Progressive Cognitive and Ability

Teacher Difficulties in Teaching English to Young Learners

Imelda Telaumbanua
Universitas Nias, Gunungsitoli, Indonesia

Article Info

ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kesulitan dalam mengajar berbicara bagi pelajar muda yang dihadapi oleh guru bahasa Inggris dan bagaimana guru mengatasi kesulitan dalam mengajar berbicara bagi pelajar muda. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif. Teknik yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif. Untuk menganalisis data, peneliti menggunakan teknik analisis deskriptif. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa guru menghadapi banyak kesulitan ketika mengajar siswa muda berbicara, namun guru dapat mengatasi kesulitan tersebut dengan menggunakan solusi yang tepat untuk mengatasi kesulitan tersebut dan dengan menciptakan pembelajaran yang menyenangkan, aktif, dan kreatif.

ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the difficulties in teaching speaking to young students faced by English teachers and how teachers overcome difficulties in teaching speaking to young students. The method used in this research is qualitative. The technique used to collect data in this research is a qualitative method. To analyze the data, researchers used descriptive analysis techniques. It can be concluded that teachers face many difficulties when teaching young students to speak, but teachers can overcome these difficulties by using appropriate solutions to overcome these difficulties and by creating fun, active and creative learning.

Corresponding Author:

Imelda Telaumbanua
Universitas Nias
Fadoro Lasara, Gunungsitoli, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
Imeld2895@gmail.com

Introduction

Having the ability to speak at an early age is not as easy as imagined. The assumption that everyone can speak for themselves means that the development of speaking skills is often neglected. Introducing English from an early age is important considering that English is a foreign language in Indonesia.

In the world of education, English is the main communication language, this is because English is an international language. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language that must be taught from elementary school to university. Therefore, many people, especially students, need to be fluent in English. Students' needs for learning English are considered capable of supporting daily life in developing the field of communication and supporting global learning (Yunelia, 2019). Learning English helps students improve their skills, thinking, determination and expression. Speaking classes focus on the learner's ability to master four language skills. Students must have reading and listening skills to support speaking and writing. The interaction or reciprocal relationship between teachers and students is the main requirement for the teaching and learning process to take place. Usman in Siti, (2021)

Because English is rarely used in daily communication, speaking English in Indonesia is very challenging. Speaking is indeed a skill that can be developed by young students in elementary school. Verbal performance and verbal proficiency are two of these skills. In reality, this is a challenging and protracted task. This class will be difficult for young students and foreign language teachers. However, it is not an exaggeration to say that communication skills, especially language skills, are the highest priority in the classroom, especially in learning activities (Yusuf & Zuraini in Putri (2023). This means that a teacher explains what is being taught. This is of course done through conversations with students. In particular in EFL countries, English teachers often have to speak up because they need to articulate themselves (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019).In addition, English is not their mother tongue so it is part of their teaching duties.

Speaking according to Florez in Putri (2023) is an interactive process in conveying meaning which includes receiving, creating and processing information. Additionally, this creates difficulties for educators in figuring out what their students are learning, how and why it impacts them, and what teachings will benefit them in the future. Therefore, developing students' academic and interpersonal skills is a requirement of language teaching. Lack of English language skills, classroom management, adaptation to new material, student attention, and effective communication are some of the difficulties teachers face when speaking.

Active and creative students are a learning goal that is in accordance with the process standards of Minister of Education and Culture Number 16 of 2022 which states that the teaching and learning process must be carried out with learning conditions that are: 1.) Interactive, 2.)

Inspirational 3.) Fun, 4.) Challenging, 5.) Motivate students to participate actively, 6.) Provide sufficient space for initiative, creativity, independence in accordance with students' talents, interests and physical and psychological development. Because the standard curriculum expects students to play a very important role in the learning process, students are indirectly trained in speaking skills to express their opinions.

