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ESTABLISHING "GOOD MORNING PROGRAM" TO PROMOTE ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

Bambang Harmanto,¹

Abstract: The teaching English to young children has become important in Indonesia in recent years. It means that the role and importance of English has got serious attention. Parents and educational leaders see early English education as a necessary prerequisite for children's later success. The underlying assumption is that learners will be more successful if they begin studying English at early age. As a result, nowadays there are many teachers find themselves teaching in primary school even though they have no English background or been trained for this level. Most of the English graduates are only well equipped to teach junior or senior high schools. Therefore, when they have to teach them, the challenge is how to create the quality of teaching and learning programs that match to the needs for young learners. One of the hardest things about working with young learners is that often they are pre-literate. When you are working with them, you can't just write letters and words on the board and expect them to be able to read what you have written. However, they can orally learn a large amount of language before they learn to read and write.

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INTRODUCTION

The teaching English to young children has become important in Indonesia in recent years. It is clearly reflected when the English language curriculum was carried out in the primary grades as well. It means that the role and importance of English has got serious attention. Parents and educational leaders see early English education as a necessary prerequisite for children's later success. The underlying assumption is that learners will be more successful if they begin studying English at early age. Even though, according to Nunan (1999), there is no evidence supporting the idea that an early start in English language learning in foreign language context produces better English.

Consequently, nowadays there are many teachers find themselves teaching in primary school even though they have no

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English background or been trained for this level. Most of the English graduates are only well equipped to teach junior or senior high schools. Therefore, when they have to teach them, they often find some difficulties either in the material development or the implementation of effective way of teaching. They always meet the challenge on how to create the quality of teaching and learning programs that match to the needs for young learners. Finally, their teaching technique is done as they ever got from the former teachers. Most of the teaching strategies done were exposed in words memorization, grammar stressing, and writing assignments. One important part of language development is to make learning experience through speaking practice or oral communication. However, they seldom provide an opportunity to practice the language learned. Many teachers forget the importance of developing students' self-esteem and self confidence as a language learners and language users. Hence, the output of course will be unsatisfied.

As we know, one of the hardest things about working with young learners is that often they are pre-literate. When you are working with them, you can't just write letters and words on the board and expect them to be able to read what you have written. However, they can orally learn a large amount of language before they learn to read and write. This is the order in which we learn our first language (Krashen, 1981). In addition, for children the 'here and now' is the most important language needs to be associated with the senses in order to be meaningful. Young learners function well within a structured environment and enjoy repetition of certain routines and activities.

Since the teachers usually have limited amount of time with the students in the classroom situation, there should be available specific time that give them the maximum exposure to English language outside the classroom. Therefore, the writer has an idea to implement new model called "**Good morning program**" for all

students of Integrated Muhammadiyah Elementary School at Ponorogo. This gives them plenty of practice using the language learned and helps them scaffold their learning of new language.

THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

Integrated Muhammadiyah Elementary School (SDMT) is an interesting and strategic position in Ponorogo because it has a well-established elementary school which ensures learners to have a bilingual proficiency in Arabic and English. From the first years they are introduced to the aural/oral Arabic language as well as English. It was inspired from the successfulness of the language teaching model applied in Modern Islamic Boarding School "Darussalam Gontor" Ponorogo which set up an English atmosphere outside the classroom. They put up English labels for rooms and objects throughout the building. From this creation, students will be stimulated to learn English and Arabic more often and natural. The principle is more word they hear, the more words they learn because repetition is very important for language learning.

There are many things can be adapted from the implementation of English learning in Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School at Ponorogo either in the way to cultivate vocabulary development or create English atmosphere. Here, SDMT has also decided to create some breakthroughs. Some of them are 1) English week (the first and third week) during one week students are enforced to use their English for any activities; 2) Monday's flag ceremony using English (once in a month). All agendas of ceremony are delivered in English; 3) English labeling for class rooms and offices; 4) schedule-shifting for any activities broadcasting; and 4) Good morning program. Each student is greeted by all teachers in English every morning. These activities are expected gradually to help students develop their skills and proficiency required to emerge a successful English language for young learners.

Further, school has designed the curriculum of English education in own version which is possible for enriching the students' vocabulary. English is not viewed as merely a local content, but a main subject. The English instruction is given to the students twice a week for each grade. Various books are used to support the teaching process. However, the English teachers are required to make students' worksheet.

GOOD MORNING PROGRAM

English education in some parts of Indonesia is typically passive, formal and teacher-centered. A teacher teaches and writes on the blackboard, while the students simply copy information into their notebooks and memorize. As a result, students feel reluctant, tired, bored in accepting material. Even though many techniques have been tried out, they always think that English is an uninteresting lesson to learn. This is reasonable because students seldom get a chance to practice in real life. To handle this problem, therefore, the school official felt that it is important to create a program that would keep children motivated to learn. Finally, it has been decided to establish English continue daily habits and routine in the forms of **Good morning Program**. This might seem quite ordinary in some parts of the worlds, but it is rare to be found in some elementary schools in Indonesia.

It is less formal than a regular course at the primary school level. The emphasis of good morning program is on exposure to the English language rather than the development a strict set of English language skills. The type of activity found in **Good morning program** is like a question and answer technique. It is done every morning when the students enter the schools. So, it is done outside the classroom. All teachers are standing in line welcoming students passing them with simple English questions. The questions given to the students are limited on the most basic linguistic function such as

personal information and daily tasks. Everyone will receive maximum two questions because of the numbers of students. Hopefully, this way is able to help student begin speaking in longer phrases by having them prepare a talk on their daily activities that can.

