

CAKRAWALA

JURNAL PENDIDIKAN

"Guru Ekonomi Dalam Perkembangan Teknologi
Informasi Dan Komunikasi

Wingsalan Tegat: Unik, Khas dan Memuat Pesan Moral

Struktur Bahasa Dalam Gaya Berpikir,

Pengembangan Dan Pemanfaatan Komputer Dalam Proses
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Kemampuan Numerik Terhadap Prestasi Belajar Matematika,

Kebijakan Pembangunan Pendidikan Dalam Upaya Peningkatan Akses
Masyarakat Terhadap Pendidikan,

Water Grating,

Developing Foreign Language
Proficiency Trough Speech Learning In Early Childhood,

Perilaku Kehidupan Remaja Heteroseksual Kota Tegat,

Guru Sejati, Menulis Puisi

Bahasa Dalam Masyarakat Multikultural,

Teachers' Questions In The English Classroom And Students'
Responses At Semarang State Polytechni,

Model pembelajaran Moving Class

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ABSTRACT

Childhood is generally regarded as the most cheerful phase in people's life. Related to the language learning, in this period of time a child unconsciously learns how to speak his/her vernacular through constant imitation and repetition of the utterances produced by the older people when they are speaking in their mother tongue language. This phenomenon takes place when the child is about six to eight years old. In the years after, a foreign language will be effectively taught, because they are supposed to be adult linguistically, which means that the child is going to get ready to learn a new set of habits in speaking.

Several characteristics of children as young learners of a foreign language should be considered as a guideline to decide several kinds of approach, method, technique and model of the foreign language teaching and learning to optimize their foreign language proficiency, considering that they have specific and unique characteristics contrasted to adult learners. To yield an intended result, appropriate, accurate and integrated materials involving pronunciation, vocabulary enrichment and sentence arrangement must be selected in such a way and adjusted to the learners' needs. It's not easy to achieve the intended purpose of the process due to several handicaps such as; lisping, slurring, stuttering, and cluttering.

Key words: Childhood, vernacular, adult linguistically, foreign language proficiency, handicaps

1. Introduction

Speech as the most essential component of language mastery should get our serious attention, so giving the right, accurate, and suitable methods of speech teaching in early childhood must be formulated and organized in such a way in order to avoid the emergence of cognitive deficiencies on children by teaching complete, integrated and chronological language which can define universalistic meaning, separated from situation, space, time, and interlocutor context.

Most of babies' powerlessness is caused by their disability to express their needs and willingness into understandable utterances and their disabilities to understand another people's utterances. This powerlessness will quickly reduce at the beginning years of their life, when they can control nerves required for some mechanisms of communication.

The speech mastery is also required to fulfill another important needs in child's life, that is a need to

be a member of social group, although it is possible that they can communicate with some members of social group in another ways. Before they are able to get along with the members of group, their role in the group will not be dominant.

It's like in another child's development cases, the beginning years of child's life will really determine the development of his/her speech skill. Due to this fact, it is very important to strengthen the basic skill of child's speech development in this period. If not, the child will make some grammatical mistakes repeatedly and unconsciously when he/she grows up, because language is regarded as a matter of habit which is highly affected by what he gets, knows, feels, and hears at the beginning of his/her life.

2. The Definition of Speech Related to Language

Most people think that the definition of speech and language is interchangeable, although they are

actually different. *Language* covers all communication means by symbolizing thought and feeling to convey ideas to another people, involving differences of art. *Speech* on the other hand is a form of language using articulation or words used to convey ideas. Due to the effectiveness in communication, speech is regarded as the most essential skill should people have when they will take part in the process of communication. Speech is a mental motoric skill. Speech doesn't only include the coordination of some different sounds mechanism nerves, but also has a mental aspect, that is an ability to relate the meaning with the sounds produced. It doesn't mean that all speech sounds a child produces are regarded as a *speech*. Before a child can organize nerves mechanism to yield a clear, different, and controlled speech sound, the speech sound is regarded as an articulatory sound solely. Thus, before a child can relate the meaning with the controlled speech sound, it doesn't matter for him/her, because the child can remain do the communication process, although it's only "imitating", it is due to lack of mental aspect from their intended purpose.

