Educating Young Learners in English: A Review of the Literature

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Abstract. *This study looked at engaging teaching strategies that encourage student engagement and language acquisition, age-appropriate English teaching resources, and the value of fostering a positive learning environment for young learners. This study employs the library research approach, which entails seeking and identifying sources of factual data or firsthand or expert commentary on a research subject. This method's ability to improve performance is why it was selected for this investigation. As a result, this study's premise needs solid theoretical and experimental backing. Studies on young learners' age-appropriate English teaching resources demonstrate the efficacy of various approaches. In order to engage younger kids, research emphasizes the use of visual and interactive materials, storybooks, songs and hymns, games, and technological integration. These teaching strategies not only hold students' interest but also advance their language proficiency, understanding, and vocabulary growth. They also include creating a secure space for communication, a supportive teacher-student connection, clear expectations and routines, collaborative learning, and a pleasant and encouraging environment. components need to provide the best possible learning. One cannot stress how crucial it is to build strong relationships between teachers and students since these ties are the cornerstone of a self-assured and supportive learning environment. The study also emphasizes the need of individualized instruction that takes into account the various learning preferences, language proficiency levels, and interests of young students. Teachers may make sure that every student feels appreciated and supported throughout their language learning process by customizing lessons to meet each student's requirements.*

Key words: *Teaching English; Young Learners; Literature Review.*

Introduction

The term "English for Young Learners" describes students whose first language is not English as *they* acquire the language in pre-primary or primary (elementary) schooling. When learning English as a second language, it includes kids whose native tongue is the language of their nation. Many issues arise as a result of globalization[1], such as population mobility, differences in wealth between small towns in isolated rural areas and large, diverse cities, and attitudes toward minorities (both native and recent immigrants), their cultures, and languages, some of which have an impact on EYL[2]. In recent years, teaching English to young learners as a second language has drawn a lot of attention. The early years are critical for language acquisition, and a child's language abilities and general cognitive development can be significantly impacted by receiving high-quality language instruction at this time.

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[1] Globalization is a term used to describe the increasing connectedness and interdependence of world cultures and economies.
[2] EYL- English for Young Learners

Research Method

According to George (2008), this study used a library research technique, which entails discovering and locating sources of factual information or firsthand or expert opinion on a research subject. Since this strategy was selected for the study because it is performance-promoting, the study's premise needs substantial theoretical and experimental backing. By referencing reputable sources and well-established academic work, the research aims to support its conclusions and add to the corpus of current knowledge in the topic. By using this methodological technique, researchers may examine various viewpoints and examine the findings of earlier studies that have been published in the literature. Additionally, research attempts to guarantee the authenticity and trustworthiness of its results by depending on trustworthy sources. This study intends to give a thorough and well-founded analysis that advances knowledge of the topic by employing a library research technique.

Discussion

Age-Correct Resources

The following conclusions have been drawn from the investigation on age-appropriate resources for teaching English to young students:

Visual and Interactive Materials

Young learners benefit greatly from visual and interactive materials because they are more receptive to things that are visually attractive and incorporate vibrant graphics, photographs, and captivating visuals. These resources grab their interest and add to the enjoyment of studying. The following are some instances of the application of interactive and visual elements in language instruction:

Researchers studying Russian language preschool and kindergarten teachers discovered that they effectively used a digital resource by taking advantage of its multimodal content presentation, incorporating interactive activities primarily in a whole-class setting, and fostering an interesting and fun learning environment through play. According to reports, visual material representation is the most beneficial and essential for introducing or practicing vocabulary, promoting listening comprehension, and generally encouraging very young learners to stay on task when paired with aural input. Many teachers have taken advantage of the Internet and technology to make the language classroom more attractive with visual aids and interactive teaching methods using technology. Learners nowadays have better access to many other channels of language learning, such as Youtube, Netflix, BBC, Ted Talks, the news, radio podcasts, etc. where they can actually learn the language as well as an approach to the content they want at their own homes. In fact, it is very difficult to find a teenager or young adult without a smartphone or Internet access, and young Vietnamese students are not excluded.

