

INTRODUCTION

In the practice of English language teaching at schools, there are many teachers who still use conventional techniques. They have more dominant role than students. The students just listen to the explanation and do the assignments from their teachers. As a result, the students do not enjoy the learning process. In some occasions, the students are interested in their own ways by applying context based on the subject that have been taught or they have chit chat with the other friends. According to Ketter & Arnold (2003) if the teachers do not have the students' attention, they will not be able to teach them. Because of the reasons above, the teachers should use the technique or approach that can create the students' interest so that they enjoy the teaching learning process. In other words, the teachers should use the approach that can explore the interest of the students where they can take apart or be active in class. One of the approaches is contextual teaching and learning that helps teachers relate the subject matter content to real world situation and motivates students to make connection.

The purpose of using Contextual Teaching and Learning for young learner is especially for kindergartners students, they will get easily understand the material. The materials are connected with the real life. And it is also impact on the student experienced of the study itself; they will get more information from the background knowledge with the next material they learn.

THE NATURE OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL is instruction and learning that is meaningful. Typically, that means that instruction is situated in context but for

more advanced students meaningful learning can also be abstract and de-contextualized subjects.

Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL is the process of relating classroom with the real world. [http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL /Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL /intro/Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL is.html](http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/Contextual_Teaching_Learning_or_CTL/Contextual_Teaching_Learning_or_CTL/intro/Contextual_Teaching_Learning_or_CTL_is.html)

THE PRINCIPLES AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Contextual teaching and learning as one of approaches for teaching and learning has scientific principles. According to Johnson (2002) there are three principles of it. They are principles of interdependence, the principle of differentiation, and the principle of self-regulation.

Principle of Interdependence

Human being could not establish intimacy with one another (Johnson, 2002:28). It means that although the approach consists of authentic learning activity that is conducted group where the students can work together with their friends, there is no one who can intimidate the other's to follow the certain students. It is a sharing and discussing section when it is conducting in group, so the principle stresses that all of the learners have the interdependence.

Principle of Differentiation

When the students are different in their creativity, they could be free to explore their individual talents, cultivate their own learning styles, and progress at their own pace (Johnson, 2002:31). It means that contextual teaching and learning

approach can be conducted to the students with different characters, talents, and ability. The importance of the principle is how the contextual teaching learning helps the students to explore their own talent and can have a big motivation to study based on their life context.

Principle of Self-Regulation

Self-regulation means everything is set up, maintained, and recognized by yourself. The principle motivates the students to show all of their potentials. Moreover, it also explores them to get the new talents. The teacher should give them belief by giving responsibility for taking the decision, behavior, choice, plan, solution etc.

THE EIGHT COMPONENTS OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

According to Elaine B.Johnson (2002) there are eight components of contextual teaching and learning as follows :

- Doing Significant Work

The students could relate what the materials have gained in the school and also in the various contexts that still exist in real world.

- Using Authentic Assessment

The using of authentic assessment is useful in order to get the meaningful purposes. The importance of it for contextualizing the meaningfulness of learning and promoting students' motivation (Paris & Winograd, 2006:2).

- Making Meaningful Connection

The students can learn the materials that make sense to them because the materials itself are gained based on their real life context.

- Self-Regulated Learning

The purpose of self-regulated learning is to create the students to have learning regularly in order they can get the knowledge as much as possible. It is done because the role of the students in contextual teaching and learning is to find their own material when they are learning.

- Collaborating

Collaborating is derived from the word “collaborate”. It means that the characteristic of contextual teaching and learning is to do the group discussion, to have sharing session what they have known with the other friends.

- Critical and Creative Thinking

It stresses on how the students can think critically if they find problem in order to gain the best solution. Besides, they can be creative when there is task that needs creativity.

- Nurturing the Individual

It stresses that the students still need the help of the other such as from adult people who mostly have more experience than the young. So, the students should respect the adult people.

- Reaching High Standard

By relating high standard as the characteristics of contextual teaching and learning, it can motivate the students to have more frequency of studying.

THE BENEFITS OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Contextual teaching and learning as a concept helps the teachers and students relate the meaning through prior and new knowledge to get new understanding. So, it is an expectation that the approach can give benefits for teacher and students in teaching learning process. According to Satriani, Emilia, & Gunawan (2012:11) the first benefit is that contextual teaching and learning motivates young learners. The learner can take a charge of their own learning and to relate between knowledge and its application to the various contexts of their lives. The second benefit is that the learner can produce the process when the learning process more meaningful because of it so the students can enjoy their own learning by doing the practical activity. The last benefit is it can strengthen students' memory and understanding of the concept because the students who are learning through the material that has taken from their experience and new knowledge. In other words, they relate their prior and new knowledge to get new understanding. So, they will easily remember, recall, and comprehending the material.

