

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

#### **A. Teaching**

Teaching includes all the activities of providing education to other. The person who provides education is called teacher. The teacher uses different method for giving best knowledge to his students. He tries his best to make understand students. His duty is to encourage students to learn the subjects.

#### **Definition and the Characteristics of teaching**

Teaching can be defined as the transfer of knowledge. Teaching has been defined by Well, G. as cluster of activities that are noted about teachers such as explaining, deducing, questioning, motivating, taking attendance, keeping record of words, students' progress and students' background information.

The nature and characteristic of teaching are (1) the main character of teaching is to provide guidance and training, (2) teaching is interaction between teacher and students, (3) teaching is an art to give knowledge to students with effective way, (4) teaching is a science to educate fact and causes of different topics and different subjects, (5) teaching is continues process, (6) teacher can teach effectively, if he has full confidence on the subject, (7) teaching encourages students to learn more and more, (8) teaching is formal as well as information, (9) teaching is communication of information to students, and (10) teaching is tool to help students to adjust himself in society and its environment.

It can be concluded that teaching is the several activity in the transfer of information from teacher to students. The main characteristic of teaching is the guidance.

## **B. Teaching English for Young Learners**

Wendy and Lisbeth (1993, p.1) stated that young learners cannot organize their own learning. They are not able to read or write in their first language therefore the learning process has to be through talk and play and the language must be recycled. Therefore in order for the acquisition process to take place the learners must experience the process as they would acquire their first language. Learning a language for very young learner is incidental, they learn through playing. They are not consciously trying to learn new words or phrases, they like making sounds, imitating and making funny noises.

Read (2007, p.17) created the C-Wheel which enables the language teacher to create an optimal environment for the young language learner. It focuses on the learner as a unique learner and as a unique person. It consists of eight parts which are ideal for the learners language learning; creativity, context, connections, coherence, challenge, curiosity, care and community. In addition there are six external factors; teacher, methodology, materials, education and cultural context, curriculum and evaluation. The aim of the C-Wheel is to create an ideal environment for the learner to feel safe, supported, praised and successful. In addition Read (2007, p.35) stated that in order for the language teacher to manage the classroom positively, the rules and norms of the classroom should be observed and the children should also be motivated to learn and to enjoy the activities.

Also Cameron (2001, p.8) stated that within the language classroom routines are vital, as they provide an opportunity for the learner to interact and make sense of the familiar language therefore they develop their language skills.

### **C. Definition of Young Learners**

Etymologically the term young learners derived from word 'young' and 'learner'. Oxford Advance Learners' Dictionary the word 'young' means not far advance in life or recently begun. Then, the word 'learner' means a person who is gaining knowledge or skill.

Terminologically Suyanto identified young learners as the students of elementary school in the age of 6-12 years. They are classified into two groups; younger group (6-8 years old) and older group (9-12 years old).

Scott and Ytreberg in Suyanto classified them based on their classes into two levels, level one and level two. The group in level one (5-7 years old) called lower class which means the learners who study in the first, second and third grade of elementary school. While another group in level two (8-10 years old) called upper class which refers to the students in the fourth, fifth and sixth grade.

#### **1. Young Learners Psychological Development**

In this section the writer discusses about two experts' theories about the young learners psychological development. Thus the writer describes the problems based on theories which are presented by Piaget and Bruner.

First, Piaget believed that children are active learners. The knowledge which is obtained by their actions is developed by themselves. The teaching of children has been profoundly effected by

the work of Jean Piaget, who identified four stages of cognitive and affective development in childhood and adolescence. There are as follows:

- a. The stage of sensory-motor intelligence (age 0 to 2 years ). During this stage, behavior is primarily motor. The child does not yet internally represent events and “think” conceptually, although “cognitive” development is seen as schemata are constructed.
- b. The stage of preoperational thought (age 2 to 7 years ). This stage is characterized by the development of language and other forms of representation and rapid conceptual development. Reasoning during this stage is pre-logical or semi-logical, and children tend to be very egocentric. Children often focus on a single feature of a situation at a time for example, they may be able to sort by size or by color but not by both characteristics at once.
- c. The stage of concrete operations (age 7 to 11 years ). During these years, the child develops the ability to apply logical thought to concrete problems. Hand-on, concrete experiences help children understand new concepts and ideas. Using language to exchange information becomes much more important than in earlier stage, as children become more social and less egocentric.
- d. The stage of formal operations ( age 11 to 15 years old). During this stage, the child’s cognitive structures reach their highest level of development. The child becomes more able to apply logical reasoning to all classes of problem, including or having no concrete referents.

