

STRATEGIES OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR THE FIRST-GRADE STUDENTS BY PEACE AND HAPPINESS FOUNDATION

Laksana Tri Prasetya¹⁾
Arabic Education Study Program
STAI Darul Ulum Kandangan
Kandangan, Indonesia
praszestful@gmail.com

Abstract

Teaching English for elementary school will be obligated in Indonesia based on the decree of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of Republic of Indonesia Number 12-year 2024. However, many teachers of elementary schools in Indonesia do not have many experiences in teaching English. Therefore, the easiest way to help the teachers is by providing the models of teaching English that can be the teachers' sources in learning how to teach English for the elementary students. Nowadays, many models of teaching are available in the YouTube. One of teaching models is presented by Peace and Happiness Foundation channel. This model of teaching is appropriate for early stage of students in learning English because the contents are very basic and easy and the strategies of the teacher in delivering the contents in a good manner. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the teacher's strategies in teaching English for the first-grade students by Peace and Happiness Foundation. The study uses qualitative content analysis. The result shows that the teacher's strategies in teaching English are using English as a medium of communication, slowing down with clear pronunciation, and always giving good feedback for the students. In the first, the teacher and the students do meditations, doing physical warming up, and singing a song and continued with the learning the material. This study suggests that the English teachers should be a good model for their students in learning English.

Keywords – elementary school, strategies, teaching English

Introduction

Teaching English for young learners in the elementary school will be implemented in the schools in Indonesia at least at year 2027 based on the decree of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2024. It is stated at transitional provisions of the decree No. 33 that English subject at elementary school, Islamic elementary school, or the others will be obligated as a compulsory subject at academic year 2027/2028. This transitional provision of English as local content and as an optional subject becoming a compulsory subject in every elementary school in Indonesia will encourage the students to use English in early age. There is a belief that learning in the early age is like carving in a stone that means learning in the early age will shape the students' minds, behaviors, and language acquisition. In the previous regulation in ministerial decree No. 22

year 2006 stated that it might provide English subject as a local content to elementary schools, teaching English for students of elementary schools only happens on the international and some urban schools in Indonesia because English subject is an optional for the school or not an obligatory to be implemented and also this subject is started as a compulsory subject in the junior high schools (Lestari et al., 2019). This regulation has opportunities and challenges for English teachers in Indonesia. The opportunities are such as there will be the higher demand on working as English teachers in elementary schools and the most important thing is that the English teachers can prepare the golden generation for the future students that can contribute globally without language barrier as a lingua franca (Costa & Rose, 2024). However, this obligation also has challenges for the English teachers in the elementary school level

July 6, 2024

such as challenges at the instructional level as like lack of teaching English experience, limited mastery of teaching methods and techniques, at the professional development level as like the qualification of the teachers, and at addressing the students' need such as deciding the materials, and handling the children (Prihatin et al., 2021 and Imran et al., 2024).

English language education for young learners in elementary school has become increasingly important in the global context. In other countries such as in Pakistan, in public schools since 2010, English is taught as compulsory subject from elementary school to university (Imran et al., 2024). First-grade students, typically aged 6-7, are at a critical stage for language acquisition. Recent research highlights the need for age-appropriate and engaging teaching strategies to effectively introduce English to students in early-age especially in the first grade of elementary school. Studies show that early exposure to a second language can enhance cognitive development and cultural awareness (Ali, 2023). However, teaching English to first-graders presents unique challenges, as these young learners are still developing literacy skills in their native language.

Current trends in English language teaching for young learners emphasize play-based learning (Suwastini et al., 2022), storytelling (Ginting et al., 2023), multimodal learning (Zeng, 2023) and using digital technologies (Haleem et al., 2022). These strategies align with children's natural learning processes and can foster positive attitudes towards language learning.

Digital technologies are also increasingly integrated into early English education, offering new opportunities to stimulate students' critical thinking (Merta et al., 2023). Lesia et al. (2021) stated that video-based instruction is the most suitable way for the student's events because it contains the students' character development.

However, the effectiveness of these tools depends on their appropriate implementation and the teacher's ability to blend them with traditional methods. The shortcut to help the teachers gaining this ability is by imitating the other teachers in teaching English in the elementary school. One of the good models of teaching English in elementary schools is by peace and happiness foundation channel in YouTube. The teachers of English in this channel showing how to teach English in the first grade of elementary school. Peace and happiness foundation is a non-profit organization, set up to provide free international standard bi-lingual education for the poor and underprivileged children of Thailand. This channel covering teaching students in the first and second grades with the subjects such as English, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences, and Health Education. These subjects are taught by experienced international teachers.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to investigate and explore the strategies for teaching English to first-grade students by the English teacher of the peace and happiness foundation channel. This study will contribute to the teachers who want to teach English in the first grade of elementary school.