According to (Magdalena: 2021) there are 2 factors that cause students' low speaking abilities, namely internal factors and external factors, the first is internal factors. Internal factors refer to the student's condition, both the student's physical and mental condition, the student's passivity during the teaching and learning process, the student's lack of self-confidence, always feeling afraid that the opinion or idea he conveys is wrong. Apart from that, internal factors can also refer to students who do not understand the learning material, students who master little vocabulary, and students who have less opportunity to speak systematically. Another internal factor that can be a benchmark for whether a student's speaking ability is high or low is the student's personality or character.

Based on the previous statement, several studies have examined the challenges teachers face in teaching speaking and how these challenges can be overcome. The findings of this research indicate that teachers are challenged by students' lack of knowledge about subjects, lack of time for tutoring, and confusion in choosing media for students. Several other studies with mixed results show that students have limited vocabulary and are unable to express their thoughts, making it difficult to communicate with teachers. Apart from that, the challenge for teachers in teaching English speaking is only because most students are not able to communicate with their English teachers because they are not able to communicate in English because they are afraid and lack confidence in communicating in English with the instructions given. According to Zulvira (2021:1847) lower grade students are a transition period for students' basic learning.

Previous research shows that teaching speaking to young students presents many challenges, including: These challenges must be overcome so that young students can master speaking skills and learn English well. Addressing these challenges is important, so the current research focuses on discussing teachers' challenges in teaching speaking to young learners in English First. To address this issue, researchers need to take a closer look at the difficulties of language teaching for young learners to provide insights to teachers of young learners about applied language teaching. Therefore, this research raises two crucial issues:

1. What difficulties do teachers face in teaching speaking to young students?

2. How can English teachers overcome the challenges of teaching speaking to young learners?

METHODOLOGY

The research research design that achieved these results was a qualitative approach. In line with Denzin & Lincoln in Fadli (2021), qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting with the aim of interpreting a phenomenon that occurs and is carried out using various existing methods.

Qualitative research is an effort to present the social world and its perspectives on the world, in terms of concepts, behavior, perceptions and issues about the humans being studied. Qualitative research itself has the aim of understanding detailed issues about the situations and realities faced so that the results can later be used to understand any phenomena that until now have not been widely known.

This research data is in the form of statements resulting from participant interviews, questionnaires and observations. The data source is a teacher who teaches speaking to young students. Researchers chose English teachers as respondents because teachers are the main actors in the learning process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Difficulties Faced by English Teachers in Teaching Speaking to Young Learners

Learning difficulties or learning disabilities are conditions experienced by students which are characterized by certain obstacles in receiving and absorbing lessons caused by many factors, not only instructional or pedagogical problems, but can also refer to psychological problems so that students experience difficulties in carrying out their activities. listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or calculating. Not all difficulties are faced by teachers. Researchers have identified difficulties faced by teachers in teaching speaking to young learners and the most common challenges include lack of student self-confidence, unclear student pronunciation, and parental involvement.

The first difficulty is the influence of self-confidence on the academic achievement of elementary school students. They found that self-confidence can also influence students' academic achievement based on students' low and high levels of self-confidence, and their research found that academic achievement was much higher between students who had low and high self-confidence. shows that there is a difference. This theory is related to the difficulties faced by English teachers. Self-confidence is the most important factor in learning English, so a lack of self-confidence can affect the learning process in young learners. Additionally, Rosalina et al., (2020) A challenge is something that is thought to be tough. Teaching English is not easy, and teachers face some challenges in the process of learning English, especially when teaching oral English to young students.

The second challenge is that students' pronunciation is unclear. For teachers, it is difficult to persuade students to speak English and make them speak correctly, precisely and perfectly. Teachers face such difficulties when teaching young learners to speak. Young students have difficulty pronouncing the correct pronunciation, young students do not use whole sentences, and young students use a deep voice when speaking.

The third challenge arises from parental involvement. Parents can have a positive influence on children's learning because the family is the most effective system in encouraging and maintaining children's growth and development in the long term. The role of parents in the learning process also has a big impact on children. The quality of children's learning can only be improved by supporting and participating in the learning process.