The sharp increase of high school and university students who own a Youtube or Netflix account and the amount of time they spend watching TV shows, viral video clips, soap operas, or movies every day made the researcher wonder if we could use these endless captivating sources of materials to actually enhance learners' motivation and listening ability in Vietnamese ESL classrooms. With the use of interactive teaching techniques and visual aids, many teachers have made language classrooms more appealing by utilizing the Internet and technology. These days, language learners have more access to a wide range of additional language learning resources, including radio podcasts, Youtube, Netflix, BBC, Ted Talks, the news, and more, from which they may get the information they desire at home while also learning the language. Young Vietnamese students are not an exception to the rule that it is very rare to locate a teen or young adult without a smartphone or Internet connection. Young learners benefit from visual and interactive materials, and language teachers can employ a variety of tools to enhance student enjoyment and engagement.

Songs and Chants

Chants and songs are useful resources for helping young students acquire languages. Through enticing songs, repeated lyrics, and rhythmic patterns, they aid youngsters in internalizing language,

pronunciation, and intonation. Singing and chanting can help students learn the language and create a happy, engaging environment in the classroom.

Research on oral repetition teaching methods—specifically, songs, chants, and drills—increased the likelihood that young pupils would pick up and remember new words. The study was conducted with a class of around 25 students in a kindergarten in Japan. Using games, chants, songs, and other kid-friendly activities, Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS[3]) is an additional approach that helps kids improve their vocabulary and conversational English as a second language.

Blocks and Puzzles

Young learners can benefit from manipulatives and hands-on activities that involve puzzles, building blocks, or tactile materials because they encourage kinesthetic learning and offer a sensory experience. Through physical interaction, these exercises aid in the absorption of verbal concepts. Craft projects may be included into a second language learning program to maximize language acquisition and offer a variety of options for language learning. Every child's cognitive development can be aided by an understanding of their unique learning styles. Young children who are gifted and talented demonstrate exceptional abilities in verbal expression, logical thinking, elaboration, creativity, and flexibility in problem-solving. Additionally, they demonstrate sharp observation skills and a broader general knowledge base. Promoting the self-regulation of young EFL learners in their learning is crucial. When selecting age-appropriate English language learning resources, take into account factors including visual appeal, interaction, contextual relevance, and cultural sensitivity. To effectively meet the requirements of young learners, a variety of materials such as storybooks, songs, flashcards, visual aides, digital resources, manipulatives, realia, and adapted materials are used.

Activating Educational Techniques

Based on the research conducted on finding activating educational techniques for teaching English to young learners, the following findings have been identified:

Total Physical Response (TPR)

The educational approach known as Total Physical Response (TPR) blends language learning with physical activity. By including their bodies into the learning process, it engages young learners and enables them to comprehend and generate language via movement and reaction. TPR is a strategy for teaching young students English. For kinesthetic learners who must participate actively in the classroom, it works very well. With the use of the TPR approach, teachers may teach language skills by having them function as a supervisor, role model, and instructor.

TPR is appropriate for early childhood education as it places a high priority on activities that are closely connected to physical movement. Teaching English is not the only use for this approach. It has also been used in second language instruction for Mandarin and Chinese. TPR has been demonstrated to be beneficial in raising students' comprehension and self-assurance in their ability to learn a foreign language. Studies that have contrasted TPR with alternative teaching approaches have discovered that it works well for increasing students' vocabulary.

To sum up, TPR is a teaching strategy that involves movement to keep young students interested in language learning. It has been shown to be beneficial for expanding vocabulary as well as for enhancing speaking and listening abilities.

