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TEACHING ENGLISH TO VERY YOUNG LEARNERS IN KINDERGARTENS IN MYANMAR

Ei Thet Hmoo Po & Rismareni Pransiska
Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia
eithethmoopo8@gmail.com ; pransiskaunp@fip.unp.ac.id

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the Implementation of Teaching English To Very Young Learners in kindergartens in Myanmar. The subjects of this study are the early childhood education teachers from Myanmar. The research problem is going to investigate is the practice of teaching in Myanmar particularly on the methods of teaching tend to implement in Yangon city Myanmar. Data is obtained through questionnaires. The Research findings on teachers' involvement are first briefly reviewed, and then the analyses using the data are discussed to identify the trend and practice of teaching English in Kindergarten. It can be concluded that the planning, methods, the analysis used in this paper are in accordance with the references.

Keywords: English, Teachers, Early Childhood Education

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is the critical period for human being. According to Hensch TK (2005), explained that early years is the period for children to acquire a language such as mother tongue and the period to learn and acquire English as international language.

The early childhood years shall be developed by the following significant areas of ECD (early childhood development) (Callie Malvik, 2020). According to Callie Malvik, early childhood learning abilities are divided into four fundamental areas which are Social

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and Emotional, Language Development, Physical Development, and Cognitive Development.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) according to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar describes that they will make sure that all children from age 0 to 7 years including their parents will have absolute access and participation in standardized quality, cultural-oriented, comprehensive and linguistic-adequate, and cost-efficient Early Childhood Care Development (ECCD) services (UNICEF, 2007). Children and families of Myanmar nation who are vulnerable will be granted priority with the assistance of UNICEF.

According to President of Myanmar. (30 March 2011), Myanmar is committed to meeting the gender and disability provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as well as the Convention's General Comment 7 regarding Early Childhood. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is a treaty that protects the rights of people with (CRPD).

In accordance with my opinion, I think that the reason why teaching English to very young learners in kindergarten is important is because English is a key to profession. The English language is comprehensive and learning English within the short timeframe is impossible through methods like imitation and personation.

That is why by learning English language, children can improve their cognitive development. By learning English, children can learn the English language from the environmental surroundings and possess the capability to change the language if the environment changes.

According to my opinion, I think that the main important thing for young learners to learn English language, is to obtain the basic skills of English language, so that they can implement their English skills in various academic fields. The important aspect of English teaching to early childhood learners is creating an enjoyable and creative learning atmosphere.

METHODS

This research adapted a quantitative method that targeted to investigate and perform interpretation in the teachers' experiences in teaching English to very Young

Learners in kindergarten class at Myanmar. The created research question is "How are teachers involved in teaching English to very Young Learners in Myanmar?".

According to Rossman and Rallis (1998), a quantitative research 1) should be performed in a natural setting; 2) utilizes several methods which are interactional and human-centered; 3) is emergent instead of considering; 4) is basically interpretative; 5) puts the researcher to visualize the societal phenomenon in a holistic manner; 6) motivates the researcher in a systematic way to manifest on who he/she is in the enquiry and has the sensitivity of his/her biography and how it forms the research study; 7) motivates the researcher to utilize composite logical thinking which is many-sided, sequential and concurrent; 8) invigorates the researcher adapt and utilize more than one strategies of enquiry as a guide for the processes in this quantitative research study.

The crucial data applied in this research study were the information of the participant acquired from the survey questionnaires. Thus, I required to inspect the information attentively because they were the center of interpretation study. The interrelated of the fundamental aim and meaning of the teaching experiences catered a center meaning and union which empowers one to understand the material and effect of the experience.

Therefore, the researcher requires to make a decision of how and in what form will his/her confidential apprehensions be presented to the research study. Thus, I cooperated with the participant to obtain the necessary subjects of the research study.

The data collection was accomplished in a natural setting which I did not hinder any class activities. Moreover, the survey questionnaires will be handed to the respective 30 teachers from Yangon, Myanmar. The questionnaires were in the Google form format in order for the teachers to answer proactively and effectively.

In the course of this research, I concentrate on teachers from Yangon, Myanmar; who have most experience in teaching English to very Young Learners. Creswell (2007, 119) proposes that within a conceptualization study, a researcher requires to search more than one individual to investigate. The individuals involved all the circumstances being analyzed and can state their teaching experiences.