APPROACHES FOR IMPLEMENTING CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

There are some approaches that give contribution when implementing contextual teaching and learning. All of the approaches are the part of the application of Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL to help to achieve the goal

of it. According to Berns & Erickson (2001:3) there are five approaches for implementing Contextual Teaching Learning or CTL . The first is problem - based learning. It means that the approach encourages the students to solve the problem when they are learning that integrated skills and concepts from many contents areas. It can begin with either a real or stimulated problem (Putnam & Leach, 2004:3). The second is cooperative learning. It is done in the form of group discussion where the students can work together with the other friends. It provides opportunity for students to interact with each other and also enables them to gain valuable social skill (Deen & Smith, 2006:16).The third is project based learning. It stresses on the principle of discipline in conducting the investigation to get the solution from the problem, and gives opportunity to students to work autonomously. The fourth is service learning. It provides the real practice to develop knowledge through projects and activities. The fifth is work based learning that the activity occurs in the workplace to get the benefit for the students.

THE NATURE OF YOUNG LEARNERS

Teaching young learners needs to consider their nature. For that, this section presents definition of young learners and the characteristics of young learners respectively.

Definition of Young Learners

There are many statements about the definitions of Young Learners,we as a teacher can give young learners lesson on the beginner level, because the young

learners is the beginner step in learning process, Young learners is a learners that learn in first step, and they can proceed into the next level based on their skill.

Basically, young learners can be learn in play group, kindergarten, or elementary school. We as a teachers must be professional to teach them, because our lesson can be the big foundation on their learning. Young learners also can learn fast and they are good in imitating their teachers. Therefore, the teachers must a good model in their learning process.

Young learners have a big motivation if they learn with what they like. For example: with their interest, they can be very enthusiastic in learning. Teacher can also give additional lesson for their students of young learners, based on their student's hobby, because that can make them feel enthusiastic for their learning, and make them enjoy their lesson.

Slattery and Willis (2001) define the young learners as those between 7–12 years old while very young learners are defined as under 7 years of age. Scott and Ytreberg (2001) distinguish between two groups of young learners, one between 5-7 and another 8-11, considering mainly their ability to perceive the abstract and concrete. The Turkish primary curriculum for teaching English (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2006) defines the “young learners” as the children from the first year of formal schooling (6 years old, in our case) to 12 years of age.

Characteristics of Young Learners

Susan Halliwell (1992: 3) states that young children do not enter the language classroom empty-handed. They have already established a set of instincts, skills and characteristics which will help them learn another language.

Halliwell (1992: 3) introduced these as the examples of major qualities of young language learners. According to her, children have the following characteristics:

- already very good at interpreting meaning without necessarily understanding the individual words;
- already have great skill in using limited language creatively;
- frequently learn indirectly rather than directly;
- take great pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do;
- have a ready imagination;
- above all take great delight in talking.

Meanwhile, according to Scott and Ytreberg (1990: 1-5) the following list shows general characteristics and language development of a young language learner.

Five to seven year olds can:

- plan activities;
- talk about what they are doing, what they have done or heard;
- use logical reasoning;
- use their vivid imaginations;
- use a wide range of intonation patterns in their mother tongue;
- understand direct human interaction.

Phillips states that these biases toward certain types of learning should pave the way for competence in early schooling. Children lack knowledge and experience, but not reasoning ability. Indeed, although young children are inexperienced, they reason with the knowledge they have. Precocious knowledge may jump-start the learning process, but because of limited experience and underdeveloped systems of logical thinking, children's knowledge contains misconceptions. Misinformation can impede school learning, so teachers need to be aware of the ways in which children's background knowledge influences their understanding. Such awareness should help teachers anticipate children's confusion and recognize why children have difficulties grasping new ideas. Strategies for learning are important.

When children are required to learn about unfamiliar knowledge domains, they need to develop intentional learning strategies. Children need to understand what it means to learn, who they are as learners, and how to go about planning, monitoring and revising, to reflect upon their learning and that of others, and to learn how to determine if they understand. These met cognitive skills provide strategic competencies for learning.

The children have their own characteristics, which are different from adults. The characteristics cover their ways of thinking, their attitude, their aptitude, et cetera. They also prevail to the children's ways of learning language. This, of course, influences the ways of teaching them. To give the best quality of teaching English to the children, the teachers should know and understand them (1995: 7).