Methodology

This study uses qualitative design by using content analysis and thematic analysis. The content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences for the texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use (Krippendorff, 2004) and thematic analysis is a method in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study aims to investigate and explores the strategies for teaching English by the English teacher of peace and happiness foundation channel on YouTube. It can be seen as in the Picture 1.

July 6, 2024



Picture 1. Peace and Happiness Foundation channel

The object of this study is the strategies used by the teacher and the subject of this study is English teacher at peace and happiness foundation channel. The data collection procedures are watching the channel, taking notes, and analyzing the channel by using content analysis and thematic analysis. The content analysis method involves systematically analyzing content of the channel of peace and happiness foundation by categorizing and coding it and then doing thematic analysis such as familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

Finding and Discussion

Based on the analysis using content analysis and thematic analysis on Peace and Happiness Foundation channel, the finding and discussion are presented as the following:

Selecting Topic

The first finding shows that the teacher selects the appropriate topics to the students' level. This channel has many contents especially for teaching English to the first-grade students. This channel has 96 English lessons by peace and happiness foundation channel and the duration of each of the videos is approximately at the range of 27 minutes 14 seconds to 57 minutes 27 seconds. This content has been uploaded since 2016 with the views more than 2,895,878 people from around the world. The topics are presented in the table 1.

Table 1. Topics of English Lesson

No	Lesson	Topic
1	1-6	Introductions & the Alphabets; Alphabets and Phonetics; My Name is; Colors; Colors Part 2; Greetings
2	7	Review
3	8-13	B & P Phonetics; How are you; Family Members; Magic Words; Opposites; Days of the Week
4	14	Review
5	15-24	How old are you; Describing People; All about Me! - Describing Ourselves; F & V Phonetics; Clothing Introduction; Clothing Part 2; This and That; This and That; This and That Part 2
6	25	Review
7	26-35	D & T Phonetics; Pets; Pets Part 2; Pets Part 2; Farm Animals; Farm Animals Part 2; Zoo Animals; Zoo Animals Part 2; Sea Animals; Sea Animals Part 2
8	36	Animals Review
9	37-45	Animals Body Parts; Animal Body Parts-2; Animal Movements; C & G Phonetics; Bugs; Bugs Part 2; S & Z Phonetics; Vowel- A, E, I, O, U; Vowel Part 2
10	46	Speaking Review
11	47-48	Halloween! - What is it? Halloween Part 2
12	49	Review of Alphabets
13	50	Review of Phonetics
14	51	Review of Colors and Animals
15	52-75	Ordinals; Ordinal Numbers 2; Months of The Year; Months of the year Part 2; Ordering

July 6, 2024

		Months of the year; When is your Birthday; Seasons; Seasons 2; Thanksgiving; Weather; Weather 2; Weather 3; Morning Routines; Routines 2; Routines 3; Routines 4; Routines 5; Afternoon Routines; Christmas; Christmas Part 2; New Year; Afternoon Routines Part 2; Evening Routines; Evening Routines Part 2
16	76-77	Review Routines; Review Routines Part 2
17	78-94	Time Introduction; Time by the Hour; Time by the Hour Part 2; Time by the Hour Part 3; Time by the Minute; Time by the Minute Part 2; Time Practice; Time on the Hour- O'clock; Time Practice Part 2; Time Practice Part 3; AM vs PM; What time is it; What time is it Part 2; Time(s) of Our Routines; Times of My Routines; Introduction Practice
18	95-96	End of Year Review; and Review

The table. 1 shows that the teacher uses basic level of knowledge in English such as the alphabets, phonetics, colors, greetings, names of something and forth. It indicates that selecting the appropriate topics and relevant to the students' need could engage the students to learn English (Amalia & Albiansyah, 2023). However, in writing with higher level of English, the self-selected topic would be better for their writing performance (Bonyadi, 2014).

Greeting

For the opening of the lesson, the English teacher says greeting to the students such as "welcome back everyone, we're happy to have you join us again, can everyone say hello" or "welcome everyone we're happy to see you and can everyone say hello, good morning". This habit can build the good character for the students before

entering the materials. It is not just saying hello, hi, or others, it enacts relational value of belonging (Lysiak et al., 2020). This is as the first impression for the students that they are available and important in the eye of the teachers. Someone could be a good friend if he/she thinks that he/she is friendly by feeling that he/she takes care about him/her. One of the indicators that people are friendly is by greeting in a good way and based on the culture on where they belong.