RESULTS

The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed in order to answer the research questions. The data was divided into three categories. There are Teacher's Educational Background, Skills and Talent, Fun Teaching Methods (Children's preferences on Teacher's English Teaching), Teachers' Strengths and Weaknesses. For Teacher's Educational Background, Skills and Talent category, there are 10 questions.

There are 10 questions for, Fun Teaching Methods (Children's preferences on Teacher's English Teaching) category, for Teachers' Strengths and Weaknesses category, there are 5 questions. Thus, there are 25 questions in the questionnaires. The questionnaires consist of 4 scale statement; there are SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree) and SD (Strongly Disagree).

The four scales in the questionnaires will be given score. The scale which shows the positive opinion or perspective from the sample will be given score 4 (the highest score), the scale which shows the negative opinion or perspective from the sample will be given score 1 (the lowest one). Consequently, the score between the first and the fourth scale will be scored 2 and 3. The mean for each item was calculated using the method X= total score/participant.

Table- 1. The results of teachers' responses for teaching English in different sections

No.	Indicators	Mean score	Percentage	Category
1.	Teacher's Educational Background, Skills and Talent	2.93	73.2%	High
2.	Fun Teaching Methods (Children's preferences on Teacher's English Teaching)	3.14	78.5%	High
3.	Teachers' Strengths and Weaknessess	3.12	78%	High
Mean Score		3.06	76.5%	High

Table from the above showed the percentage and mean score of teachers' responses for teaching English in different sections. The mean score describe that teachers agree with the statement of the category. From the data, it can be concluded that the statement of Teacher's Educational Background, Skills and Talent got 2.93 mean score and 73.2% in this section. The category is high. Thus it got the lowest percentage and mean score among three sections.

The statement of Fun Teaching Methods (Children's preferences on Teacher's English Teaching) got 3.14 mean score and 78.5% in this section. The category is high and it got the highest mean score and percentage among three sections. The last statement of Teachers' Strengths and Weaknesses got 3.12 mean score and 78% in the section. The category is high.

DISCUSSION

Based on the result of the data analysis, it shows that teachers' ability in teaching English to very young learners in kindergarten in Myanmar was high category. It was indicated that the highest percentage was (76.5%) in high category. Moreover, the mean score of teachers' ability in teaching English to very young learners in kindergartens in Myanmar also showed that it was 3.06 (high).

The results of this research has different finding because according to Thein, M.M, (2020), the teachers in Myanmar do not use appropriate teaching material and they do not have proper teacher training in order to teach more effectively. While in this research, it is found that the teachers in Myanmar use appropriate teaching material and they have good teaching training to teach more effectively.

In my opinion, Teaching English to children in Myanmar involves several trends and practices that aim to enhance language acquisition and communication skills. Effective English instruction for kindergarten students requires trained and skilled educators. Teacher training programs focus on early childhood language development and effective teaching strategies. Teaching English in many countries, including Myanmar, has been shifting towards a more communicative approach. This means that teachers are emphasizing practical language use and real-life communication skills over rote memorization of vocabulary and grammar rules.

This trend encourages students to actively engage in conversations and express themselves in English. Teachers' understanding of effective teaching methods is likely to evolve through continuous professional development. Workshops, training sessions, and collaboration with other educators can help teachers stay updated on the latest teaching techniques and trends. Visual aids, pictures, videos, and multimedia resources are commonly used to enhance language learning.

These materials help young learners understand and remember new words and concepts by associating them with visual cues. Teaching English in many countries, including Myanmar, has been shifting towards a more communicative approach. This means that teachers are emphasizing practical language use and real-life communication skills over rote memorization of vocabulary and grammar rules. This trend encourages students to actively engage in conversations and express themselves in English.

CONCLUSION

The goal of the research is to find out what are the teaching trends and practice of English for children in Myanmar and how are teachers involved in teaching English to Kindergarten students in Myanmar. Based on this research which was conducted in Yangon, Myanmar, some conclusions can be made from the finding in the previous chapter. Most of the teachers have positive responses towards teaching English to very young learners. Teachers' perception toward the three sections related to Teacher's Educational Background, Skills and Talent, Fun Teaching Methods (Children's preferences on Teacher's English Teaching) and Teachers' Strengths and Weaknesses; in high category.

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