Meaningful and Interesting Learning Process: Accomodating Comprehensible Input for Teaching English to Young Learners in the 4.0 Industrial Age

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Article Information	Abstrak
	Tujuan pembelajaran untuk anak usia dini adalah untuk mengembangkan segenap potensi yang meliputi aspek fisik, kecerdasan, sosial-emosi, kepribadian, bahasa dan komunikasi. Menjawab tantangan revolusi industri 4.0, guru anak usia dini harus mau mengenal generasi milenial secara utuh dan bersikap adaptif terhadap imbas perkembangan teknologi dan komunikasi khususnya pada pendidikan untuk anak usia dini. Proses pembelajaran seharusnya di selenggarakan secara bermakna dan menarik sehingga dapat menstimulasi kemampuan berfikir kristis, kreatif, dan mengembangkan kemandirian sekaligus sikap kolaboratif yang disesuaikan dengan kondisi dan kebutuhan peserta didik baik high achievers maupun low achievers. Deskripsi pembelajaran yang bermakna dan menarik dalam kontek penelitian ini adalah proses pembelajaran yang mampu (1) menghadirkan masukan yang terpahami (comprehensible input) dengan mengelola materi dan media sedemikian rupa sesuai dengan kondisi siswa; (2) mengakomodasi pembelajaran aktif – kolaboratif, dan (3) mengadopsi/ mengadaptasi situs-situs belajar yang menyenangkan dan atraktif utuk anak. Melalui pengkondisian suasana belajar bermakna dan menarik ini, saringan afektif siswa diharapkan menjadi lebih rendah sehingga masukan yang dikembangkan lingkungan dapat menggerakan sistem kognisi siswa dan proses belajar menjadi lebih efektif.

Abstract

In general, the purpose of teaching young learners is to develop students' physical aspects, intelligence, social-emotions, personality, language and communicative competence. Addressing the challenge of the 4.0 Industrial age, teachers of young learners need to know well the characteristics of millennial generation and must be adaptive to accommodate the growth of technology to support learning process. Teachers need to support young learners' witn learning process held in a meaningful and interesting way stimulating the ability of young learners to think critically and creatively. Besides, learning process accommodating rich content of media and opportunities for interaction/ discussion with teachers and peers prepare both, high achievers and low achievers for lifelong learning. In simple words, meaningful and interesting learning in this study covers some principles as follows; (1) accommodating comprehensible input; (2) accommodating active - collaborative learning, and (3) adopting and adapting online learning sites for young learners. Through this conditioning learning atmosphere, students' affective filters becomes lower and their learning process becomes more effective.

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INTRODUCTION

In many countries, children are learning English at younger ages. Young learners are in the golden age. Early studies of second or foreign language learning argued that golden age was a "critical period" (Lenneberg, 1967; Penfield & Roberts, 1959), prior to puberty in which children could acquire native-like proficiency in a foreign language. Besides, parents' belief that English skills provide their children with a better education and better employment opportunities following the growing demand for English have led to an increase in the number of EYL programs (Enever & Moon, 2009; Gimenez, 2009). In this 4.0 Industrial age, young learners do not only learn through what they hear, see and feel, but they also go through the process of mediating technology that is very close to their daily life to support their learning process. English for Young Learners programs try to provide more time to learn the language leading to better pronunciation and fluency, enhanced intercultural competence, and mental flexibility. In this case, the goal of learning process for young learners is intended to develop all potential including physical aspects, intelligence, social-emotion, personality, language and communication.

4.0 Industrial age is a disruptive era in which innovation develops so rapidly. In this era, artificial Intelligence, intelligent robots (robots Intelligent), autonomous vehicles, the internet, biotechnology and nanotechnology show their role to open up a more creative economic space (https://ACEH.TRIBUNNEWS.COM/2018/11/27/MENJADI-GURU-ERA-PENDIDIKAN-40). The rapid growth of technological innovations and industries bring great impacts on English education in Indonesia. Schwab (2017) signifies that the era of education driven by the industrial revolution 4.0 was Education 4.0. According to Fisk (2017), it is education which responds to the needs on Industry 4.0 where smart machines work alongside human-professionals, utilizes the potentials of digital technologies, personalized data, open sourced contents, and the globally-connected, technology fuelled world of humanity, and establishes lifelong learning to grow and survive even to play a better role in the society.

