EFFECTIVE WAYS IN
TEACHING ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TO YOUNG LEARNERS WITH VARIOUS LEARNING STYLES

Fahriany; Fahri Haswani
fahriany@uinjkt.ac.id; fahrihaswani@yahoo.com

Faculty of Educational Sciences Syarif Hidayatullah State Isamic University of Jakarta, Indonesia
Faculty of Language and Arts State University of Medan, Indonesia
Jl. Ir. H. Juanda No 95 Ciputat 15412, Indonesia
Jl. Willem Iskandar, Pasar V Medan Estate

Abstract: In response to learning revolution, teaching is not only transferring knowledge to students but also it should be conducted by accommodating students' learning styles. By viewing to these two factors, the teaching learning process will be more successful. This study presents the strategies to improve students' speaking skill related to age and learning styles. The teaching strategies were developed by analysing the students' needs, students' wants, and students' lack.

Keywords – effective way, EFL, young learners

INTRODUCTION

Teachers who teach English in the countries, which do not use English as their daily language, might think harder to create an interactive class for active students. Moreover, it always finds quite confusing for some English teachers whose students are teenagers (Junior and Senior High School) due to both their less of interest and lack of prior knowledge about English.

Quoting Birdsong (1992); DeKeyser (2000); Oyama (1976); Patkowski (1980)asserts that age has been considered as an important factor in the ways in which language learners differ, and a vast amount of research has been conducted regarding age effects on second language acquisition. The statement means that age is one of the essential factors for everyone to learn language that is being a determining aspect for successful in mastering a new language. Furthermore, that case happens to

teenangers(especially Junior and Senior High School) where in their age of growing, it isa right time for them to gain new information and to acquire basic knowledge about one particular language, in this case English. Therefore, they really need to be guided and to be given much attention while the teaching-learning process goes on.

Beside the factor of age, attitudes also play an important role in forming our students' view about learning language. They influence our perception of the foreign language and determine how we respond to different languages which are used in community. In view of the vital role played by attitudes in learning language, it is not surprising to know that students' attitudes will give effect how English is learned in Indonesia. The Encyclopedia of Psychology (2004) discusses the attitudinal model, with a slight modification, on the basis of three factors which are affective, behavioral, and cognitive. Thus a dominant aspect of attitude is emotional response to learn English. Attitude or response may also described as an abstract unit which is realized in the form of behavior. Attitude not only predicts behavioral patterns (Speilberger, 2004), but it also triggers various manifestations of behaviour. Mostly, students who are learning English think that English is not easy to learn. For students who have a negative and positive attitude about learning English will make different atmosphere in language learning classroom.

Various intelligent also influence how a teacher will conduct a language teaching strategy in a classroom. As stated by Gardner (1993) that every person has a different lifestyle and a different work style. It is why the students also have various intelligences. Two of them (logic and language) are very highly valued in traditional education. The intelligences involve linguistic, intelligence, mathematic intelligence, musical intelligence, spacial or visual intelligence, kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. The students who have the linguistic intelligence will be easier to practice foreign language. It is caused by having the linguistic talent will make them love to learn the foreign language. Moreover, an approach should be used to the students who do not have linguistic intelligence in order to persuading them like the foreign language and then practice it. Also, the teacher should consider a teaching mothod for conducting a classroom which can accommodate these intelligence.

The most extraordinary thing about being a good teacher is that he or she transcends accepted educational methods. The statement means that the methodsof the teacher teach and deal with the students are also being so important in the classroom activities. The teacher should develop various methods and techniques in teaching and

learning in order to fostering students' participation in every teaching and learning activity. Therefore, those goals of education itself can be achieved progressively.

The most crucial case that teacher should think is about how the students learn language. There are currently about twenty different methods of identifying learning styles. A reasearch conducted by Professors Ken and Rita Dunn provides one of the most comprehensive models. They have also produced a simple questionnaire which anyone can complete to obtain a computerized learning-style printout. On the other hand, Dunn's research revealed that they discovered that only thirty percent of students who remembered even seventy five percents of what they hear during a normal class period. Fourty percents retain three-quarters of what they read or they observe. These visual learners divided into two types, which are some process information in the word-form, while others retain what they analyse in the diagram or picture-form. Whereas, fifteen percents students learn best tactually. They need to handle materials, to write, draw and be involved with concrete experiences. Another fifteen percents are kinesthetic learners.They learn best by physically doing by participating in real experiences that generally have direct application to their lives. According to the Dunns, everyone usually has one dominant strength and also a secondary one. Also, it can be observed in the classroom or seminar that if the main perceptual strength is not matched with the teaching methods and some difficulties in learning are faced, people can compensate with their secondary perceptual strengths.

The case above is being the major implications for solving the high school dropout problem. Based on the writers' experience, kinaesthetic and tactile learners are the main candidates for failure in traditional school classrooms. The students need to move, feel, touch and do, and if the teaching method does not allow them to do these activities, the students will feel left out, uninvolved, and bored in the classroom activities.

