**CHAPTER II**

**THEORITICAL FOUNDATION**

2.1 Young Learners

2.1.1 The Characteristics of Young Learners

Young learners are categorized as students from three to eight years old (Pinter 2006);the limit of the age groups of young learners is from five to fourteen years old. However, the researcher offers an idea that age of categorization is not a big deal in teaching language to young learners. The main issue in teaching language to young learners should begin with the consideration that every child is unique and they have substantial differences within, such as culture differences (Pinter, 2006). Moreover, Paul (2000) adds that all children are deserved the chance to achieve their potential both as learners and as whole people, and become broad-minded members of a truly international society.

Further, Harmer (2007) classifies the characteristics of young learners as follows: (1) they respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual words,(2) they often learn indirectly rather than directly, (3) their understanding comes not from explanation but from what they see and hear, and crucially, have a chance to touch and interact with, (4) they find abstract concepts such as grammar rules difficult to grasp, (5) they generally display an enthusiasm for learning and a curiosity about the world around them, (6) they have a need for individual attention and approval from their teacher, (7) they are keen to talk about themselves and respond well to learning that uses themselves and their own lives as main topics in the classroom, and (8) they have a limited attention span unless activities are extremely engaging, they can easily get bored. Based on these classifications, various teaching approaches in teaching young learners are significantly developed.

The finding of an effective approach is usually correlated with the particular needs of young learners. In this context, teachers should develop a general approach based on their views on how young learners learn most effectively and consistently (Paul, 2003). Since teaching English to young learners become a universal consideration due to the expansion of English, there must be specific approaches in teaching them (Hudelson, 1989; Pinter, 2006).

2.1.2 Young Learners’ Learning Style

A learning style is a term that refers to different ways in which we learn, process, and retain information. All young children learn through meaningful hands-on experiences through touching, doing, and moving. Theyalso learn through seeing and hearing. As you observe your child, you will begin to identify strength and preferences that tell you something about his preferred learning style.

Generally, children have different ways of learning. Bandler and Grinder (1988) identify three characteristics of different learners: Those who prefer a visual learning style will look at their teacher’s face intently, like looking at wall displays, books etc. They will often recognize words by sight, use lists to organize their thoughts and recall information by remembering how it is set out on a page. Those who prefer an auditory learning style like the teacher to provide verbal instruction, like dialogues, discussions and plays, solve problems by talking about them and use rhythm and sound as memory aids. Those who prefer a kinesthetic learning style will learn best when they are involved or active, find it difficult to sit still for long periods and use movement as a memory aid.

**Visual Learners**

Children who have this learning style will thrive if they are given regular opportunities to present their work pictorially. For their learning to make sense they need to be able to see, visualize and illustrate their knowledge skills and concepts. Visual learning characteristics include remembering visual details, preferring to see what they are learning, needing to have paper and pens handy, doodling while listening, liking to write down instructions or see them demonstrated. Visual learners may also benefit from using mind-maps or flow-maps to explain different processes and using different colors to highlight their work.and nothing’s worth to tell these learners how to do something– they need to see it.

**Auditory Learners**

This type of learners will be happiest communicating their ideas verbally. They learn through listening to what others have to say and talking about what they’re learning. They’re also more likely to remember information by talking aloud, need to have things explained orally, may have trouble with written instructions, talk to themselves while learning something new, and enjoy discussion groups over working alone. Auditory learners may also feel more at ease expressing their ideas into a tape recorder or flip-cam. Children who have this predominant learning style will also enjoy teaching that is linked to anecdotes/jokes.

**Kinesthetic Learners**

These learners like to be actively involved ina learning process, and learn best through hands-on activities and movement. Other kinesthetic characteristics are that they want to actually do whatever is being talked about or learned, like to move around while listening or talking, often “talk” with their hands, like to touch things in order to learn about them, and remember events by recalling who did what rather than who said what. Children with this learning style will enjoy working in groups.

Kinesthetic learners can also be supported by allowing them to use models and objects to describe their ideas. Games can be utilized to support their understanding of materials. They will also enjoy reading books with strong plots. It is worth noting that these types of learners can be misdiagnosed as troublemakers because the more tradition visual or auditory learning styles do not work for them.