Regarding to the growth of Education 4.0, English teachers appear to have a great number of roles toward the successfulness of the students in English

learning. Harmer (2007: 25) states ―…a good teacher's art is the ability to adopt a number of different roles in the class, depending on what the students are doing. Teachers have several roles, regarding to their responsibility to build meaningful interactions within language learning which is adaptable to Industry 4.0, namely as controller, director, manager, facilitator, and resource. Reffering to meaningful interactions, teachers need to provide learning process that is more than just memorizing content and facts without following meaningful learning experience. Students' learning process should be held in a meaningful and attractive way stimulating them to think critically, creatively, innovatively, and develop self-reliance as well as a collaborative attitude. Moreover, this learning process ideally meet all students' physical and psychological condition and needs of both high achievers and low achievers. In this case, teachers should be willing to know the characteristics of millennial generation and should be more adaptive towards the technological development and communication especially on education for early childhood.

Facing the condition above, teachers need to support young learners through the delivery of engaging and motivating lessons accommodating rich content of media and opportunities for interaction/ discussion with teachers and peers. Participation in this course will prepare children for lifelong learning. Teachers also need to learn techniques for teaching new vocabulary and grammar that encourage student participation and new ideas for teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing in a meaningful context. Besides, they also need to utilize the development of technologies effectively following linguistics and cognitive developmental stages of young learners. For example, understanding that the age of children is very close to the playtime, teachers are expected to make the learning process more enjoyable and meaningful. Teachers need to create a comfortable learning environment with attractive activities such as singing, playing music, watching cartoons, playing games, playing roles, and playing with an interesting Flash card (http://esensi.co.id/2017/04/08/bingung-cara-mengajari-anak-usia-dini-ini-dia-cara-yang-tepat/). Furthermore, teachers can also utilize/adapt online English learning websites to support the student learning process. In simple words, through conditioning process, learning atmosphere becomes more meaningful and attractive

for students. In this case, whenever students' affective filter is lower, learning input developed by the environment can move the student cognition system easily.

In general, this article describes meaningful and interesting learning as a learning process (1) accomodating comprehensible input facilitating students' understanding on learning materials; (2) accommodating active-collaborative learning, and (3) Adopting and Adapting learning sites that are fun and attractive to children.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

1. Characteristics of Early Childhood

Early childhood refers to young learners of 0-6 years old (The National Education System Law year 2003). According to Piaget (1970), early childhood has an active nature as learners and thinkers. They learn through what they see, hear, and feel when dealing with their peers or parents (Vygotsky, 1962). Furthermore, Scott and Ytreberg (1990) suggest that young learners are easily attracted to new things. They will continue to feel curious and use their logical reasoning to understand something new. Early childhood are in a "critical" or "sensitive period" (Oyama, 1976), prior to puberty in which children could acquire native-like proficiency in a foreign language. In this case, there is a condition supporting and facilitating students' learning. Read (2003) suggests that younger is better when learning is natural, contextualized and part of a real event, interesting and enjoyable, has a purpose for the child, builds on things the child knows but also challenges the child, multisensory, active and experiential, memorable, and offered in a relaxed and warm learning atmosphere.

2. Teacher pedagogical competence in the Educational Era 4.0

Competent teachers are expected to be able to build and develop a good and effective learning process. Teachers ideally have appropriate training in teaching young learners, in teaching English, and in teaching through English. According to Nunan (1999: 3), programs to teach English to young learners need to be "carefully planned, adequately supported and resourced, and closely monitored and evaluated. Following these principles, teachers are expected to be

able to develop personalities and competencies both high and low achievers optimally. Moreover, facing the 4.0 industrial revolution era, teachers need to be creative and adaptive in implementing pedagogical competencies to realize meaningful and interesting learning processes: (1) accomodating comprehensible inputs; (2) accommodating active – collaborative learning, and (3) adopting and adapting learning sites that are fun and attractive for children. The teacher is also expected to be able to carry out his role as a facilitator who helps students to be able to master the competencies needed in this 4.0 era.

3. Meaningful and Interesting Learning in Language Learning for Early Childhood

According to Sujiono (2007: 59), one of learning principles for young learners is that children act as active learners who build their own knowledge through what their sensors and senses feel. They prefer to learn through concrete objects that they can see and touch. Even when children are learning a language, existing learning must be able to challenge and motivate children to find out for themselves what is in their minds (Risaldy, 2014). Children will feel happy if they are involved in the learning process. Language learning activities and processes must be agreed to each child's abilities and needs. In this case, when children feel involved in the learning process they like and in accordance with their conditions, children will feel their learning process is more meaningful.