There are two criteria which can be used to decide whether a child speaks well or just imitates. *First*, the child must know the meaning of words that he/she uses and connects to the represented object, e.g: the word ball must refer to a circle thing, not a kind of toy in general. *Second*, the child must pronounce clearly the words he/she is going to say, in order to make the ideas clear and understandable. Words that can only be understood by a child because he/she often hears the words or has already understood and supposed what someone is saying do not fulfill this criterion. No wonder if the prominent difference of the child's vocabulary mastery emerge because these criteria are not implemented in this case.

3. General Characteristics of Young Learners

Children, who are supposed to be young learners of the foreign language, have unique and specific characteristics which are different from adult learners in several extents, such as:

a. Young learners tend to be egocentric

Generally there is a tendency that young learners like to relate what they are studying or what they are doing with him/herself. They like to discuss the topics which are related to their daily life or several objects around them, such as my family, my hobby, my favorite things, etc. In the older ages, this kind of characteristic will gradually disappear and become reciprocal by starting to confess and get along with other people.

b. Young learners still have problems to differentiate between concrete and abstract nouns. Young learner teacher should introduce the language with concrete nouns before introducing the abstract nouns. It is advisable for the teacher to present the materials through pictures, games, gesture or even body moving.

c. Young learners tend to be active and imaginative.

Playing is part of young learners' life. They like materials which are presented through games, songs, stories and pictures. This kind of teaching technique can unconsciously generate and motivate the learners to take part actively in the teaching and learning process. This kind of activity is well known as recreational time out activities.

d. Young learners tend to get bored easily

They have superficial attention and concentration on something. To avoid this problem the teacher must be capable to select the various kinds of techniques in terms of activities, grouping students, materials and variety of

voice to catch the students' attention.

- e. Young learners' life is full of color and joy

A set of activities which is supplemented with interesting and colorful pictures, flash cards and puppets will generate their enthusiasm to the materials which are being discussed.

4. How Children Learn Speech?

Speech is a kind of skill, and it is like another kind of skills which should be trained repeatedly and continuously. It comprises, *first*, the ability to produce certain sounds which are organized into a word, it is called *speech motoric aspect*. *Second*, the ability to connect meaning with the words, it is called *speech mental aspect*. The followings will make a clearer description about the ways of how children learn speech:

- a. The methods of speech learning

Speech learning is like other kinds of skill which can be learned through various methods, like as follows:

1) Trial and error method

This method is usually used when a child can not find a suitable guidance and models of speech to be imitated, so he/she tends to do different thing randomly. This method usually yields skills under his/her real skills.

2) Imitating method

It is a kind of learning speech by imitating and observing a model of speech (the style of adult people's speech). It tends to be more effective than the trial and error method.

3) Training method

It is a kind of learning speech by having guidance and supervision from a skillful language instructor. It is intended to minimize sum of mistakes a child makes immediately.

Based on the description above, it is known that learning speech by training method is regarded as the most effective way. In training method, a child does not only get a model to be imitated, but also get guidance and help to use the model accurately. Furthermore, the instructor will immediately show the mistakes and help to correct the mistakes he/she makes before the mistakes are implanted into his/her habitual speech.

- b. Models of speech learning

The models of child's speech learning are generally similar, but different in progress of achievement. Based on several developmental study of motoric control and speech, it is stated that the model of speech development is in accordance with motoric developmental model, and also mental developmental model. The reason is because speech depends on mental and motoric development.

In the speech development, the model is a motivation followed by a flat period (*plateaus*), that is a period where there is no concrete improvement in the child. E.g. a child in the age of 9 to 18 months, the motivation to walk tends to be more dominant than to speak. After he/she can walk automatically, speech learning will get his/her attention. In this period, the child can learn speech his/her mother tongue language effectively through adult speakers. A child in the age between 18 months to 7 or 8 years, he/she is able to speak the mother tongue language well. In the years after, he/she has strong willingness to study new sets of language through skillful language instructors.

Apart from the fact that a child learns speech in a predictable model, there is an individual difference in the progress of the model. The difference lies on the standard of the vocabulary quality, the accurateness of

pronunciation, and the grammar and structure rules.