2.2 Assessment

2.2.1 Purposes of Assessment

Assessment should provide multiple measures and opportunities for studentsto create and demonstrate what theycan dowith a language. To provide a comprehensive picture of a student’s language ability, a teacher should strive to create a balance between formative assessment and summative assessment.

Assessments should beauthentic and include alternative and integrated performance-based assessments. Teacher and language learner need to identify goals, objectives, and expected results before beginning to plan a lesson or activity. In other words, it is essential to determine what a learner should know, understand, and be able to do. So thatin his article about classroom evaluation, classroom assessment of what is important to learn, affects their motivation and self-perceptions of competence, structures their approaches to and timing of personal study and consolidates learning and affects the development of enduring learning strategies and skills.

The purpose of assessment differs according to who is conducting or using the assessment.

1). School administrators use assessment as benchmarks for instruction, placement, or exemption in course levels and certification.

2). Teachers use assessments as diagnostic tools and feedback for guiding instruction, evidence of progress, and evaluation of teaching or curriculum.

3.) Researchers use assessment to gather data on knowledge about language learning and language use, and for evaluation or experimentation of programs

2.2.3 Types of Assessment

An assessment is integral to the teaching–learning process, facilitating students to learn and improve instruction, andtake a variety of types. Classroom assessment is generally dividedinto three types: assessment for learning, assessment of learning, and assessment as learning.

1). Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)

Assessment for learning is ongoing assessment that allows teachers to monitor students on a day-to-day basis and modify their teaching based on what the students need to be successful. This assessment provides students with the timely, specific feedback that they need to make adjustments to their learning. Formative Assessment occurs in the short term, as learners are in the process of making meaning of new content and of integrating it into what they already know. Feedback to the learner is immediate (or nearly so), to enable the learner to change his/her behavior and understanding right away.

2). Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment)

Assessment of learning is the snapshot in time that lets the teacher, students and their parents know how well each student has completed the learning tasks and activities. It provides information about student achievement. While it provides useful reporting information, it often has little effect on learning. Summative Assessment takes place at the end of a large chunk of learning, with the results being primarily for the teacheror school's use. Results may take time to be returned to the student/parent, feedback to the student is usually very limited, and the student usually has no opportunity to be reassessed. Thus, it tends to have the least impact on improving an individual student's understanding or performance.

3). Assessment as Learning

Assessment as learning develops and supports students' meta-cognitive skills. This form of assessment is crucial in helping students become lifelong learners. As students engage in peer and self-assessment, they learn to make sense of information, relate it to prior knowledge and use it for new learning. Students develop a sense of ownership and efficacy whenthey use teacher, peer and self-assessment feedback to make adjustments, improvements and changes to what they understand.

2.2.3 Principles in Assessing Young Learners

A number of principles below isany strategies that can be used to teach young learners in general (Richard 2006) :

1. Build Teaching around Activities and Physical Movement

Link language learning to physical activities by having children use and hear English for making things, drawing pictures, completing puzzles, labeling pictures, matching words and pictures, playing games, acting out movements in response to instructions and other activities that involve hands, eyes, and ears. Teachers often make use of TPR activities. Many listening activities for young children use this principle, such as activities in which children listen and respond to commands (e.g. ‘sit down’, ‘turn around’, ‘touch your nose’), listen and choose a picture, listen and draw a picture or listen and number a sequence of actions in a picture. Similarly, speaking activities with young learners may involve the use of songs, dialogues, chants and fixed expressions that students can practice in different situations.

2.Build Lessons around Linked Activities

Activities of five to ten minutes in length are most successful. A balance between the fo€llowing kinds of activities is often useful: Quiet / noisy activities. Different skills: listening, talking, reading / writing. Individual work / pair work / group work / whole-class activities. Teacher–pupil / pupil–pupil activities.

3. Build Lessons around Tasks

A task is a meaning-focused activity that requires learners to draw on and use their existing linguistic resources to complete a task, such as drawing a picture from oral instructions, or working in pairs or groups and sequencing a series of pictures to complete a story. The key features of classroom tasks for young language learners are as follows: they have coherence and unity for learners (from topic, activity and/or outcome), they have meaning and purpose for learners, they have clear language-learning goals, andthey involve learners actively.

4. Provide Scaffolding

Scaffolding refers to how a child learns through collaboration with a more knowledgeable partner (a parent, a classmate, a teacher). When children work collaboratively on tasks (such as sequencing pictures in a story, completing a puzzle or completing an information-gap task), more proficient learners can often provide the scaffolding less proficient learners need.