Moreover, the physical environment obviously affects learning. For instances, sound, light, temperature, seating and body posture are all important. People also have different emotional needs and emotion plays a vital role in learning. It is in many ways the key to the brain's memory system. In addition, the emotional content of any presentation can play a big part in how readily learners absorb information and ideas.

While teaching method is an important thing in conducting a classroom activities and learning styles also constributes to get a successful classroom in achieving the students' creativity through teaching language. In learning English, the students should master four main language skills which are writing, speaking, reading and listening. These four skills are very important to support the students' abilities in mastering English and, thus those

language skillsbe separated from one another. Finally, this paper will only focus on discussing how to teach writing skill for second year students of Senior High School.

METHOD

This paper used qualitative approach, in which the research data were analysed by in-depth interview to know what students' need in learning English. There were three questions given to the students related to their need the why they were in English class. To find out the students' wants about learning English three different questions also given to them. Students' learning styles are not separable from students' wants in learning. How should be a teacher conduct an English also view the students' lack in communicating with English.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The questions of need analysis which are given to the students are about their learning styles and the suitability of speaking materials for students. In responding to these questions, the students answered that the learning materials should be developed based on their ages. The students' lack can be viewed by observing their activities in learning process. All of the students have strength themselves but the teacher should find out the window how to use their strengths in persuading the students' abilities. Most of students have lacks in mastering grammar rules and vocabularies but those weaknesses can be solved by implementing the interested strategies.

Writing is being one of the important skills that students needto be mastered. It requires the ability of students to be able to deliver their thought by writing and confidently. "You cannot learn swimming without landing in water, so just start writing, no matters correct or incorrect. There are more than a million words in English language but you need only few thousand words to write it(Sharma, 2012). As Sharma's above statement, it is clear that to learn language is to practice the language whenever we speak.

However, it is also clear that the most difficult thing students do is to write their English. Some major problems are like the less confidence they have, the lack of English knowledge as well as the less motivation they have in practicing their English. Also, the latter statement is the most-appeared reason answering by students due to their teacher lack of interesting ways in teaching writing. Because of that, the English teachers are obligated to be able to make various creative materials as well as media designs in order to attract the students' interest in learning speaking skill.

1. Material Design

Allwright (1990) argues that materials should teach students to learn, that they should be resource books for ideas and activities for instruction/learning, and that they should give teachers rationales for what they do. From the above statement, it can beconcluded that preparing materials for teaching is a must thing to do for teachers that purposes as a direction that controls the teaching learning process.

Littlejohn &Winseatt (1989) emphasize that materials have a hidden curriculum that includes attitudes toward knowledge, attitudes toward teaching and learning, attitudes toward the role and relationship of the teacher and student, and values and attitudes related to gender, society, etc. That means that, in designing the material, the teacher does also have to remember when they want to design the material, they have to make the curriculum as the direction to design the material. Clarke (1989) also argues that communicative methodology is important and that communicative methodology is based on authenticity, realism, context, and a focus on the learner. That is why, to design a material, the teacher has to understand the condition of their students so that the activity can run effectively.

In designing the material for teaching speaking for second year of Senior High School, the teacher has actually wide ways to improve their students' ability. In this case, the teacher will determine to use the students' centered approach that aimed to give the students more times toparticipate actively in every activity the teacher makes. Then, the teacher will divide the class into some small groups in which there are only five students in each groups. The technique used by the teacher is the debate technique where each student in the groups has to speak and to deliver their opinions based on the topic given.

In choosing the topic discussed, the teacher needs to be very careful and consider some things. The topic that is going to be debated must be simple, important and familiar topics in order to ease students to state their opinions. Furthermore, the teacher needs to also analyze the students' interest that aims to attract students' attention when they read the topic given. The more interesting the topics are, the more enthusiastic they will. Another thing that needs to be considered when designing materials is providing as many topics as possible to prevent boredom for the students. Giving the same topic for every round in debate will make students feeling bored and less motivated. The example of the topics that are possible are such *(1) School uniforms should be abolished, (2) Girls are more selfish than boys, (3) A high*

educational background is needed for all higher public officers, and *(4) The usage of cell phones in class should not be permitted.*

Those given topics seem quite easy for students to activate their prior knowledge before debating. Having the students had the basic knowledge of those particular topics will, of course, impact to the successful of the activity because the students will feel glad and enthusiastic in following the debate activity. More than that, they will also be easy to relate the topics with their schemata and finally create a natural debate activity.