When teaching speaking in schools or courses, teachers face a variety of challenges that can hinder the learning process. Nunan in Putri at al identified five challenges that English teachers may face with young learners. These challenges involve: 1) cognitive development, 2) motivation, 3) attention, 4) multilevel groups, and 5) assessment. This study used Nunan's theory to identify the challenges English teachers face when teaching young learners to speak in English

Solutions to Difficulties Faced by Teachers in Teaching Speaking to Young Learners

Every problem or challenge requires a solution. A solution is a way out or way out of a problem. Here, researchers will discuss solutions to the challenges teachers face in teaching speaking to young students. Based on the results of interviews, questionnaires and observations conducted by researchers, researchers found several difficulties faced by teachers, where researchers identified and also discussed solutions to overcome these various difficulties.

In this case, the teacher states that the first way to overcome the difficulty of lacking self-confidence is to group active students with students who are inactive or lack self-confidence, so that they can work together and active friends can help or guide them. . Friends who are less active or less confident get better. The teacher forms several groups in the class, each group consisting of very active students and less active students. students want to interact and participate in learning. If there are students who are not confident in my class. The teacher will carry out activities that drain energy, namely by playing while learning around the class or singing and dancing. When students do these activities, usually students who are less confident will start to open up and start interacting with other friends. The solution carried out by the teacher also uses the same method, namely young students are invited to play in groups with

the aim of increasing their self-confidence. So indirectly they can participate with other friends without feeling embarrassed or afraid.

The solution when students say words that are not clear or it is difficult to get students to speak is to use body signals so that students do not just say 1 or 2 words, but use complete sentences. When a student says a sentence that is unclear or in a low voice, usually the teacher will ask the student to raise their voice a little, but if a young student's voice is still unclear or small then the teacher will immediately sing loudly. so that all students join in singing loudly too.

Another way is that teachers usually give examples to students who only say 1 or 2 words and do not use complete sentences by using gestures such as imitating animal movements 'that's a monkey' or showing something that refers to the vocabulary 'that's a table'. From there, young learners begin to learn correct sentence structure. The solution above uses the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, which is a teaching method used by teachers, especially to teach young learners. This method uses language concepts or vocabulary by using body movements to respond to verbal input. This process mimics the way young students learn their native language, thereby reducing student barriers and stress. So that early age learners can easily memorize and remember the sentences they learn. Encouraging parent-child interaction at home is also important. The teacher's solution is to suggest that parents also help their children's development in speaking English. The role of parents in learning to speak English is very necessary. If students only talk when in class but not at home, then over time students will forget what they have learned. So that parents participate or support their children as much as possible in practicing speaking English. If students still don't want to speak English at home, the teacher provides a solution by parents making an agreement with their child with the aim of wanting to speak English. If young learners still don't want to speak English at home or with parents. Parents give their consent by taking their children for a walk, but with the condition that while they are outside or when traveling, the children must use English when the students want to talk to their parents. Another solution is for teachers to educate students to focus on their strengths, provide incentives for students to recognize their strengths and uniqueness, create a supportive environment, and help each student not differentiate between their abilities to achieve a level of learning that suits their abilities. curriculum they receive, continually expanding practice beyond theory , participating in group discussions, and rewarding children in the form of rewards, praise, attention, praise and prizes.

Teachers need to be more sensitive and must be able to overcome factors that hinder young students ' speaking abilities because students' speaking abilities are an important asset that students must have not only for now but for the long term. Having good speaking skills is not only useful for students' daily lives but can also be used as a talent that students can explore

further. There are several ways that teachers can apply to overcome students' speaking skills, namely: The teacher understands the condition of each student in his class, so that the teacher knows how to give direction or advice to the student.

This is confirmed by the statement (Aan Whiti: 2020) that understanding children's characteristics in learning is an important thing that must be done by teachers, knowing students' characteristics makes teachers able to condition learning, and makes it easier for teachers to provide material to students so that the material can be conveyed well to students. . Teachers who do not understand students' conditions will result in students not experiencing development and their potential will be weakened. Generally, students who have low speaking skills are students who have shy and quiet personalities, so teachers must always try to stimulate students' abilities so that these students have the desire and courage to express opinions or speak first.