5. The Coverage of Speech Learning

There is a learning process done by a child in attempting to establish speech in relation to the need to get along with another people. The sequence of speech learning process covers pronunciation, vocabulary enrichment, and sentence arrangement.

a. Pronunciation

The first thing a child does in speech learning is trying to pronounce speech sounds. It is learnt by imitating what adult people who get along with speak. The whole pronunciation pattern of the child will quickly change if the child is occupied in an environment where people who live with use different and various words. Most of people argue that early childhood is the most effective period to start learning speech a foreign language. If a child learns and is able to articulate good pronunciation, he/she will feel proud of it, as a result, he/she will be motivated to learn to speak the target language correctly. Conversely, if a child learns a foreign language later, he/she will tend to speak it in the style of his/her mother tongue language.

b. Vocabulary enrichment

In this step, a child must learn to connect the meaning and sound, because there are a lot of words pronounced similarly but different in meaning. E.g. rain, reign, rein, etc. Before a child has sufficient number of words to communicate, he/she tends to use some related symbols or gesture as a substitute word.

In developing words, a child learns two kinds of words, they are *general words* and *specific words*. General words comprises words which can be used in some circumstances, such as human, good, go, etc. Specific word comprises words which

have specific meaning and can only be used in certain circumstances.

c. Sentence arrangement

It is regarded as the most difficult and complex step of all. It covers the combining words into meaningful sentence which is structurally and grammatically correct and understandable. *Firstly*, a child uses a single word, it can be noun, verb or adjective, then combine it with another words by using gesture or another symbols to state a complete idea. E.g. saying word "give" by pointing a toy, it means "give me the toy, please".

6. General Handicaps of Speech Learning In Childhood

In learning speech, the following handicaps may emerge:

a. Lipping

Lipping is substituting sounds with another similar sounds due to the speech organ deficiencies, E.g / / for / s / like in "thimple thing" for "simple sing", / l / for / r /, like in "led lose" for "red rose". Lipping is usually caused by the problems in jaws, teeth, or lips and sometimes it is caused by the influence of the babyish speech style.

b. Slurring

Slurring is a speech style which is uttered unclearly, due to the function of some speech organs such as lips, tongue, and jaws do not work well. It is sometimes caused by the paralysis of speech organ or the nerve of the tongue does not develop well. If there is an emotional explosion, or great happiness, a child will tend to speak very fast and in a hurry unclearly. Slurring often happens in pre-school period, before speech becomes a set of habit.

c. Stuttering

Stuttering is a speech style with hesitation, repetition, followed with the cramp of throat and diaphragm. Stuttering can

also be caused by a problem in the respiratory system, which partly or thoroughly is caused by the lack of coordination work of speech nerve. It is like the condition of someone who is in a quite fear, and lost idea about what to do. It is usually followed with trembling, stopping speech, and gradually the speaker can not produce sounds at all. It will reduce gradually when he/she can make social adaptation to the environment.

d. Cluttering

Cluttering is a fast and confusing speech style. It usually happens in a child whose motoric control and speech development is slow. Cluttering is an exaggerating speech mistakes done by normal people. It is not like stuttering, cluttering can be improved if she/he gives a good attention to the things she/he is going to say.

7. Conclusion

Communication is an exchange process of thought and feeling which is represented in some kinds or forms of language, such as, written language, gesture, symbols,

and emotional expression. Communication actually starts when a child is born, but speech as the most common form of communication starts from early childhood. This form of communication will rapidly develop when a child grows up and feels as a part of social life and needs to get along with another people.

Early childhood is regarded as the most effective period for a child to establish language, because in this period, a child does not have a permanent and strong pattern of language yet. By implanting a good language as a set of habit in this period, the child can involve well and actively in a communication process. In the process of speech learning, due to the children's unique and specific characteristics, skillful language instructor, integrated materials and sequential teaching technique must be organized in such a way to optimize their foreign language proficiency. However, there are also several inevitable handicaps that generally emerge in the process; such as: lispng, slurring, stuttering, cluttering and some other speech organ deficiencies.

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