

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

One of the most crucial things that primary school pupils can do is learn English. English is a universal language that is utilized in commerce, education, and communication, among other areas of life (Brown, 2001). Thus, proficiency in the English language is essential to improve students' chances and capacity to deal with global issues. However, many pupils in primary schools have difficulty in learning English. These challenges can be caused by several factors, including lack of interest and motivation (Gardner, 1985), inefficient teaching techniques (Cameron, 2001), and lack of opportunity to practice English. Teachers must employ efficient teaching techniques to raise students' enthusiasm and interest in studying English. Students' English proficiency can be enhanced and their likelihood of overcoming global obstacles can be raised with the use of effective teaching techniques (Yin, 2014). Nonetheless, a lot of educators continue to teach English using antiquated and inefficient techniques. Students may get disinterested and unmotivated to study English as a result of traditional instructional approaches (Brown, 2001).

English language learning at an early age plays a crucial role in building a strong foundation for language skills. However, increasing students' interest and engagement in the learning process remains a challenge for educators.

Various strategies have been implemented to address this challenge, focusing on students' unique characteristics and needs (Marsevani et al., 2024). One widely used method is Total Physical Response (TPR). This method integrates physical movement with verbal instructions, allowing students to comprehend language through actions. Research has shown that TPR is effective in enhancing active participation and students' understanding of the learning materials (Jayanti & Rachmawati, 2025). Additionally, the combination of TPR with technology has been proven to improve English vocabulary instruction for young learners (Abdusharipovna, 2016).

Other creative strategies include the use of stories, music, and songs in teaching. This method not only makes learning more enjoyable but also helps students retain vocabulary and language structures more effectively (Aliabadi & Weisi, 2023). Studies indicate that music can assist children in transitioning from preschool to elementary school by enhancing their confidence and social skills (Veren, Yohanes Gatot Sutapa Yulia, 2023). Moreover, music plays a role in regulating emotions and strengthening social bonds, which are crucial in language learning. This aligns with the words of Allah in the Qur'an, which emphasize the importance of effective communication:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best manner. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is (rightly) guided."

(QS. An-Nahl: 125)

A game-based approach or gamification has also been proven to enhance motivation and young learners' engagement in English language learning. Language learning platforms such as Duolingo incorporate game elements to make learning more engaging and addictive for users (Islahuddin, 2023). Luis von Ahn, CEO of Duolingo, stated that gamification helps maintain user engagement, which, in turn, improves learning outcomes. Although there is ongoing debate regarding the balance between gamification and education, this approach is regarded as effective in sustaining students' interest (Nilma Taula'bi', 2022).

The implementation of these strategies requires a deep understanding of students' characteristics and needs. Research highlights the importance of teachers adapting teaching methods to students' learning preferences to achieve optimal outcomes (Tpr et al., 2024). Additionally, family involvement plays a significant role in supporting children's English learning. Parents can use familiar songs at home to help prepare children for school environments, creating a sense of belonging and connection with their new surroundings (Learners & Engagement, 2024).

Despite the various strategies that have been applied, further research is still needed to understand the effectiveness and implementation of these strategies in specific local contexts, such as at SDN 1 Sungai Tiung. This study aims to describe the teaching strategies used by English teachers at SDN 1 Sungai Tiung and how these strategies can enhance student engagement in English learning. By understanding and implementing the right strategies, it is

expected that the English learning process will become more effective and enjoyable, motivating students to continue learning and developing their language skills.

B. Definition of Key Terms

Recognizing the most important regards provides the study easier to understand for future investigators and readers. This study is associated with a number of key terms, including teaching and young learners.

1. Strategy

A strategy is a planned set of actions or methods used by teachers to achieve specific learning objectives. According to Brown (2007), a teaching strategy refers to “specific methods used by teachers to make learning more effective.” In this study, strategy refers to the teacher’s approach to attract and maintain students’ interest in learning English.

2. Engage

To engage means to capture and hold someone’s attention or interest in an activity. Harmer (2007) defines engagement as “the state of being involved and interested in the learning process.” In this study, engage refers to how the teacher involves students actively and emotionally in English learning activities.