Based on Piaget's theory, the writer concludes that as the active learners children are developed through their own activities in their cognitive development stages.

## **2. Young learners Characteristics in Learning**

Based on Suyanto here are some characteristics of young learners, such as :

- a. Generally, children in the age of 5-7 years has egocentric attitude; has preference to relate what they learn or do with themselves.
- b. Learner in the age of 5-7 years still difficult to distinguish between abstracts and concrete things.
- c. Active and imaginative. They love to learn by games, story or song.
- d. Ease to be bored and has short-terms concentration.
- e. Childhood is fun and color full.
- f. In the age of 8-10 years has reading and awareness in language.

Then Pahin and Power in Suyanto mentioned the young Learners' characteristics as below :

- a. Learning by doing.
- b. Able to tell what they have done or listened.
- c. Able to understand about a situation fastly.
- d. Able to play attention and concentrations in very short terms.
- e. Able to learn or play and fell happy to do it.
- f. Able to work together with adult.
- g. Learn English by using it in communication.

- h. Able to achieve the best result of learning if they are motivated. If they are interested and actively included in learning process.

#### **D. Definition of Vocabulary**

Learning vocabulary is a very important part of learning English. It is one of the main important parts in English which has to be mastered by students. Vocabulary consists of words which are used in written or oral communication. In Oxford Dictionary (2000, p.495), stated that vocabulary is defined as the three ones below.

1. All the words a person knows or less
2. All the words in a language
3. List of words with their meaning, especially in a book for learning foreign language.

In addition Gate (2007, p.2), state that there are three definitions of vocabulary, namely :

1. All the words that someone knows, learns, or uses.
2. The words that are used when talking about particular subject.
3. All the words in a particular language.

Thus, vocabulary is a word or words in a language.

Vocabulary can be defined as " words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)" Neuman and Dwyer (2009, p. 385). Hornby (1995, p. 350) defines vocabulary as "the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings". While Ur (1998, p. 2) states: "Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of

vocabulary may be more than just a single word: for example, post office, and mother-in-law, which are made up of two or three words but express a single idea. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary "items" rather than "words." In addition, Burns (1972, p. 295) defines vocabulary as "the stock of words which is used by a person, class or profession."

According to Zimmerman cited in Coady and Huckin (1998, p.189) 'vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learning. Furthermore, Diamond and Gutlohn (2006, p.187) in [www.readingrockets.org/article](http://www.readingrockets.org/article) state that vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings."

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speakers' meaning. That is the reason why it is important to learn vocabulary.

#### **E. Piaget theory**

According to Piaget in Cameron (2001, p.2) and Ekonomi (2007, p.39) children is active learner, with how young children function in the world that surrounds them, and how this influences their mental development. The child is seen as continually interacting with the world round her/him, solving problems that are presented by the environment. It is through taking action to solve problems that learning occurs. For example, a very young child might encounter the problem of how to get food from her bowl into her mouth. In solving the problem, with a spoon or with fingers, the child learns the muscle control and direction-finding

needed to feed herself. The knowledge the result from such action is not imitated or in-born, but is actively constructed by the child.

What happen early on with concrete objects, continues to happen in the mind, as problems are confronted internally, and action taken to solve them or thing them through . in the way, throught is seen as deriving from action; action is internalised, or carried out mentally in the imagination, and in this way thingking develops. Piaget gives a much less important role to language in cognitive development that does Vigotsky. It is action, rather than development of the first language which, for Piaget, is fundamental to cognitive development.

Piagetian psychology differentiates two way in which development can take place as a result of activity : assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation happens when action takes place without any change to the child; accommodation involves the child adjusting to features of the environment in some way. Returning to the example of feeding, let's imagine what might happend when a child, who has learn to use a spoon, is presented with a fork to eat with. She may first use the fork in just the same way as the spoon was used; this is assimilation of the new tool to existing skills and knowledge. When the child realises that the prongs of of the frok offer new eating opportunities – spiking food rather than just ‘spooning’ it – accomodation occurs; the child's actions and knowledge adapt to the new possibility and someting new is created. These two adaptive proesses, although essentially different, happen together. Assimilation and accomodation are initially adaptive processes of behavior, but they become processes of thingking. Accomodation is an important

idea that has been taken into second language learning under the label ‘restructuring’, used to refer to the re-organisation of mental representations of a language McLaughlin, (1992, p.240). We will encounter it again when we consider the development of grammar.