Furthermore, interesting learning in this study is a learning process that is able to present comprehensible input. According to Krashen (1981), comprehensible input is the process of language acquisition in second language learners (second language acquisition) that occurs when there is an input that can be understood (comprehensible) obtained through speech and reading that can be understood it's meaning. To understand this, early childhood must be able to master their first grammar or langauge. In fact, these inputs are not only limited to being understood, but it is better for children to be stimulated and motivated to learn languages.

In the theory of comprehensible input, Krashen (1981) also mentions that an understandable input is related to language acquisition in which there are

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materials whose level is higher than the cognitive level of early childhood (i + 1). The role of the teacher here is very important to guide and assist children in understanding language correctly because the teaching material is made in such a way that it exceeds the ability of the children. In fact, the results of previous studies conducted by Gleitman (1977) revealed that input for children is not only limited to increasing the level of material difficulty one level above the child's cognitive level, but there are also i + 2, i + 3 and others. This can happen if there is full support from the teacher and the optimal use of teaching media.

METHODS

This research was conducted at a learning group governed by LAZIZ of Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta in 2019. This study is aimed to explain the result of optimizing comprehensible input for teaching English to young learners in the 4.0 Industrial age. This research is a case study in which the researcher gained an in-depth understanding of the subject's perspective using case study method. The sources of the data are events and documents while the technique for collecting data are document analysis, interview, and non-participant observation. The technique used in analyzing the data is qualitative data analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994: 10-11) proposes the steps in analyzing the data in qualitative data analysis as the following: (1) Data reduction, (2) Data display, (3) Conclusion drawing and verification.

1. Data reduction

   This step is a process of election, a centration of attention to the simplification, abstracting, and transformation of "crude" data arising from the document-written notes on the field. Data reduction/process-transformation continues after field research, until the complete final report is composed. This is a form of analysis that sharpen sorts, focuses, removes, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be withdrawn and verified.

2. Presentation of Data (display data)

   The presentation of data on qualitative research should be clear and concise to facilitate the understanding of problems in the research. Data Display helps researchers understand what's happening and further analyse or take action

based on that understanding. Simple data display patterns include different types of matrices, graphs, diagrams, and networks that are necessary to understand the data more easily.

3. Withdrawal of conclusions and verification (conclusion drawing and verification)

This measures the process of discovering meaning, pattern, explanation, configuration or also causal flow about a phenomenon. In addition, in the verification, the meanings arising from the data should be tested for its validity/truthfulness, its firminess, and the match, which is the merupakañ validity. If it is not so, the possession is an interesting cita-citá on something that happens and that is unclear of its truth and usefulness.
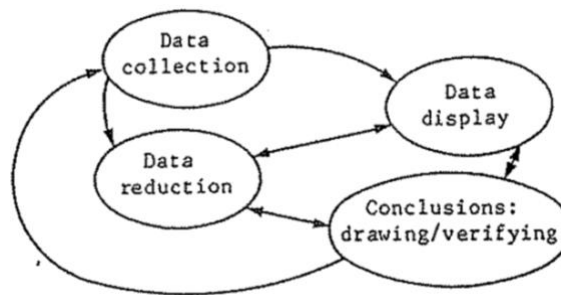

Image 1. Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Accomodating Comprehensible Input Facilitating Learning English for Young Learners

Krashen (2002) states acquisition and learning hypothesis as two strategies for developing second language competence. Adopting this theory, in the context of learning English as a foreign language, researchers apply these two strategies in the process of learning English for early childhood. By creating a learning environment that is closer to natural, English is used to communicate without focusing on the rules of language but rather aimed at mastering communicative functions (acquisition strategies). Furthermore, through learning strategies that are focused on understanding the language rules, students will be able to master the language rules well in line with the learning process that is supportive too. In this

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case, the teacher's role becomes very important in guiding and facilitating students to be able to master English well.

To support the implementation of the two strategies above and to make input as expected input, the teacher needs to condition the input as a comprehensible input that is understandable for students. In this case Krashen (2002: 102-103), states that the second language is obtained by understanding messages (understanding messages) or by receiving input that can be understood (comprehensible input). Krashen states comprehensible input as an input that is a level above the previous ability of learners. This input that is heard or read is formulated as $i + 1$. The i is interpreted as the ability or competence of students and +1 is interpreted one level above it. If the input is understandable and adequate, the language rules will automatically be integrated in it.

