

# Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif

DOI: 10.23960/jpp.v10.i2.202003

e-ISSN: 2550-1313 | p-ISSN: 2087-9849 http://jurnal.fkip.unila.ac.id/index.php/jpp/

# The Role of Parents towards Early Childhood in the Process of Learning English in the Global Era

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Received: 11 March 2020 Accepted: 01 July 2020 Published: 18 August 2020

Abstract: The Role of Parents towards Early Childhood In the Process of Learning English in the Global Era. Objective: This research aims to find out parents' perspectives about the importance of English learning and to know the involvement of parents in the process of learning English. Methods: Therefore, the Researcher provided two kinds of the procedure to collect data, namely 1) Questionnaire and 2) Interview as the quantitative and qualitative methods of this research. The sample consisted of 16 parents who have profession as the lecturer in Makassar Muhammadiyah University and Parepare Muhammadiyah University in Indonesia. Findings: this study showed that parents' have a very positive perspective on the importance of teaching English to young learners. They enthusiastically support their children in the process of learning English as a foreign language for them, even though they agreed that there are some challenges they can face in this process.

**Keywords:** parents role, early childhood, learning English.

Abstrak: Peran Orang Tua terhadap anak usia dini dalam proses pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di era global. Tujuan: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perspektif orang tua tentang pentingnya belajar bahasa Inggris dan untuk mengetahui keterlibatan orang tua dalam proses belajar bahasa Inggris. Metode: Oleh karena itu, Peneliti menyediakan dua jenis prosedur untuk mengumpulkan data, yaitu 1) Kuisioner dan 2) Wawancara sebagai metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif dari penelitian ini. Sampel terdiri dari 16 orang tua yang berprofesi sebagai dosen di Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar dan Universitas Parepare Muhammadiyah di Indonesia. Temuan: Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa orang tua memiliki perspektif yang sangat positif tentang pentingnya pengajaran bahasa Inggris kepada pembelajaran anak usia dini. Mereka dengan antusias mendukung anak-anak mereka dalam proses belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing bagi mereka, meskipun mereka sepakat bahwa ada beberapa tantangan yang dapat mereka hadapi dalam proses ini.

Kata kunci: peranan orang tua, anak usia dini, pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris.

#### To cite this article:

Latifa, A. (2020). The Role of Parents towards Early Childhood In the Process of Learning English in the Global Era. *Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif*, 10(1), 173-182.

## ■ INTRODUCTION

English is a foreign language for Indonesian people. It has been popular that English has become an international language, that is what makes learning English so important, moreover in this 21st Century along with the development of increasingly sophisticated technology, English become as a high demand to keep up with technology in our world today. Therefore it is very important to learn English as early as possible. Teaching English in the primary age is the best time; it is called teaching English for young learners.

Teaching English for young learners means introduce English as a foreign language to young learners 3- 10 years old (Mattsson & Norrby, 2013). In this age will be the right time to teach English, because the younger children are indeed more likely to develop native-like native English than adult learners (Mayr & Siddika, 2018). Children have amazing abilities to learn the language (Harrison & McTavish, 2018; O'Grady, 2005)

Parents are supporting factors Al-Fadley et al. (2018); Umami & Suryono, (2020), especially for parents who have profession as English Lecturer. Parents' participation is also much needed in the process of learning English because not enough just in the school but also the family environment (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Edwards & Newcombe, 2005 & Newcombe, 2005). Nowadays, many parents have realized the importance of teaching English to their children, because English also can support the carrier in the future (Wagner et al., 2016; Butler & Le, 2018).

Previously, there were several studies examined the process of achieving English learning in early childhood. In these studies, it is likely still getting a serious debate. This is caused by the presence of influential variables not included in the study. These researchers

only focus on age as a major factor. Some of the results of these studies come from Butler (2019), Wang & Dostal (2017), Oktaviani & Fauzan (2017), Wati (2016), and Khairani (2016). It is screening the results of their research in the following graph.