From a piagetian viewpoint, a child’s thinking develops as gradual growth of knowledge and intellectual skills towards a final stage of formal, logical thinking. However, gradual growth is punctuated with formal, logical thinking. However, gradual growth is punctuated with certain fundamental changes, which cause the child to pass through a series of stage. At each stage, the child is capable of some types of thinking but still incapable of others. In particular, the Piagetian end point of development – thinking that can manipulate formal abstract categories using rules of logic – is held to be unavailable to children before they reach 11 years of age or more.

The experimental studies used to support Piaget’s theories have been criticised for not being sufficiently child-friendly, and for underestimating what children are capable of. In a series of ingenious experiments, Margaret Donaldson and her colleagues have convincingly shown that when appropriate language, objects and tasks are used, very young children are capable of many of the ways of thinking that Piaget held too advanced for them, including formal, logical thought Donaldson (1978, p.21). These results undermine some of Piaget’s theoretical views, particularly the notion of discrete stages and the idea that children cannot do certain things if they have not yet ‘reached’ that stage. An example of how stage theory can lead to restricting children’s learning occurred in the

UK in the late 1970s and early 1980s. worked on part-skills. In spending so long on writing patterns and bits of letter shapes, they were missing out on the more holistic experiences that also help children understand the purposes of writing as communication.

An important dimension of children's lives that Piaget neglects is the social; it is the child on his or her own in the world that concerns him, rather than the child in communication with adults and other children.

### **1. Implication of Piagetian theory for language learning**

We can take from Piaget the very important idea of the child as an active learner and thinker, constructing his or her own knowledge from working with objects or ideas. Donalson's work emphasises that. (the child) *actively tries to make sense of the world . . . asks questions, . . . want to know . . . also from a very early stage, the child has purposes and intentions: he wants to do* ( Donalson 1978, my emphasis )

Children also seek out intentions and purposes in what they see other people doing, bringing their knowledge and experience to their attempts to make sense to other people's actions and language. Realising that children are active 'sense- - maker', but that their sense- making is limited by their experience, is a key to understanding how they respond to tasks and activities in language classroom that we will use throughout this book.

### **2. The worlds as offering opportunities for learning**

If we take Piaget's idea that children adapt through experiences with objects in the environment, and turn it around, we

can see how that environment provides the setting for development through the opportunities it offers the child for action. Transferring this idea metaphorically to the abstract world of learning and ideas, we can think of the classroom and classroom activities as creating and offering opportunities to learners for learning. This view coincides with 'ecological' thinking that sees events and activities as offering affordances or opportunities for use and interaction that depend on who is involved, according to Gibson, 1979 in Cameron (2001, p.5) : for example, to a human being, a tree 'affords' shelter from the rain of firewood, to a bird, the same tree 'affords' a nest site or buds to eat.

#### **F. Bruner theory**

According to Cameron (2001, p.8) and Ekonomi (2007, p.41) an important concept given by Bruner is scaffolding and routines, where scaffolding is teacher talk that is used to do activity in the class so that when they are absent until disperse class in the last meeting. All do with use language that is studied.

For Bruner, language is the most important tool for cognitive growth, and he has investigated how adults use language to mediate the world for children and help them to solve problems (Bruner 1983, 1990). Talk that supports a child in carrying out an activity, as a kind of verbal version or fine-tuned help given in the baby feeding example above, has been labelled scaffolding Wood, Bruner and Rose (1976, p.89). In experiments with American mothers and children, parents who scaffolded tasks effectively for children did the following :

- a. they made the children interested in the task;
- b. they simplified the task, often by breaking it down into smaller steps;

- c. they kept the child on track towards completing the task by reminding the child of what the goal was;
- d. they pointed out what was important to do or showed the child other ways of doing parts of the tasks;
- e. they controlled the child's frustration during the tasks;
- f. they demonstrated an idealised version of the task.