3. Young Learners

Young learners are children aged six to twelve who are in the early stages of formal education. Cameron (2001) describes young learners as “children who are still in the stages of cognitive, social, and emotional

development, and who learn best through play, activities, and interaction.”

In this study, young learners refer to fourth-grade elementary school students at SDN 1 Sungai Tiung.

4. Learning Interest

Learning interest refers to students’ motivation, curiosity, and positive attitude toward learning a subject. Schunk, Pintrich, and Meece (2008) define interest as “a psychological state characterized by focused attention and positive emotion toward learning activities.” In this study, learning interest refers to students’ enthusiasm and willingness to participate in English lessons.

C. Research Question

1. What strategies does the teacher use when teaching English at SDN 1 Sungai Tiung?
2. How can the teacher use these strategies in English classes to help young students engagement in SDN 1 Sungai Tiung?

D. Research Objectives

1. To describe the teaching strategies employed by an English teacher at SDN 1 Sungai Tiung.
2. To describe how teacher can use these strategies in English teaching to encourage young learners to take SDN 1 Sungai Tiung.

E. Research Significances

1. Developing and selecting learning strategies that are appropriate for the characteristics of elementary school students.
2. Enhancing teachers' creativity in creating English lessons that are interesting, interactive, and enjoyable.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW

A. ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

1. Definition of Young Learners

Teaching English to Young Learners directs and assists young students aged 6 to 12 in their activities based on the initial definition of young learners to learn, feel, understand and comprehend thoughts, mindsets, principles, abilities and knowledge of the English language using tricks and strategies. further changing and redefining your thoughts in your everyday environment as foreign language learners. English Young Learners (EYL) is an English language course for children to develop lifelong skills. At the same time, Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) is an opportunity to introduce English as a foreign language to young students.

According to Drown, "teaching is to direct and facilitate learning, to enable the student to learn, and to establish the circumstances for learning." This ensures that students receive quality instruction. The support and opportunities they need to learn well. Teachers' theories and beliefs about teaching, teachers, and students guide their actions in the knowledge classroom, which is both cognitive and behavioral. This means that the teacher's transmission of information to the student is instructive. The teacher must be aware of how the classroom works and how the students

behave. Based on the preceding statement, it is possible to conclude that the teaching is beneficial to the students. The teacher's information is communicated to the students.

2. Characteristic in Young Learners

The tendency to be active is one of the most important characteristics of young students, some of whom Some people are more active than others. Concerns should be raised by teachers students who are either extremely either passive or active extremely engaged in their activities. Another distinguishing feature of youngsters, in addition to their proclivity to be curious is reflected in their high level of activity. You've probably noticed how sensitive children are to many things in life, and how quickly their attention switches from one thing to another.

Primary school students are considered young. (Cameron, 2001) defines young learners as those aged 5 to 12. Children who are young learners attend primary or secondary in school educational systems. Furthermore, the characteristics of young learners are as follows:

- 1) They can distinguish objects classified according to their properties;
- 2) They can construct a logical combination in which A is greater than B and B is greater than C and so on;
- 3) They may develop a rational and systematic way of thinking, but they still think physically.

There are numerous claims concerning the significance of young students. Students in their early twenties aged 7-15 convinced of English students andquot;. Students between the ages of 7 and 15 who are learning English as a second language in primary or secondary school are considered young learners.

She says, according to Pribilova that " The term "young learner" refers to people of all ages. group. It can be anyone from 3 years old to 18 years old. There is a significant distinction between what a 3-year-old can do and what a 15-year-old is capable of year old is capable of. It is possible for a one year old to do it. Some children develop more quickly than others." Primary school students aged 6 to 12 are considered young learners. They could be divided into two groups: those aged 6 to 8 and those aged 9 to 12. Depending on they are on their level invited students from lower levels of education, such as first, second, and third years, and students from higher classes, such as fourth, fifth, and sixth years. Meanwhile, Scott and Yterbeg divided them into two groups: one for children aged 5-7 and another for children aged 8-10.