English as a foreign language better in the primary age, young learners are not necessarily better learners compared to adult learners; the children are indeed more likely to develop native-like English proficiency than adult learners (Butler, 2019). The term 'young learner' indicates in a sizeable chronological age span, from around three years of age until 15 (Wang & Dostál, 2017). Based on their age and grade, young learners categorized in three groups, the first is very young learners around in 3-6 years old is called pre-school education, the second is young learners, they are 7-9 years old, and the third is older or late young learners, they are 10-12 years old (Oktaviani & Fauzan, 2017)

Learning the language at primary ages has begun by many countries at the primary level (Oktaviani & Fauzan, 2017). The language, in this case, English, will be more easily learned because the children are in the golden age learner. Introducing English to the children at earlier grade levels, according to the curriculum, has begun where English taught as a foreign language (Wati, 2016). At the primary level, our children can learn a foreign language faster than adults (Khairani, 2016). Therefore an increasing proportion of students learning English throughout the world comes from children currently (Nilsson, 2019). The finding of the research in (Khairani, 2016) explains that when the children can master a foreign language, that language has advantages in terms of flexible intellectual, the language, their academic and social skills for them; in order, their children will have the readiness to a social context with various languages and cultures. Therefore when they are adults, they will become qualified and capable of human resources. In other words, Butler, Octaviani, Wang, Wati, and Khairani believed that the success of young learners to study English because of the golden age factor.

This study comes on a different variable to find out the important perspective of studying English for young learners. In this study, the parent's participation is the core of this study to investigate the young learners' achievement in studying, especially the learners who have a parent's profession as an English lecturer. In developing children's language skills, the role of the people around them is very important. It is necessary for children to interact with adults and other older speaker, and play an important role in supporting the development of children's communication skills (Bredekamp and Copple, 1999: 100).

The process of children beginning to recognize communication with their environment verbally is called the acquisition of children's language. The acquisition of children's language, according to Krisanjaya (1998), has a characteristic of continuity, has a series of unity, which starts from crying as the beginning of communication competence, moving from saying one simple word to a combination of more complicated words (syntax). In its development, language ability does not only include the ability to speak alone. Children also must master the ability to hear. According to Askouri (2011), the simplest way to teach listening skills is to reduce disruption when talking to children, for example, by turning off the television first and approaching the child before speaking. In addition to listening skills, at the age of 2-4 years, children also develop the initial ability to speak written or read. Parents should try to use words written around the child. For example, writing the name, brand name of milk or biscuits, and so

on. Children will enjoy doing the activities of cutting the letters he found and sticking them.

English, as a foreign language for Indonesian people, has become the international language. Moreover, it is used as a means of communication in many aspects, such as transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, diplomacy, and scientific research (McKay, 2016). Therefore, the English language has become the global access to knowledge and communication issues (Khemaja & Taamallah, 2016; Seargeant, 2009).

Teaching English is not enough if only in the school or courses, but the family environment is needed Kinshuk (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005). In this case, the parents' involvement is essential. The most effective system fostering and sustaining children's longterm improvement can provide by parents as a positive influence on their children's learning as a family Anne M. Maaskant (Benard, 1991). Parents' involvement in their children's education contributes to their success in the school Mariela Pavalache-Ilie (Al-Fadley et al., 2018). Furthermore(Bruno, 2019) states that parent's participation as a parent's involvement in the experience of children and the educational process.

Parents' involved their self in discussion of the children'social community. The parent also help in guiding the homework or encouraging their children to read material on foreign language and solving the problems of their children experience in learning the foreign language (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2016; Pomerantz et al., 2007). Cognitive socialization that contributes to children's basic intellectual development can be created by the interaction between parents and children at home (Jenkins et al. 2016; Bempechat, 1992).

Kalayci & Öz, (2018) stated that the teacher and parents need to work together to

be an effective partnership to provide a learning environment for the children. Parents' involvement is the most significant predictor of students' achievement (Mulyadi et al., 2016; Boonk et el., 2018; Green et el., 2007). The children will become confident and empowered if they feel supported by their parents; in order, parents' involvement is essential (Barrett DeWiele & Edgerton, 2016; Bæck, 2010). Parents' help in their children's education is crucial for their academic development (García-Fuentes & McDonough, 2018).

## METHOD

**Research methods:** this research employed quantitative and qualitative research design to analyze the data. **Instrument & Data collection:** In this study, the researcher also provided a questionnaire and interview for collecting data, which aimed to investigate the parents' perspective on the importance of learning English for young learners. The questionnaire was made in the Google form to make the researcher easy to distribute and collect the data.