Moreover, good scaffolding was tuned to the needs of the child and adjusted as the child became more competent. Scaffolding has been transferred to the classroom and teacher-pupil talk. Wood (1998, p.89) suggests that teachers can scaffold children's learning in various ways;

<b>Teacher can help children to</b>	<b>By</b>
attend to what is relevant	suggesting praising the significant providing focusing activities
adopt useful strategies	encouraging rehearsal being explicit about organisation
remember the whole tasks and goals	reminding modeling providing part-whole
activities	

*(from Wood 1998)*

Each of these teaching strategies can be applied to language teaching. The notion of helping children attend to what is important will recur in various topics, and echoes discussion in English language teaching about 'noticing' Schmidt (1990, p.10). In directing attention and remembering the whole

task and goals on behalf of the learner, the teacher is doing what children are not yet able to do for themselves. When they focus on some part of a task or the language they want to use, children may not be able to keep in mind the larger task or communicative aim because of limits to their attentional capacity. Between them, teacher and pupils manage the whole task but the way in which the parts and aspects are divided up varies with age and experience. The teacher does most of the managing of joint engagement on a task.

Bruner has provided a further useful idea for language teaching in his notion of formats and routines. These are features of events that allow scaffolding to take place, and combine the security of the familiar with the excitement of the new. Bruner's most useful example of a routine is of parents reading stories to their children from babyhood onwards Garton and Pratt (1998, p.33). I will develop it at some length, both because it clarifies the important idea of routines, and also because it will be used in latter discussions of the role of stories in language classroom.

In situation where parents read bedtime stories to their children ( Bruner researched middle-class American families ), the routine that is followed at the same each day goes something like this : the child sits on the parents lap with a large picture story book, and parent and child turn the pages together. As the child gets older, the type of book changes and the role of adult and child change, but the basic format remains. When action and language use are analysed, another layer of routine emerges. With even young children, adults do most of the talking , describe the characters and objects in the pictures and involving the child with instruction, to question and to ask silent questions , such as look at the clown.

He's a big nose, hasn't he ? the child can be further involved by being asked to point to known pictures : where's the clown ? where's his big nose ? as child learns to talk, so the child's verbal involvement increases as she or he joins in naming pictures and events. Over any short period of time, the language used by parent includes a lot of repetition and use of finely tuned language that the child, helped by the pictures, can make sense of. The book-reading event is scaffolded by the adult to let the child participate at the level he or she is capable of. The repeated language allows the child to predict what is coming and thus to join in, verbally and non-verbally.

At the large stage, when the five or six year old child is beginning to read, the format may be much the same, with the routine and language more advanced. At this stage, the parents may read the story aloud as well as ask questions about the pictures. The child may finish sentences, recalling how the story ends from memory of previous reading events. Later still, the child may read the story to the parent.

Notice how novelty and change are incorporated alongside the familiar security of the routine, and how the child can participate at the increasingly more demanding level as the parent reduces the scaffolding. Again, language use is predictable with the routine, but there is 'space' within which the child can take over and do the language her/himself. This space for growth ideally matches the child's zone of proximal development. Bruner suggests that these routines and their adjustment provide an important site for language and cognitive development.

### **3. Routine in the language classroom**

Transferring to the language classroom, we can see how the classroom, routines which happen everyday, may provide opportunities for language development. One immediate example would be in classroom management, such as giving out paper and scissors for making activities. As a routine, this would always take basically the same form: for example, the teacher talking to the whole class, organising distribution, perhaps using children as monitors; the scissors might be kept in a box, the paper in a cupboard. The language used would suit the task and the pupils' level; so early stage learners might hear, Gorge, please give out the scssors. Margaret, please give out the paper. The context and the familiarity of the event provide an opportunity for pupils to predict meaning and intonation, but the routine also offers a way to add variation and novelty that can involve more complex language: Sam, please ask everybody, if they want black paper or white paper , or give out a pair of scissors to each group. As the language becomes more complex, the support the meaning that come from the routine and the situation helps th children to continue to understand. The increased complexity of language provide of space for language growth ; if the new language is within a child's ZPD, she or he will make sense of it and start the process of internalising it.

Routine then can provide opportunities for meaningful language development; they allow the child to actively make sense of new language from familiar experience and provide a space for language growth. Routine will open up many possibilities for developing language skills.

#### **4. From learning to language learning**

The first sections of this chapter have reviewed important theories of learning that yield valuable tools for theorising the teaching of

languages to young learners. They have been largely concerned with the learning of children in general rather than the learning of language. In the second half of the chapter, I review theory and research that are relevant to the learning of foreign languages by children. The language learning that is studied in these contexts is different in important ways from the learning of a foreign language. When we make use of the theory and empirical research from these other situations.

The central characteristics of *foreign language learning* lie in the *amount and type of exposure* to the language: there will be very little experience of the language outside the classroom, and encounters with the language will be through several hours of teaching in a school week. In the case of a global language like English, however, even very young children will encounter the language in use on video, TV, computers and film.