Young learners are defined as is 6-12 years old, as shown in the preceding explanation. In Indonesia, children must be six years old to begin primary school.

Experts have identified the following traits of young learners, along with the year and an explanation:

Qualities of Young Students:

1. Cameron (2001)

Short attention span: Young students are often distracted and have short attention spans. To keep their interest, they require engaging and participatory activities (Cameron, 2001, p. 25).

Limited language proficiency: Young students are still learning the language and have limited linguistic proficiency (Cameron, 2001, p. 30).

English Language Teaching (ELT) refers to the process of teaching English to individuals whose first language is not English. In today's era of globalization, English has become the dominant international language, widely used in science, business, technology, and cross-cultural communication (Akmal et al., 2021). Therefore, the ability to use English effectively is essential for participating in global discourse. In Indonesia, English has been officially designated as the first foreign language to be taught in schools, starting from the elementary level. The main goal of language learning is to enable students to understand, respond, speak, read, and write in the language. However, due to limited exposure to English outside of the classroom, teachers play a central role in creating meaningful language learning experiences through classroom activities (Boy Jon et al., 2021).

Several theories support the importance of effective strategies and approaches in English language teaching, particularly for young learners.

Stephen Krashen (1982), through his Second Language Acquisition Theory, argues that successful language acquisition depends on providing comprehensible input, or language input that is just slightly above the learner's current level ($i+1$). Teachers must ensure that the language is presented in a low-stress environment (low affective filter), allowing learners to acquire the language naturally and enjoyably. In this context, motivation and emotional comfort are essential for successful language learning (Sutrisna, 2021).

Meanwhile, Lev Vygotsky (1978), through his Sociocultural Theory, emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. He introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the gap between what learners can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance from teachers or peers. With proper scaffolding or structured assistance, teachers can help students advance to higher levels of competence. This theory highlights the importance of interactive dialogue, group work, and activity-based learning in the language classroom (Etnawati, 2022).

Jean Piaget (1954) contributed to the understanding of child development through his Cognitive Development Theory. He believed that children learn through direct experience and interaction with their environment. In language learning, this suggests that concrete, visual, and kinesthetic approaches—such as using pictures, music, games, and physical

movement (like in the Total Physical Response method)—are more effective than abstract explanations (. & Madanagopal, 2020).

Jerome Bruner (1966) further supports this through his Discovery Learning and Spiral Curriculum concepts. He emphasized that language is a tool for thinking and that using narratives, stories, and dialogue stimulates children's cognitive processes. Bruner advocated for learning to be built gradually, allowing learners to revisit concepts in more complex ways as their understanding deepens (Rahmawati et al., 2011).

Combining these theories, English language teaching strategies for young learners should be communicative, interactive, and enjoyable. The use of technology, educational games, music, and storytelling activities is crucial in enhancing motivation and engagement. These strategies not only support language mastery but also contribute to learners' overall social and cognitive development.

2. Strategy in Teaching Young Learners

Teaching young learners requires specific strategies that suit their characteristics, learning styles, and developmental stages. Unlike adults, young learners are still developing cognitively, emotionally, and socially; therefore, teachers need to design learning activities that are meaningful, engaging, and enjoyable. According to Harmer (2007), teaching strategies are the specific actions or methods used by teachers to facilitate learning and help students achieve learning objectives. Effective teaching strategies

enable teachers to maintain students' attention, build motivation, and create a positive classroom atmosphere.

Cameron (2001) emphasizes that young learners learn best when they are actively involved in activities that stimulate their curiosity and imagination. They tend to enjoy learning when it involves movement, songs, games, stories, and visual materials. This means that teachers should adopt strategies that incorporate fun, interactive, and context-based learning experiences. The use of various teaching strategies is crucial to accommodate different learning preferences among children and to sustain their interest throughout the lesson.