Play-based learning and games

Young learners can benefit from games and play-based learning activities that encourage active engagement and pleasure while strengthening language, grammar, and vocabulary. A natural and comfortable learning atmosphere may be produced in English classes by using board games, memory games, and interactive web games. Technology-mediated board games have been found in several studies to increase students' motivation and success in learning vocabulary in English. Other

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[3] TPRS- Total Physical Response Storytelling

innovative methods of teaching that have been used to teach English to young students include role-plays, instructional applications, music and videos, storytelling, and interactive games. In K–12 education, tablets and other digital technology have also been utilized to improve learning outcomes and practices related to participatory literacy.

Storytelling

For young students, storytelling is an excellent teaching strategy because it sparks their creativity, improves their listening comprehension, and increases their vocabulary.

According to a Libyan research, when tales are told to pupils, they are more likely to learn English with passion. Most students said they could understand the course better and could take up new language more quickly. The instructor added that since the students are actively engaged, employing the narrative style makes the sessions more interesting and pleasurable.

According to a research done in Norway and the Ukraine, storytelling may be used to teach English, although it is not a highly organized subject and is only used sometimes. This is partly because both countries' present primary school textbooks and national curriculum do not place much emphasis on storytelling, which also explains why there aren't many pre-made resources available for telling stories to young children during the pre-reading stage.

According to a research done in Vietnam, instructors may face a number of challenges while using storytelling in the classrooms of very young learners due to their distinct second language learning features. While giving storytelling classes, the participants ran into a few obstacles, mostly related to the students and other subjects, including teachers and resources.

According to two Indonesian research, teaching young learners English through the use of Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) approaches can enhance their vocabulary acquisition and retelling abilities. The results of the research indicate that the use of storytelling and physical movements in these strategies might assist children stay focused and motivated to acquire new language.

Two studies conducted in Indonesia suggest that using the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) techniques to teach young learners English can improve their retelling and vocabulary acquisition skills. The study's findings suggest that using narrative and dance as part of these tactics may help kids stay engaged and focused while learning a new language.

Encouragement-Providing Learning Environment

The following conclusions have been drawn from the study on locating an encouraging learning atmosphere for teaching English to young learners:

Positive and Encouraging Atmosphere

It's essential to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for young learners to feel at ease and inspired to engage in English language learning. Young learners' confidence and self-esteem are cultivated via encouragement, praise, and positive reinforcement, which increases their readiness to take chances and participate in language-learning activities.

A research on young English language learners found a correlation between speaking confidence and self-improvement and positive reinforcement. According to the study, educators need to become more conscious of the need to encourage students' speaking abilities in order to see improved results.

Higher foreign language enjoyment (FLE) ratings are correlated with a favorable emotional climate in the classroom, according to a study on the emotions of foreign language learners. In contrast to foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA), which is more consistent among teachers, the study indicates that FLE is more teacher-dependent.

Character education may be used in any topic, including English, to assist young people develop good moral qualities, according to a report on the subject's implementation in English instruction for young learners.

Another tactic that can foster a supportive and stimulating environment in the classroom is to use a conversational approach to encourage pupils to communicate when they are still learning English. According to the article, one linguistic variety that helps motivate students to participate more in class is the informal manner. Finally, a review of several classroom-based research on the impact of songs on the motivation and vocabulary development of young learners discovered that songs unquestionably boost young learners' enthusiasm and foster a good learning environment in addition to having a favorable affect on vocabulary.

Another strategy for creating a positive and engaging learning environment in the classroom is to encourage students to talk even when they are still learning English by using a conversational approach. The casual style is one language variation that, according to the text, encourages pupils to interact more in class. Lastly, a review of multiple classroom-based studies on the influence of songs on young learners' motivation and vocabulary development found that songs definitely increase the zeal of young learners and create a positive learning environment in addition to having a positive impact on vocabulary.

Creating Positive Teacher-Student Connections

For young learners' general language development, instructors and students must build supportive interactions. Children feel more at ease asking questions, asking for assistance, and expressing themselves in English when they are in a loving and trustworthy atmosphere created by teachers who model empathy, respect, and understanding. However, the difficulties of distance learning may make it more difficult to establish these connections.