To accommodate this comprehensible input and the strategy of acquisition and learning in the learning process, teachers can apply "learning by doing" strategy. Teachers can accommodate simulation or demonstration so that children actively participate in class. Children are invited to go round playing. Teachers can also utilize the power with cooperative learning to support a natural learning atmosphere in the classroom. These strategies are suited with children' level of intelligence, ability, and interest so that children find the process fun for them. Teachers can also accomodate technology that is very much loved by children. Teachers can use internet on developing teaching materials and media with more variety in a short time. The teacher can adopt or adapt the materials available at online English learning sites according to students' needs and conditions.

2. **Accomodating Active-Collaborative Learning Facilitating Learning English for Young Learners**

Active - collaborative learning is considered able to provide sufficient language exposure and attract young learners' attention to a naturally real practice that is appropriate to their conditions and needs. In cooperative learning model, students learn in small groups, learn from each other and learn to achieve common goals. In this case, the class atmosphere needs to be planned and built so that students get the opportunity to interact using English with each other more

meaningfully. By utilizing English learning sites, teachers can also build children's experiences to use English such as in singing activities, playing games, or quizzes and making crafts in small groups.

Activities using video and group work are also interesting and meaningful them. They can learn to help each other to understand learning material. They can retell or even criticize the contents of the video stimulating the ability of young learners to think critically and creatively. Reteling and criticizing wjat is ini the video can be very helpful for children to become more enthusiastic in learning and strengthen a good relationship between one child with another child. Here, learning atmosphere also becomes exciting and enjoyable. In this case, it is suggested for teachers to present an atmosphere of collaboration among learners in the classroom, especially for young learners. Although basically, children have a strong self-centred nature at this age, teachers can still try and utilize collaborative-based learning to help students strengthen the socialist character between children. According to Shuel (1986) in Biggs and Moore (1993), what students do is very important in the teaching and learning process. Harmer (2002) also states that if students (children) are fully involved in learning, they will have high ability to learn, have high potential in being creative, and have a high commitment to things that are in accordance with their interests.

3. Accomodating Technology (fun and attractive learning sites) in Language Learning for Young Learners

The the growth of technology offered by the Industrial Revolution Era 4.0 can help teachers in the learning process. Technology can be applied as a device of learning in the classroom that can also stimulate children to be active and have fun in the classroom. In this research, the teacher utilizes/adapts online English learning sites to support student learning processes. Internet-based learning sites such as *toddler fun learning, englishfirst*, and *powtoon* can be used to present comprehensible input for children. The teacher can adopt or adapt the materials available on the toddler fun learning site-https: *//www.toddlerfunlearning.com/* according to the needs and conditions of students. Teachers can also use videos on this site to support the language learning process in the classroom. In addition,

teachers can also download student activity sheets such as creating some handicraft to support their learning processes. After finishing watching the video, children can collaborate with the teacher to play simulations according to the context in the video. They can also collaborate with their classmates so that the meaning in the video and all the learning processes can be well understood and the child can understand the language being taught in its entirety. Furthermore, students and teachers can keep these learning activities into learning outcomes in the form of videos through the *Powtoon* website. Through the *powtoon site https://www.powtoon.com/edu-home/*, teachers and instructors can make their own videos according to the learning context and children's interests in class.

Besides toddler fun learning sites, teachers can also easily access online learning sites at *https://www.ef.co.id/englishfirst/efblog/*. There are a lot of teaching materials on this site starting from reading and writing; listening and speaking; also teaching material about grammar and vocabulary, and examples of the use of English in everyday life. Teachers can even use flashcards, quizzes and games available on this site as a means of learning and playing as well as to overcome the boredom of students.
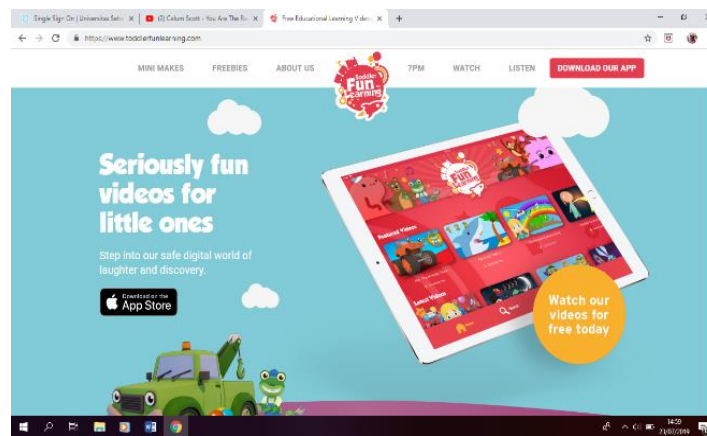