Phillips states that in learning a language, young learners respond to the language, depending on what it does or what they can do with it rather than treating it as an intellectual game or abstract system (1995: 7). Brewster (1997: 6)

supports it by saying that theories of the children's learning require that young learners be supported by moving from the abstract to the concrete and through being involved in activity. It can be understood that the children need activities that are more concrete rather than abstract and to be involved in those activities in order that they can learn the language well.

Meanwhile, Brumfit (1997: v) gives a list of the characteristics which young learners share as follows :

1. Young learners are only just beginning their schooling, so that teachers have a major opportunity to mould their expectations of life in school.
2. As a group they are potentially more differentiated than secondary or adult learners, for they are closer to their varied home cultures, and new to the conformity increasingly imposed across cultural grouping by the school.
3. They tend to be keen and enthusiastic learners.
4. Their learning can be closely linked with their development of ideas and concepts, because it is so close to their initial experiences of formal schooling.
5. They need physical movement and activity as much as stimulation for their thinking, and the closer together these can be the better.

Most primary level learners will share these characteristics. Those opinions give the researcher some important notes about children's special characteristics in learning the language. They are as the following:

1. Children respond the language well through concrete things (visual things) rather than abstract things,

2. Children need physical movements and real activities to stimulate their thinking,
3. Children will be enthusiastic if they are taught using fun activities or being involved in activities,
4. Children love to play, and learn best when they are enjoying themselves,
5. Children learn well through something that is close to their culture,
6. Children like to work together.

Considering the characteristics of young learners above, in the writer's opinion, contextual teaching and learning is suitable for teaching kindergartners because contextual teaching and learning covers those characteristics. For example, kindergartners will be enthusiastic when, a teacher, as a facilitator give a task to the children to identify the right food for chicken out of some other kinds of food. The young learners will directly act enthusiastically to chose the food. In this process, they fell like playing, and usually they work together to complete the task.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Inquiry – based Learning as one of the Techniques of Contextual Teaching and Learning

The Chinese Confucian philosopher Xunzi (312-230 BC) wrote in *Ruxiao (The Teachings of the Ru)* "Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand." Inquiry implies involvement that leads to understanding. Furthermore, involvement in learning implies possessing skills and attitudes that permit you to seek resolutions to questions and issues while you construct new knowledge.

Joe Exline (2014) stated that "Inquiry" is defined as "a seeking for truth, information, or knowledge -- seeking information by questioning." Individuals carry on the process of inquiry from the time they are born until they die. This is true even though they might not reflect upon the process. Infants begin to make sense of the world by inquiring. From birth, babies observe faces that come near, they grasp objects, they put things in their mouths, and they turn toward voices.

The process of inquiring begins with gathering information and data through applying the human senses -- seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Bellow is a model lesson plan of applying contextual teaching in a kindergarten.

MODEL LESSON PLAN OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

LESSON PLAN

School : A Kindergarten

Subject : English

Theme / Sub theme : Animals / Tame Animals

Term : I

Grade : Kindergarten

Time allocation : 2 x 30 minutes

1. Basic Competence
 - Understand all of the instruction from the teacher about tame animals.
2. Achievement Indicators
 - Students are able to mention the name of the tame animals (cow, horse, goat, chicken, duck, deer)
 - Students are able to retell the story about tame animals in a very simple way
3. Learning materials
 - The real animals at the school zoo
 - Animals toys
 - Animal pictures
4. Teaching and learning activities

- 1) Technique : Contextual Teaching and Learning (inquiry)
- 2) Learning Activities
 - a. Opening
 - Greeting
 - Sing a song good morning
 - Review the last material (wild animals)
 - b. Main activities / whilst
 - Students are invited to the mini zoo of the school
 - Students are asked about the names of the animals
 - Students are asked to mention the names of tame animals (cow, horse, goat, chicken, duck, deer)
 - Students are asked to feed the tame animals
 - Students asked to describe about the tame animals (their name and food)
 - Students sing a song “ Sounds of Animals”
 - c. Closing
 - Students are asked to give circle in the tame animals picture that have been studied in the school zoo.
 - Sing a song “ Good Bye “

5. Assessment

Students are given an assignment to match the animals picture of tame animals in school zoo.

- Source:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=tame+animals&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi37ZLNksnKAhWBCo4KHclPBXYQsAQIGg&biw=1024&bih=655>

Surabaya, 08 January 2015

CONCLUSION

Contextual teaching and learning is a suitable approach for teaching kindergartners because contextual teaching and learning covers those characteristics of young learners. One of the benefits of contextual teaching and learning is that the learners can relate between knowledge and its own application to the various contexts of their life, so that the learners can learn the new knowledge in meaningful learning process.

However, teachers have to chose and plan activities that are suitable to implement contextual teaching and learning in a kindergarten class. With the right activities, children will actively participate in learning.

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