Furthermore, Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (2002) suggest that the teacher's strategy in teaching English to young learners should be based on three main principles: (1) the use of meaningful and contextual language input, (2) the integration of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities, and (3) the creation of a supportive learning environment. These principles help students feel comfortable and confident in participating in classroom activities, even when they are still at the early stage of learning English.

In addition, Scott and Ytreberg (1990) explain that young learners have short attention spans; therefore, teachers must frequently change the pace of activities and use varied techniques to avoid boredom. Activities such as storytelling, singing, games, and role plays can effectively attract their attention and encourage them to use the language naturally. Through

these activities, students can learn vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence patterns in a meaningful context.

Effective strategies in teaching young learners also include the use of Total Physical Response (TPR), visual aids, and story-based learning. Total Physical Response, introduced by Asher (1977), is particularly suitable for young learners because it combines language learning with physical movement, allowing students to understand language through action. Visual aids such as pictures, flashcards, and realia help students grasp meaning easily and make abstract concepts more concrete. Meanwhile, story-based learning provides a natural context for language use, develops imagination, and helps children relate language to their own experiences.

In conclusion, the success of teaching young learners depends greatly on the strategies applied by the teacher. The strategies must be interactive, enjoyable, and student-centered, focusing on activities that involve play, creativity, and communication. By applying these strategies, teachers can create an engaging learning environment that motivates young learners to participate actively and develop a lasting interest in learning English.

B. Teaching Strategy

1. Definition of Teaching Strategy

Isaac's teaching strategy, according to Stone and Morris, is an overall lesson plan that includes the structure, learning objectives, and a plan of tactics for implementing the strategies. Isaac also describes teaching strategies as a teacher's behavior in class, such as developing teaching strategies, finding timely answers, exploring learned answers, and completing answers with additional activities (Stone & Morris, as cited in Rahmawati, 2020).

Strategies are employed in order to achieve or maintain success. Strategy differs from method in that a strategy is a plan to accomplish something, whereas method refers to how a strategy can be implemented. In other words, a strategy is simply a plan of action to accomplish a goal. Although a method is a method of accomplishing something.

Strategies are steps or actions taken to win other definitions of strategy include a war and an attempt to achieve success. A strategy in an educational context, according to J. R. David, is a strategy, method, or plan sequence a set of activities designed to achieve a specific goal specific educational objective (Putri, 2019).

The learning that the teacher and student must do in order to effectively and efficiently achieve this educational goal is referred to as a teaching strategy.

Based on the above definition, we can conclude that teaching strategies are plans devised by teachers to achieve specific educational objectives.

Based on Based on some research, a learning strategy was determined to be a method of managing activities that includes the order of events, devices, substances, and time spent learning to achieve learning goals. decisively active and powerful.

2. Strategies in Teaching English for Young Learners

Teaching English to children is more difficult than teaching English to adults. It is entirely different. (Cameron, 2001) believes that a teacher must gradually demonstrate his ability to provide relevant information to young students. Young students require more education regarding learning considerations in the course of learning. It's not as easy as stated by the scientist thought; the teacher must possess done some research. Patience, imagination, humor, a positive attitude, and the ability to be a mother figure to her students are all required. Furthermore, teachers must be able to analyze learning in a language that children understand in order to convey the message. As a result, in order to assist young people in understanding the material, staying on task, learning, and mastering the language, instructing young students in English necessitates abilities of a good teacher.

Skillings and Piller (2010) explain that “some teaching strategies for elementary students include demonstration, look and say, oral illustration, asking, storytelling, and reading and saying.” This quote shows that these strategies are appropriate for elementary school students because they help them understand language through visualization, repetition, and direct interaction.

a. Strategy Demonstration

Real objects are used in demonstration, as are actions, gestures, and facial expressions. It is employed with words like toy and hat. In sentence patterns, the demonstrative can be used to represent specific ideas. Saying things like "I looked at my watch" or "I'm cleaning the board" while doing these things. The strategy is presented by the teacher, and students practice based on the teacher's feedback. Proof is required. The demonstration connects the new information to what the child is already aware of.

b. Strategy Look and Say

Look and Say is a method in which learners listen to the teacher and then repeat the teacher's word or phrase by looking at an object or print. Children either observe how the teacher displays the words on the board or how a specific print is displayed on a sheet of paper or even in a textbook.

c. Strategy Oral Illustration.