Meditation

In this channel, after the greeting session, the teacher and the students always do meditation about 4 minutes before coming to the lesson. The teacher says "let's get started with meditation" then the teacher guides the students to do meditation by saying "everyone show me two fingers and use the to find our heart center" and then they put the fingers to point the heart in the center of chest and the other hand is open in their lap and then take a deep breath with the closed eyes. The teacher also tells the purpose of the meditation as said "we want to focus our energy". Then after doing a meditation, they open their eyes and take a deep breath three times. This meditation is to prepare the students' brain to be ready for accepting the lessons. Based on the studies, meditation can improve learning effectiveness and both attention and memory aspects of cognitive performance (Ching et al., 2015) and it is also lowering the students' anxiety (Rahman & Syafei, 2019).

Physical Warm Up

After the teacher and students doing a meditation, they do physical warming up as the teacher said "everyone is standing up with me and do some moving around". They do physical warming up as like stretching up, shaking the fingers out, spinning around, jumping, touching toes, and then taking a seat again. This physical warming up will help the students to

July 6, 2024

prepare physically, mentally and emotionally before learning new things (Gunawan et al., 2023). This is appropriate with the characteristic of young learners that they like doing physical activities than stay still and keep silence during the process of classroom (Iswandhary, 2021). The students like to do many activities than the adult learners. They tend to be more physical activities such as playing, running, jumping, hide-seeking. Therefore, if the students do the physical warming up before the lessons start, they will involve more in the classroom activities.

Singing

In the process of the teaching learning, the teacher in this channel usually uses various songs for children. In the first video on the YouTube, it can be found that the teacher with the students singing three times with different song and different time. The first song before entering the material by singing “good morning song”. The second song is in the middle of the teaching process, the song is “a little tea pot” and the last song in the ending of the teaching process is related with the lesson that is “ABC song”. After singing the song, the teacher gives an emphasis on the vocabulary on those songs. Therefore, it is not just singing but also learning new vocabularies and the pronunciation from the songs. Children song is easier for the students to get the comprehensible input. Using songs in the classroom will improve the young learners’ skill in gaining new words with the clear pronunciation and the class will be active and interesting (Fransisca & Syafei, 2016).

Giving Praises

In the whole process of teaching English, the teacher always give praises for the students’ works such as by saying “excellent”, “nice work”, “great job”, “great work”, “that’s perfect”, “that’s right”, “very nice”, “very good” and so on.

Praise is form of reward that can be verbal or written. It indicates that the teacher gives appreciation for each student’s work and this will motivate and encourage the students to learn new things (Asfah, 2023). The use of praises will also influence students’ positive engagement if the praises are given properly (Firdaus, 2015). The teacher’s praise is the teacher’s strategy to manage the students’ engagement in the learning process.

Intonation

The teacher speaks slow down when she emphasizes and highlight the important vocabularies and defines the new terms of the material such as when the teacher says “we’re going to talking about greeting”. The teacher emphasizes the word “greeting” in that sentence and when the teacher says “when we come together and when we go apart” as the meaning of greeting itself. This intonation also gives meaningful information for the listeners or students in English because the intonation will determine whether it is questioning about something or as statement from the speakers (Dash, 2022).

Taking a Brain Break in the Middle of Lesson

In the middle of the process of teaching learning English, the teacher gives a brain break for the learning activities. The teacher and students stand up and sing a song with the movement. This activity helps the students’ behavior and focus on the learning process and it will optimize the students’ cognitive knowledge both receptive and productive skill performance (Parra & Vega, 2023). Taking a brain break in the middle of a lesson is important for maintaining focus, improving memory retention, enhancing creativity, and managing stress levels. By allowing the students to take a rest and recharge their minds periodically, teachers can create more effective and engaging learning experience for their students.

July 6, 2024

Using Pictures

In this channel, the teacher always uses pictures for delivering the materials. If it is about the alphabet, then the teacher will show clear pictures of the alphabet from A to Z in the LED TV on right side of the classroom. If it is about animals, the teacher will display the pictures of animals. Photos or pictures can be media for displaying materials. The pictures keep the students' enthusiasm and attract the visual learners in learning English (Prasetya, 2023) and make the classroom activities more lively, interesting, and fruitful (Hussain & Khan, 2022). Pictures also help to enhance comprehension, retention, and engagement by appealing to different learning styles. Visual information is processed faster by the brain compared to the text, making it easier for the students to understand complex concepts quickly (Tuscher, 2022). At the end, the students' achievement (competence) in English can be improved (Khafidhoh & Carolina, 2019).