2. **Media Design**

Designing a media is as important as designing material to attract students' interest in learning. The source http://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/media/index.htmlis stated: "The use of media to enhance teaching and learning complements traditional approaches to learning. Effective instruction builds bridges between students' knowledge and the learning objectives of the course. Using media **engages students, aids student retention of knowledge, motivates interest** in the subject matter, and **illustrates the relevance** of many concepts." There are some choices of media that can be used to make the speaking teaching learning activity being effective, such as:

a. **Video**

Providing a video will be a very nice thing to do to attract students' attention. In teaching speaking through debating, the video is very useful for the students to help them to re-call their memory about a particular topic. Before the students are going to debate, the teacher can first play the video to give a clue and slight information to the students. The function is to re-call the students' memory and attract them to think what they should argue.

b. **Pictures**

Another thing that the teacher can do is preparing some pictures, still, related to the topic about debate. Besides video, if the teacher wants the students to think hard without giving too much information, pictures are a good idea as the choice. For example, if the topic is about *the usage of cell phones in class should not be permitted;* the teacher can simply show pictures of students using their phones at classroom as also the clue for them.

c. Power Point

The use of power point is just the same like using pictures. Another way besides using pictures is through power point. By using power point, the teacher can show some texts related to the topic that will be debated. This also will attract students' curiosity and as the clue of the debate topic to diagnose the problem.

3. Assignment

According to Risk, one of the purposes of the assignment is to teach the pupils how to study. It is certain that the assignment should contribute materially to training pupils to this end. It means that assignment also contributes more to deepen students' understanding about the topic they have learnt.

McKeachie (1999: 27) suggests giving a stated purpose for each assignment, even reading assignments, for simply asking a student to 'learn' or 'read' or even 'spend time on' something is unlikely to generate focused and productive learning activity. Designing assignment for students also needs to be as careful as possible so that it is still in the same line with the learning objectives. The assignment must represent the topic they study. The teacher cannot make the assignment that does not relate with the topic. This will cause to the students' less motivation in completing the assignment. Furthermore, the teacher also must create a valid assignment. When creating a speaking assignment, the teacher must provide a valid speaking assignment that tests the students' ability in speaking.

The next things to do are writing each sentence carefully. The teacher needs to make sure that there is no room for misunderstanding about doing the assignment. Be clear about what you do not want to write. In addition, explaining the reason why such informationexcluded will help students to understand better the questions and the desired response. The teacher has to be clear also about the paper requirements. The teacher has to be strict to the due date of collecting the assignment, to let the students know about the special criteria (if any) the teacher will use when grading the assignment.

4. Assessment

According to Morrison, assessment is important because of all the decisions you will make about children when teaching and caring for them. All of your assessment decisions taken as a whole will direct and alter children's learning outcomes. It means that assessment is actually being a part of teaching

learning process, on how teachers can objectively assess their students and how the assessment can enhance the teaching process as well as the student learning process. In assessing the students, the teacher also needs to pay attention to the assessment criteria they make. The same thing as making the assignment, the assessment criteria should consist of both the valid criteria so that the teacher can obtain the valid information about the students' capability as well as the appropriateness of the content and the data collection (cognitive, psychomotor and affective).

A teacher has to be very objective in assessing their students' ability. For example, when the assessment is about speaking, then the common criteria that assessed are like communicating ability, the fluency, accuracy and natural.Those are all the things that teachers have to concern andprepare when they are going to teach. However, it is not that easy to teach English as a foreign language to students but, if the teacher prepares all the things appropriately and correctly, then it will also be possible that the students will feel easy to adjust the material designed by the teacher.

This is an example a strategy of teaching English by elaborating learning materials, media, teaching technique and also focus to the learning styles:

Teacher observed students' learning styles and categorized them into visual students, audio students, and kinesthetic students. Teacher may analyze these characteristics (Dryden and Vos, 1994).A student who sits and looks straight ahead, or whose eyes look upwards when accessing information, and who is a fast talker, is generally a visual learner. Whereas, a student who looks from side to side when accessing information, or looks down to his "offside" (right-handed student looking to the left), is probably an auditory learner. He will generally speak with a rhythmic voice. On the other hand, a right- handed student who moves a lot looks to the right and downwards when accessing information, and is a slow speaker, will probably be a kinaesthetic learner.

After recognized the students, teacher may arrange the position of students' seat with their learning styles, for example: teacher mixes students with different learning styles in the same group. This arranging are obtained to combine the styles in order the students do not feel bored in learning.In starting the class, the teacher plays music and then introduce the topic "Vegetarian Food". The the teacher will give the students a record of vegetable names with its sentence and play it repeatedly.Teacher shows a picture or asks students to put

some pictures on the wall and write some sentences on it. Furthermore, the teacher asks students to write a paragraph about: Being younger with Vegetable". Finally, the teacher may invite students to give comments of their writing.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The major implication of the work is the realization, that the implementation of teaching- learning strategies should consider the students' learning styles that involve audio, visual and kinaesthetic. Curricular materials and learning process should be rich and not only depend on the text book, and the consistency within the chosen strategies or style that all students familiar with.

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