Oral illustration was used by teachers at all levels. Sometimes it simply provided a sentence or phrase demonstrating how the word is commonly within the context, such as "the cloud is white."

d. Strategy Asking

Another strategy used in all levels of instruction is asking. It appears in the beginning. The research portion a number of the lessons appeared to be designed to develop concept formation thought processes.

e. Strategy Storytelling

Storytelling is a teaching and learning process in which children's vocabulary is expanded by telling stories or using familiar English. Understanding the story's content allows children to learn vocabulary. The context of telling a story aids in the development of vocabulary. Children learn many other things as part of their vocabulary, such as local ways of telling stories and moral messages. Students will begin to understand traditional fairy tale stylistic features as in standard starts and linguistic repetition, performance repetition, flat characterizations, and moralistic endings. To create an understanding of the plot of the story, it is necessary to repeat the reader's (teacher's) story.

f. Strategy Reading and Saying

Children learn more effectively when they are actively engaged in their studies. However, the children's results varied due to their different learning styles and preferences. As a result, well-planned lessons can be effective in resolving learning-related issues.

C. Previous Study

Several previous studies have been conducted regarding strategies to engage young learners in learning English. These studies provide valuable insights and serve as references for the present research.

First, Sari (2020) conducted a study entitled “Teachers’ Strategies in Teaching English to Young Learners at Elementary School.” The study revealed that teachers commonly used songs, games, storytelling, and visual aids to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere. These strategies helped students to become more active and enthusiastic in learning English. Sari concluded that implementing various interesting teaching methods could significantly improve students’ interest and participation in class.

Furthermore, Putri and Hasan (2022) examined “Teachers’ Techniques to Motivate Students in Learning English at the Primary Level.” Their findings showed that teachers used rewards, gestures, songs, and realia to attract students’ attention. The researchers highlighted that the use of real objects and contextual learning materials made students more

interested in learning English because it related to their daily life experiences.

In addition, Nasir (2023) investigated “Teachers’ Strategies in Developing Students’ Learning Interest in English at Elementary Schools.” The study revealed that teachers used a combination of fun learning methods such as games, songs, and group competitions to sustain students’ attention. The research suggested that using engaging strategies helped build a positive learning environment and promoted intrinsic motivation among young learners.

Because the data was analyzed using sentences, this study took a qualitative approach to data analysis. Three methods were used to collect data: documentation, interviews, and observation. There were three steps data reduction, data display, and drawing or verification of conclusions are all procedures for data analysis process. The study was presented as a comprehensive justification. These summaries were examined in the classroom with young students using principles of English language teaching and learning.

One method for increasing young learners' engagement with English language learning is to use interactive and multimedia-based instructional materials. For example, educational software and applications that include games, animations, and interactive activities have been shown to be effective in keeping children's attention and promoting their learning (Pistoljevic & Hulusic, 2019). Such tools can contribute to a fun and

engaging learning environment that promotes exploration and experimentation.

Finally, incorporating technology into English language instruction can be an effective strategy for increasing young learners' motivation to learn the language. For example, using educational apps or websites that provide interactive activities or games related to English language skills can give students more opportunities to practice outside of the classroom (Nilubol & Sitthitikul, 2023). Furthermore, technology tools like video conferencing and virtual classrooms can help students connect with peers from around the world and engage in cross-cultural communication.

Based on these previous studies, it can be concluded that various strategies—such as songs, games, storytelling, role play, and visual aids—are effective in increasing young learners' interest in learning English. These studies also show that teachers play a vital role in selecting appropriate strategies that match students' needs and characteristics. Therefore, the present study aims to explore and describe the strategies used by an English teacher at SDN 1 Sungai Tiung Banjarbaru in engaging young learners' interest in learning English through a qualitative single case study approach.