Method of Analysis Data: The parents' information in the collected data of questionnaires will be confirmed and crosschecked to the result of interviews. This confirmation aimed to see the depth of parents' participation to their children's English achievement. Next step after the confirmation is analyzing process of each information from the questionnaires. Moreover, the collected data of parents'

participation was computed into scale level of frequencies in all items of information by adopting the degree of Likert Scale. Then, the frequencies data was convert to into percentage. This analysis tent to see the frequencies of each information in the questionnaire. In other words, this quantity analysis mediate the researcher to read the

frequencies data of parent's participant in guiding their children. For An in-depth Interview was semi-structured to find information about the related issue discussed in this research. An open-ended interview was applied as well by used voice recorded in order to obtain original data.

Research Sample: The sample was 16 English lecturers who have a child that categorized as a young learner from Makassar Muhammadiyah University and Parepare Muhammadiyah University. The sample was taken by using a random sampling technique. The main reason of choosing random sampling technique is a large number of population. This size population also conveys the representation the population that has been investigated

# ■ RESULT AND DISCUSSION

# Findings from the Questionnaire

In the table.1 and table.2 revealed the accumulated data of questioners. There are thirteen (13) questions as stimulator for collecting the data from the parent. These data tent to obtain the parent's roles during the observation of their children.

The table showed that 56,3 % of parents "strongly agree" and 62,5 % of parents "agree "that English is essential for their children; therefore, English better teaches in the primary age. Parents also believe that English will support their children in the future; the data prove this that 56,3 % of parents "strongly agree" with that. (McKay, 2016) and (Seargeant, 2009) Sandra Lee McKay state that language as global access to knowledge and communication; moreover, English has become an international language that is very important to use.

The statement by (Edwards & Newcombe, 2005) that English, not enough only in the school or course but the family environment also needed, the same thing as agreed by parents' views that 56,3% parents"

agree" with that. This is also supported by the children's interest in learning English. It revealed the result of data analysis; there were 75 % of parents agree that their children interested in English. Even though, there are some challenges to teach English for young learners. It is similar with parents' views, that 68,8 % parents agree that teaching English to their children more challenges but more challenges; it does not mean trying to teach English for young learners as said by (O'Grady, 2005) that children have amazing abilities to learn language, moreover they can be like a native speaker.

Practice English at home and everywhere not tricky because from the data

62,5 % of parents disagree if we say that difficult to speak English at home, moreover impossible to speak English everywhere (56,3 % parents disagree), it is mean that according to parents they can always practice English to their children every time and everywhere. However, otherwise, 50 % of parents agree that English can learn someday if their children need it. Moreover, 68, 8 % of parents agree that their children more like their local language than English language and it cannot be denied that according to parents English is needed not only for their children in the future but also because of English influence their social environment (62, 5 % parents agree).

Table 1. Shown parents' views in teaching English to young learners

No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	English is important for your children	56,3 %	37,5 %	6,3 %	-
2.	Teaching English in the primary age	37,5 %	62,5 %	-	-
3.	English will support your children in the future	56,3 %	43,8 %	-	-
4.	English have to learn as early as possible	25 %	62,5 %	12,5 %	-
5.	English not enough only in the school and course	37,5 %	56,3 %	6,3 %	-
6.	Your children are interested in English	12,5 %	75 %	12,5 %	-
7.	Teaching English to your children more challenges	25 %	68,8 %	6,3 %	-
8.	Teaching English just wasting your time	-	18,8 %	31,3	50 %
9.	Difficult to speak English at home	-	31,3%	62,5 %	6,3 %
10.	Impossible to speak English every where	-	31,3 %	56,3 %	12,5 %
11.	English can be learn if someday your children need it	12,5 %	50 %	37,5 %	-
12.	Your children more like their local language than English	-	68,8%	31,3 %	-
13.	English influence your social environment	18,8%	62,5 %	12,5 %	6,3 %

No.	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14.	Practice English at home while doing daily activity	43,8 %	56,3 %	-	-
15.	Practice English everywhere with your children	25 %	62,5%	12,5 %	-
16.	All the family members have to speak English	-	50 %	37,5 %	12,5 %
17.	Not all family members can speak English	6,3 %	68,8 %	25 %	-
18.	Facilitate your children with some media to support their English	25 %	75 %	-	-
19.	Give some videos about learning English	25 %	75 %	-	-
20.	Give your children a course to support their English	12,5 %	75%	6,3 %	6,3 %

**Table 2**. Illustrate parents' involvement in teaching English to young learners

As illustrated in table 2, parents have a significant role in teaching English to their children; it is like shown from the data that 56, 3% of parents agree to practice English at home. Moreover, their daily activity, 62, 5% parents agree to practice English everywhere, 75% parents agree to facilitate their children with some media to support their English, give some videos about learning English (75% parents agree) and also give their children a course to support their English (75%). Therefore 50% of parents agree that all the family members have to speak English, even though not all the family members can speak English (68,8% parents agree).