THE GOAL OF THE PROGRAM

This model is designed to provide primary school age learners with positive initial exposure to the English language before they begin the formal English class. In addition, it also helps children develop a positive attitude towards the English language and to be sensitized to the sound system of the language. Another aim of the program has been to help children develop pronunciation skills in English. As mentioned above, one of the real advantages to having children start learning English at an early age is that they are better equipped to develop English language pronunciation (Birdsong 1999 in Afia, 2006). In addition, this program is designed to help learners become accustomed to the language, so that when they begin formal instruction in the middle school, they are ready. Through good morning program, learners develop an awareness of the language program of the English language sound system, speaking skills, and basic question and answer. This awareness is designed to facilitate the acquisition of English language skills when learners begin formal instruction. By providing children with exposure to foreign language conversation in an enjoyable manner, the motivation and attitude for children to communicate positively is fostered.

THE MATERIAL USED IN THE PROGRAM

When children start learning English, they obviously need to be given language before they can produce it themselves. At this initial stage the activities will be under the control of the teacher. Once

the teacher given the model by asking some question, the students can provide all sort of answers.

Based on that idea, the English teachers in SDMT have to develop their own materials for question and answer that are in keeping with the needs and the goal. As stated above that the scope of questions in good morning program related to the personal information and daily tasks. These questions are ideal for beginning English classes and learners because each question has an appropriate answer or responses. (See appendix 1).

To construct the questions form, many resources and books were collected. There are some considerations to develop questions such as using simple language, easy to understand, and appropriate for children's world. Afterward, those materials are written in the form of handbook distributed to all teachers and trained to the students in the classroom.

TRAINING NON-ENGLISH TEACHERS

The Good morning program has become the responsibility for all teachers in SDMT. Even though they are not English teachers, they have to welcome the students with English language. Of course, at first they will feel difficult and sticky. Therefore, school facilitates non-English teachers to receive English language improvement class as well as training at using English outside the classroom in every Saturday. They are encouraged to be active speakers and questioners. Therefore, the methodology was set up by plenty of practice among the teachers based on the guideline written in the handbook.

PROGRESS REPORT

To see the effectiveness of the program, all teachers made a note taking during its implementation. They have to sign and analyze

the students who get difficulties in understanding the questions or failing to answer the questions. The reports are given directly after the program finished. The reports are important for the English teachers to revise the question forms or recourse the students' problem.

CONCLUSION

The **Good morning program** for young learners has been extremely success for several reasons. First of all, it was developed based on local needs and condition. Second, realistic goals were formulated that could be met with available resources. Based on the conditions and resources in SDMT the goal of young learner is to motivate to like English and to help children develop a positive attitude towards the English language. The best way to achieve the goal was by establishing Good morning program. Third, the program was not developed and implemented under pressure.

Good morning program is an alternative to the traditional classes that focus on the teacher-centre. There is obviously a lot more learning to be done, students can feel confident that they have strong base on which to build in the future

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APPENDIX:

BASIC QUESTIONS

Topics	Questions	Responses
Personal Information	What's your name?	Ahmad Zulfikar Umar
	Where are you from? / Where do you come from?	I'm from ...Ponorogo I come from ... Ponorogo
	What's your surname / family name?	Umar
	What's your first name?	Ahmad
	What's your address?	Jl. Raden Katong 21 Ponorogo
	Where do you live?	I live in Singosari.
	What's your (tele)phone number?	0352-7119347
	How old are you?	Twelve. I'm Twelve years old
	Who is your father/mother?	Yusuf / Zulaikah

Topics	Questions	Responses
Personal Information	What's your name?	Ahmad Zulfikar Umar
	Where are you from? / Where do you come from?	I'm from ...Ponorogo I come from ... Ponorogo
	What's your surname / family name?	Umar
	What's your first name?	Ahmad
	What's your address?	Jl. Raden Katong 21 Ponorogo
	Where do you live?	I live in Singosari.
	What's your (tele)phone number?	0352-7119347
	How old are you?	Twelve. I'm Twelve years old
	Who is your father/mother? When / Where were you born?	Yusuf / Zulaikah I was born in 1991 / Babadan
	What do you do? / What's your job?	I'm a student
	Where will you go?	I will go to the class
	What will you do?	I want to study
	Where were you yesterday?	I was in Alon-aloon.
	Have you got an English lesson.?	Yes, I've already got one
	Can you speak English / Arabic.?	Yes, I can speak English.

Topics	Questions	Responses
Introducing Yourself / Saying Hello	Can you play tennis / volleyball / football / etc.?	Yes, I can play volleyball.
	How do you do? How are you?	How do you do. Pleased to meet you. Fine, thanks. And you?
Prices	How much does it cost? / How much is it?	It's Rp. 45.000,-
Asking Something Specific	What's that?	It's a cat
	What time is it?	It's nine o'clock.
	Can / May I open the window/door?	Certainly. It's hot here!
	What is the nearest market from here?	The nearest market is Songgolangit market
book.	Who brings that bicycle?	Bagus
	Is there any homework	Yes, there's a lot of homework
	Is this your book / ball / house / etc.?	No, I think it's his
Questions with 'Like'	Whose is this / that?	It's Eko's.
	What do you like?	I like playing football, and listening to music.

Topics	Questions	Responses
Suggestions	What are you going to do tomorrow / this evening / next week / etc.?	I'm going to visit some friends next weekend.
	What shall we do this evening? Why don't we go out / play tennis / visit friends / etc. this evening?	Let's go see a film. Yes, that sounds like a good idea.