Generally, students who have low speaking skills are students who have shy and quiet personalities, so teachers must always try to stimulate students' abilities so that these students have the desire and courage to express opinions or speak first .

Teachers always appreciate the little things each student does, teachers usually appreciate students by giving gifts. Prizes that are usually given to students who dare to come forward and answer the teacher's questions are in the form of additional points, stars as additional points, snacks or applause from the teacher and other friends so that all students feel appreciated and become more courageous and enthusiastic to try things. -things outside their comfort zone. This is confirmed by the statement (Hani Subakti: 2021) that appreciation and rewards can increase students' enthusiasm and motivation in learning, the pleasant effect of getting rewards and appreciation from teachers and friends will make students want to repeat and get rewards again.

The teacher also always tries to respond well and enthusiastically to every student who speaks to him. Teachers also always try to give extra attention to students who have obstacles in their speaking abilities. Teachers also always provide assistance to students who have difficulty understanding the material by explaining the material to the students repeatedly until the students understand the material presented. Apart from that, teachers also always appeal to parents to always support and accompany students when they are at home so that students' speaking skills develop.

Based on the teacher's statement above, it is clear that all the difficulties they face can be managed effectively, and one solution is by implementing the learning strategies they apply. The teacher's solution is to suggest that parents also help their children's development in speaking

English. The teacher's solution is to suggest that parents also help their children's development in speaking English.

CONCLUSION

Based on research, teachers' limited understanding of learning also results in learning speaking skills still falling short of expectations. Therefore, teachers need to open up insights about learning that can attract students' attention in participating in learning and overcome the factors that cause students' learning difficulties. And the choice of learning strategies should be based on providing opportunities for students to practice using the language, not just learning about the language. Learning a language is basically learning to communicate.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aini, WN (2019). Learning Media in Teaching English to Young Learners. Journal of English and Education, 1 (June), 196–205.

Effective, KB (nd). Learning to speak (Dahliah Patiung) Learning to speak to build effective learning communication. 231–244.

Fadli, MR (2021) understanding the design of qualitative research methods, 21. No. 1. (2021) , 33-54

Magdalena, I., Ulfi, N., & Awaliah, S. (2021). ANALYSIS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE SKILLS IN GRADE IV STUDENTS AT SDN GONDRONG 2. In EDITION: Journal of Education and Science (Vol. 3, Issue 2).

Norasiah and Sugirin (2023). Assessing Young Learners' Listening and Speaking Performance, 2 NO.3, 197-203.

Putri, HSK and Nurjati, N (2023) Teacher Challenges in Teaching Speaking to Young Learners: Case Study in English First (EF) , 6 (1), 831-847

Putri, KSH, Nurjati N. (2023). The Teachers' Challenges o f Teaching Speaking For Young Learners: A Case Study At English First (EF). Journal on education. Volume 06, No. 01, pp. 831-840

Rosalina, E., Nasrullah, N., & Elyani, EP (2020). Teacher's Challenges towards Online Learning in Pandemic Era. LET: Linguistics, Literature and English Teaching Journal, 10(2).

Whiti Estari Negeri, USA (2020). The Importance of Understanding Learner Characteristics in the Learning Process. In National Workshop on Strengthening Competency of SHEs Primary School Teachers: Conference Series (Vol. 3, Issue 3).

Yunelia (2019). Teachers' Views of Students Who Support English Pronunciation in Elementary Schools, 1 Number 4, 468-473

Zulvira, R., Neviyarni, & Irdawarni. (2021). Characteristics of Lower Grade Elementary School Students. Tambusai Educational Journal, 5(1), 1846–1851.

WRITER BIOGRAPHY

	Imelda Telaumbanua, born in Gunungsitoli on December 9 2001 and now lives in Fadoro Lasara, Gunungsitoli. Completed basic education at SDN 070987 Fadoro in 2008, continued his education at SMPN 3 Gunungsitoli completed in 2017. High school at SMAN 3 Gunungsitoli and completed in 2020. Currently studying at Nias University, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, and majoring in in English education. imeldatelaumbanua12@gmail.com