Image 2. The display of https://www.toddlerfunlearning.com/

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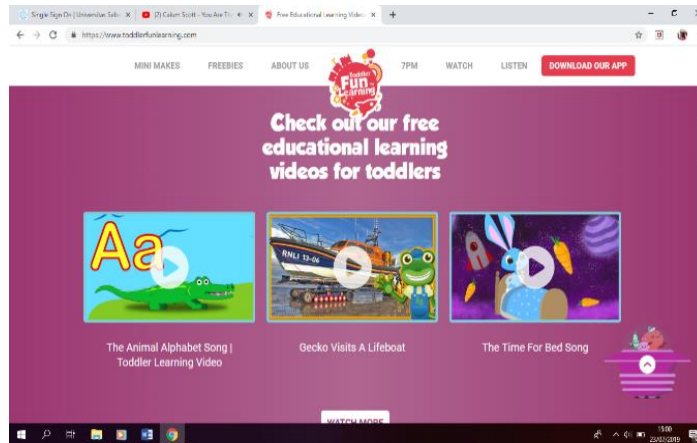Young Learners in the 4.0 Industrial Age

Image 3. The Variation of videos and teaching materials for learning English

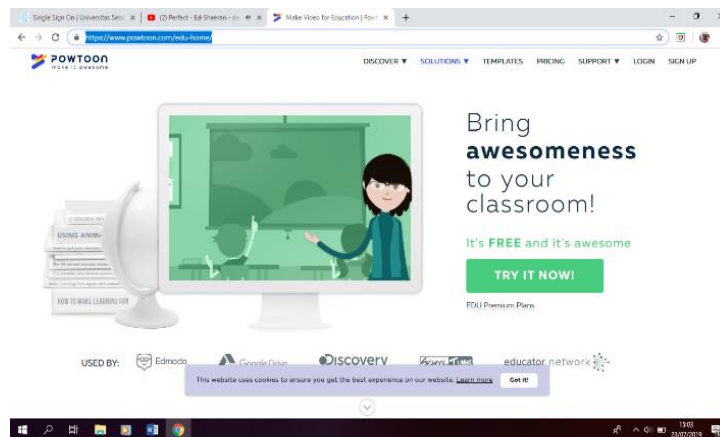Image 4. The Variations of activities and media in learning English

Image 5. The Display of https://www.powtoon.com/edu-home/

Although the three examples of learning sites above can help both teachers and students in learning English, the teacher's role in managing the material and the media remains as the main key. To be able to produce inputs that can be easily understood by students and support the implementation of learning and acquisition strategies, teachers need to manage learning materials and media in accordance with the conditions and needs of students. As stated by Krashen (1981) [19], comprehensible input is an input that is a level above the previous ability of learners. This input that is heard or read is formulated as $i + 1$. The i is interpreted as the ability or competence of students and $+1$ is interpreted one level above it. Considering this, teachers need to utilize learning resources such as learning sites that have been described above to support students' learning process. In addition, the role of the teacher to guide and assist children to understand language correctly is absolutely needed because the teaching material is made in such a way that it exceeds the level of the child's ability. Through this conditioning effort, learning atmosphere becomes more meaningful and interesting. In this case, whenever students' affective filter is lower, learning input developed by the environment can move the student cognition system easily. More than that, children are also encouraged and motivated to learn more languages

CONCLUSION

Answering the challenges of the 4.0 Industrial age, teachers of young learners are expected to be more creative and adaptive in developing and implementing learning plans and utilizing technology to support young learners' learning process. There are three principles for interesting and meaningful learning in this study. The first is accomodating comprehensible input. Besides, accommodating active – collaborative learning is also important here. In the process of learning, the teacher presents learning by doing activities. The teacher can also utilize the power of cooperative learning to support the natural learning atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher can also use the internet in developing material. The teacher may adopt or adapt the existing materials on online English learning sites according to the needs and conditions of students. In simple words, through this conditioning effort, learning atmosphere becomes more meaningful and interesting.

In this case, whenever students' affective filter is lower, learning input developed by the environment can move the student cognition system easily. More than that, children are also more encouraged and motivated to learn many more. Introducing young learners with cooperative and collaborative learning and learning accommodated with technology at younger ages also help children to establish lifelong learning to grow and survive even to play a better role in the society.

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