Parents' involvement is the most significant predictor of students' achievement (Green et al., 2007). Therefore, parents play a crucial role in their children in learning a language. Parents can provide fun, lively, and exciting activities in the learning process; doing repetition about the word in order their brain and ear can cooperate and peppering that word because children need to have their five senses stimulated(Bruno, 2019)

# **■ FINDINGS**

Data comes from 5 English Lecturers from Makassar Muhammadiyah University, and Parepare Muhammadiyah University was interviewed to have clear information about their perspective of the importance of teaching English to young learners, in this case, their children. Majority of English lecturer agree that teaching English in the primary age is a must, remain that all of them has English Education Background in a high level of English, it is mean that they know and understand the existence of English in this era. As a parent it is an obligation to provide proper education and know what subjects their children must learn to be useful in the future. Proficient in English is a must, so it is expected for parents to explain that English is very important for the progress of their children.

Practicing English every time and everywhere is always even only in a short conversation, and the only word for word, in the order it is not a habit yet. One of the respondents gives an example of how she practices English to her child, just a short and straightforward sentence

such as "how is your school?" How about your lunch? Moreover, her child answers the only word for a word such as "yes.....good", "My lunch is yummy with rice, chicken..." It means that actually, their children have an interest in English, even English as a foreign language for them.

When we have started using English to communicate with children, we must indeed be very disciplined in using language. I practice the language discipline with my two children. I do not want to speak in Indonesian with them, must always be in English, anytime, both in the morning, noon and night, and when I wake up, my son wakes up while saying Good Morning Father. I also practice language discipline when children are everywhere, at home, in the market, in restaurants, and even in their grandparents' homes, as parents continue to speak English with them. Anyway, there is no day without English. English is an everyday language for parents and children.

Is in a small community, ie, in a family that only communicates with father and child enough to make children able to communicate in English fluently? Surely the answer is not enough times, yes. However, it depends on the frequency of our meeting with children. In real terms, in our community, children will make many friends around the house with children who speak Indonesian. For a parent, it does not matter. The important thing is that parents and children speak English all day and even all night. So, when he started speaking Indonesian with me, for example asking in Indonesian, parents as the controller pretended not to hear, or said I beg your pardon? In fact, we can say, "sorry, I don't understand" Can you say it again? Then the boy said in English. Now, considering that the neighborhood is not in Europe, or in America or Canada and Melbourne so that their English language skills can continue to develop well, I make television their English teacher. Yes, of course, parents must be very selective in choosing television broadcasts.

Parents also told that in teaching English for their children, they do not have any particular method just doing naturally, they are not even rare gave their children such as English videos from YouTube to make their children more interested and easy to practice English. In order for the social, emotional, and intellectual development of their children as the significant impact of what parents do at home to their children (Baker, 2013).

## CONCLUSION

The researcher concludes after finding and discussing the data; all the respondents agreed that as long English still be the international language means English still essential to learn, moreover teach their children English as early as possible because children have fantastic abilities in learning the language.

The parents' involvement in this process has a significant role, and all parents agree that learning English not enough only in school or course where the children only learn two until 3 hours in a week, so English is also applied at home in the family environment, even only on a short sentence or conversation. Parents also have positive views that English is needed for their children in the future; in order never stop to remind our children about the importance of learning English.

Teacher performance and competence assume the primary responsibility in transforming the orientation of students from environmental learning to knowledge, from dependence to independence, from unskilled to skilled, with learning methods no longer preparing passive students. However, knowledgeable students are always able to absorb and adjust to new information by thinking, asking, exploring, creating, and developing specific ways of solving problems related to their lives. In other words, teachers are the spearhead in efforts to improve the quality of services and educational outcomes. In short, teachers are the main key in efforts to

improve the quality of education. Therefore, it is very natural that lately, the recognition and appreciation of the teaching profession has increased, beginning with the birth of Law Number 14 of 2005, concerning Teachers and Lecturers, which was immediately followed by legislation related to very dynamic regulations. Happening in the midst of society today.

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