Modelling

In the process of teaching and learning, the teacher only uses English for explaining the materials. It starts from beginning until the last of learning process. The teacher is the model for their students. Modelling is a process of observing other behaviors throughout their activities (Rexhepi, 2021). The teacher always gives examples before the students such as when the teacher says "like this" or "let's draw together" or "write with us". The teacher gives an example of how to write a letter "ABC" in the whiteboard and shows how to make it. The teacher also gives an example how to pronounce vocabularies or phrases in English by saying "look at my mouth" or "repeat after me" or "I'll go first then repeat after me" or "listen first and then repeat". The teacher also gets the feedback from the students by asking "let

me hear you say". It indicates that the teacher employs the four skills of English in every section of teaching and learning. The teacher provides the inputs of learning English that can be imitated by the students and the teacher also gets the output from the students.

Using English

As stated in the previous explanation, the teacher always speaks in English all of the time although the students are from Thailand that is basically it is not the students' mother tongue. It cannot be denied that the teacher is the central attention for the children when they learn new language. The teacher is the students' role model for the students' life especially for English. However, there are some debates about using full English or using code-switching for the instructions in the classroom (Sampson, 2012). Using English exclusively is often seen as beneficial for maximizing exposure to the target language. This helps the students with the real world situations where they can grasp the meaning and understanding English by directly listening to the teacher. However, the lower level competent students in English can feel frustration because of their limitation for understanding the teacher's instructions. On the other hand, some argue that it is better to use code-switching because it can facilitate the students to more easily understand the material (Anggraini et al., 2023). It also helps in creating a more affective learning environment where the learners feel supported by the teacher (Ezeh et al., 2022). It can be concluded that these two approaches have the advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, the balance of using these approaches based on the learners' need can develop the students' proficiency in English.

Conclusions

The strategies of teaching English for the first grade students by the teacher on peace

July 6, 2024

and happiness foundation channel are selecting topics with the appropriate level of the students, greeting the students, doing meditation in every meeting, doing physical warming up before entering the materials, singing activity in the first, middle, and before the end of process of teaching learning, giving praises for each of the students' work in the classroom, using intonation in emphasizing and focusing the meaning of the words, having a brain break in the middle of teaching learning process, using pictures to engage the students, and modelling as the expert of English for their students. Therefore, these strategies used by the teacher can be considered and implemented by the future English teachers who want to teach in the elementary schools.

References

- Ali, A. M. (2023). The Effect of Bilingualism on Children Cognitive Development. *Alustath Journal*, 62(4), 387-404.
<https://doi.org/10.36473/ujhss.v62i4.2278>
- Amalia, F., & Albiansyah. (2023). A Need Analysis for Learning English to Young Learners. *Teaching & Learning English in Multicultural contexts*, 7(1), 22-29.
<http://jurnal.unsil.ac.id/index.php/tlemc/index>
- Asfah, I. (2023). Encouraging Students' Motivation with Praise in an EFL Classroom. *Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, 1(1), 100-107.
<https://humasjournal.my.id/index.php/HJ/index>
- Bonyadi, A. (2014). The Effect of Topic Selection on EFL Students' Writing Performance. *SAGE Open*, 4(3), 1-9.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014547176>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *UWE Bristol*, 2-41.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Ching, H.-H., Koo, M., Tsai, T.-H., & Chen, C.-Y. (2015). Effects of a Mindfulness Meditation Course on Learning and Cognitive Performance among University Students in Taiwan. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, 7, 1-7.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2015/254358>
- Costa, N. d., & Rose, H. (2024). The Impact of Global Englishes Classroom-based Innovation on school-aged language learners' perceptions of English: An Excercise in practitioner and reseracher partnership. *An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics system*, 121(103263), 1-13.
www.elsevier.com/locate/system
- Dash, B. B. (2022). The Significance of Intonation in Contemporary English: a Critical Analysis. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies (IJELR)*, 9(2), 144-157.
<https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.9.2.144>
- Ezeh, N. G., Umeh, I. A., & Anyanwu, E.C., (2022). Code Switching and Code Mixing in Teaching and Learning of English as a Second Language: Building on Knowledge. *English Language Teaching*, 15(9), 106-113.
<https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n9p106>
- Fransischa, A., & Syafei, A. F. (2016). Using Songs To Teach English To Young Learners. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 5(1), 251-258.
<http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/jelt>
- Ginting, D., Sabudu, D., Barella, Y., & Woods, R. (2023). The Place of Storytelling Research in English Language Teaching: The State of the Art. *Veles: Voices of English Language Education Society*, 7(2), 193-209.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.29408/veles.v7i2.12493>
- Gunawan, G., Humaid, H., Junaidi, Dlis, F., Hambali, S., Muslimin, & Fikri, A. (2023). The Effect of Warm-Up Activities in Game-Based Physical Education on Increasing Student Pulse. *International Journal of Human Movement and Sports*