In the past, there was no link of support or positivity between the special education profession and the group of pupils classified as English language learners (ELLs[4]). The preservice courses described in this article were created to help aspiring special education teachers learn about and build effective teaching methods for pupils from a variety of linguistic backgrounds.

The authors evaluated the effectiveness of a practitioner partnership language intervention targeting expressive and receptive oral language learning in young language minority learners from multiple-language groups in a randomized trial research. Young language-minority learners' spoken language skills were successfully improved by the curriculum.

With the right guidance, new instructors may steer clear of teacher-centered, didactic, lecture-based curriculum in favor of more interactive, inquiry-based learning. Regretfully, professional development in mentoring novice science teachers is not provided to many teachers. This article fills that need by highlighting how crucial it is to change the way in which novice educators see their interactions with ELLs, by suggesting mentorship techniques, and by presenting ways to get ELLs interested in science and engineering.

One factor that significantly boosts teacher effectiveness is adjustment. Teachers who are well-adjusted consistently provide excellent instruction and deal with students' issues more skillfully than those who struggle with adjustment.

Collaborative Learning

Research has demonstrated that engaging in collaborative learning activities may effectively foster language development and social skills in young learners. In an investigation carried out in a preschool dual language classroom, the instructor employed deliberate paired learning activities, strategic student pairing, and visual and aural scaffolding to improve cooperative interactions.

An additional study examined the effectiveness of creative teaching strategies in fostering adult and youth learners' motivation for group English language study. The results demonstrated a significant

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[4] ELLs- English language learners

shift and improvement in their attitudes and sentiments about group English language learning as well as their academic performance.

Respectful and Safe Communication

In order to create a climate of courteous and open conversation where young students feel comfortable expressing themselves in English, educators have to think about the following tactics:

Active listening has to be promoted by teachers. When pupils are speaking, teachers should provide an example of active listening by paying close attention to them. Teachers can also help students listen more actively to one another by summarizing what their classmates have said or by posing follow-up questions. Positive peer connections must be encouraged by teachers. Teachers can set up activities where students can practice their language abilities in pairs or small groups. Additionally, they can motivate students to assist one another's study and offer encouraging comments to one another.

Effective communication techniques, such as asking open-ended questions, speaking clearly and concisely, and conveying meaning through nonverbal clues, should be modeled by teachers. By posing challenging questions and encouraging students to voice their thoughts and ideas, teachers may foster an environment in which students feel comfortable participating in important conversations. They can also provide pupils the chance to evaluate what they have learned and make personal objectives.

By providing students with opportunity to practice their language abilities in a safe environment, teachers may promote active involvement. Additionally, they might offer encouragement and criticism to assist kids get better at language. Teachers may foster a secure and encouraging atmosphere where young learners feel comfortable expressing themselves in English and honing their language abilities by putting these methods into practice.

Conclusion

The study looked at engaging teaching strategies that encourage student engagement and language acquisition, age-appropriate English teaching resources, and the value of fostering a positive learning environment for young learners. The present study employs the library research approach, which entails the identification and localization of sources of factual data or expert or personal opinions about a research subject. This method's ability to improve performance is why it was selected for this investigation. As a result, this study's premise needs solid theoretical and experimental backing. Studies on young learners' age-appropriate English teaching resources demonstrate the efficacy of various approaches. In order to engage younger kids, research emphasizes the use of visual and interactive materials, storybooks, songs and hymns, games, and technological integration. These teaching strategies not only hold students' interest but also advance their language proficiency, understanding, and vocabulary growth. To create the best possible learning environment, it's also important to create a cooperative learning environment, secure communication spaces, clear standards and routines, supportive teacher-student connections, and a good and encouraging setting.

One cannot stress how crucial it is to build strong relationships between teachers and students since these ties are the cornerstone of a self-assured and supportive learning environment. The study also highlights the need of individualized instruction that takes into account the various learning preferences, language proficiency levels, and interests of young students. Teachers may guarantee that every student feels appreciated and supported throughout their language learning journey by customizing lessons to meet each student's requirements.

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