July 6, 2024

Science, 11(3), 598-603.
<https://doi.org/10.13189/saj.2023.110312>

Haleem, A., Javaid, M., Qadri, M. A., & Suman, R. (2022). Understanding the role of digital technologies in education: A review. *Sustainable Operations and Computers*, 3, 275-285.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.susoc.2022.05.004>

Hussain, S., & Khan, H. K. (2022). The Role of Images in the Teaching and Learning of English: Practices, Issues, and Possibilities. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, 6(4), 338-348].
[http://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022\(6-IV\)31](http://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022(6-IV)31)
 Imran, M., Almusharraf, N., Abdellatif, M. S., & Ghaffar, A. (2024). Teachers' perspectives on effective English language teaching practices at the elementary level: A phenomenological study. *Heliyon*, 10(8), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e29175>

Iswandhary, P. E. (2021). Using Movement Activities in Engaging Young Learners. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Research And Review*, 4(3), 543-549.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.23887/ijerr.v4i3>

Khafidhoh & Carolina, A. (2019). Using Pictures for Teaching Vocabulary to the Junior High School Students. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, 2(1), 32-38.

Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. United Kingdom: Sage Publication.

Lesia, E. S., Petrus, I., & Eryansyah. (2021). Teaching English for Young Learners in Elementary School: Perceptions and Strategies. *International Journal of Elementary Education*, 6(1), 142-148.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.23887/ijee.v6i1>

Lestari, R. P., Asrori, M., & Sulistyawati, H. (2019). The English Teaching Strategies For Young Learners In An International Primary School In Surakarta. *English Education Journal*, 7(2), 151-163.

<https://jurnal.uns.ac.id/englishedu/article/view/35816>

Lysiak, L. K., Boyd, M. P., Iorio Jr, J. P., & Vasquez, C. R. (2020). Classroom Greetings: More than a Simple Hello. *IJLTR: Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 8(3), 41-56.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1271032.pdf>

Merta, L. W., Ratminingsih, N. M., & Budasi, I. G. (2023). The Integration of Technology in English Language Teaching to Stimulate Students' Critical Thinking. *Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature*, 17(2), 333-341.
<http://journal.unnes.ac.id/nju/index.php/lc>

Parra, N. O., & Vega, M. (2023). Effects of brain breaks on EFL students' writing skills at the tertiary level. *runas: Journal of Education and Culture*, 4(7), 1-28.
<http://doi.org/10.46652/runas.v4i7.102>

Prasetya, L. T. (2023). Students' strategies in learning English autonomy: Narrative Inquiry. *The Proceedings of the English Language Teaching, Literature, and Translation (ELTLT)*. 12, pp. 67-77. Semarang: UNNES.
<https://proceeding.unnes.ac.id/eltlt/article/view/2786>

Prihatin, Y., Ekawati, Y. N., Rosdiana, I., & Sakinatulhaq, A. (2021). Challenges in Teaching English to Young Learners in Southern Thailand (A Case Study of Indonesian Pre-Service Teachers' Perspective). *Psychology and Education*, 58(2), 6098-6107.
<https://doi.org/10.17762/pae.v58i2.3087>

Rahman, V., & Syafei, A. F. (2019). Using Guided Meditation for Lowering Senior High School Students' Anxiety to Speak English as a Foreign Language. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(3), 372-379.
<http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/jelt>

Sampson, A. (2012). Learner Code-Switching versus English only. *ELT Journal* 66(3), 293-303.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccr067>

Suwastini, N. K., Puspawati, N. W., Nitiasih, P. K., Adnyani, N. L., &

July 6, 2024

Rusnalasari, Z. D. (2022). Play-Based Learning For Creating Fun Language Classroom. *Lentera Pendidikan : Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*, 25(2), 250-270.

<https://doi.org/10.24252/lp.2022v25n2i6>

Zeng, Y. (2023). The Application of Multimodal Learning to Enhance Language

Proficiency in Oral English Teachin. *Adult and Higher Education*, 5(18), 34-38. https://www.clausiuspress.com/assets/default/article/2023/10/13/article_1697207065.pdf