5. Involve Students in Creating Resources that Support their Learning

Learners can draw pictures of the characters they hear in a story or create puppets to help retell a story. They can color pictures of items and characters from stories. They can find pictures in magazines, related to a theme or topic in a lesson, and bring them to class. In Richard’s Quebec primary classes mentioned earlier, they did not use a textbook. The children created their own course book, as the course developed, using the resources that formed the basis of the course.

6. Build Lessons around Themes

Lessons can be built around topics or themes, such as animals, friends, food or family, for very young learners; and for older learners, themes can be drawn from subjects in their other classes and the community, such as transport, country life, travel and famous people. Theme-based lessons provide continuity across activities and enable English learning to be connected to the children’s lives.

7. Choose ContentChildren are Familiar with

Teaching can also be built around familiar content in the children’s culture, such as stories and events (e.g. national holidays or cultural practices).

8. Use Activities that Involve Collaboration

Children enjoy socializing with other children, and activities that work best with young learners are those in which children are working with others in pairs or groups, rather than remaining in their seats, listening to the teacher.

9. Create a Supportive Learning Community in the Classroom

A class of young learners needs to become a community of learners – that is, a group of learners with shared goals, needs and concerns. Thinking of a class as a community means seeing it as a place where each child in the class cooperates and collaborates to achieve the class’s common goals.

10. Use Enjoyable Activities that Children can Accomplish without Frustration

Young learners enjoy taking part in activities that they can successfully achieve, but which also offer some kind of challenge. Activities of this kind depend on the teacher providing language input and modeling for young language learners, where the teacher and the materials are the primary source of language.

11. Provide Rich Language Support

Since the learners will have little knowledge of English to call upon, they need careful language support for learning activities. Success will depend on the teacher providing language models, demonstrating the way the activities can be carried out in English and providing the language support an activity depends upon.

12. Give clear goals and feedback

Children like to be successful in things they do in class. In order to achieve this, it is important to set clear goals for children and to let them know when they have been successful, or if not, why not. Praise for success is very important for young learners; for example, by using stars, stickers, points or smiley faces.

13. Use English for Classroom Management

Use English for instructions, for routines such as greeting students, forming groups, for introducing activities, for giving feedback, and for other teaching processes. It is a good start to be accustomed to young learners with simple words, phrases, or common expressions, such as “hello..!”, “good morning..!”, “how are you today?”, etc.

14. UseMother Tongue when Needed

It is quite appropriate to use the mother tongue when necessary to explain the meaning of words and expressions and to help explain activities. Occasional use of the mother tongue provides a comfort zone for young learners, though teacher and students should not become over-dependent on it.

2.3Speakingfor Young Learners

Learning to communicate in a foreign language, English for instance, is a processof very complex activities of language acquisition. For young learners, to start learninga foreign language is like to start learning one’s mother tongue. They need some moretime to listen to a foreign language in the classroom and they should have also morechances to repeat some of the utterances they hear. According to Slattery and Willis intheir book of English for Primary Teachers (2001:43), although repetition of setphrases does not mean that children are acquiring language, it is still very important.They argue that repetition prepares children for meaningful communication in several ways by helping them get used to saying English, by allowing them to practiceintonation pattern, and by enabling them to gain confidence, especially if the teachergives a lot of praise.

Teaching young learners is actually not as difficult as we imagine, they are likesponges, they absorb everything we say and how we say it. The ability of teachers inpronouncing every words, phrase and sentences is of vital important, since younglearners will repeat exactly what they hear. It is believed that what young learners hasbeen learned at an early stage is difficult to change later on. For this reason, the teacher can apply the rules slowly and steadily, through continual and constant revision andrecycling. In addition, it should be cared by the teachers of young learners the relaxing and positive atmosphere of young learners’ classroom, as it is a decisive factorin achieving maximum results. There are many varied activities e.g. dialogues, songs,poems, rhymes, choral revision, and chants that can be adopted to grow students’speaking abilities as well as to build their pronunciation. There should be paid moreattention, when teachers of young learners applied the above-mentioned tools into theirteaching practicethat learners’ interaction as a way of learning. It means, teachershould emphasize and open as much chances as possible for the learners to practice pronouncing and speaking English either in the classroom or out of the classroom.

2.3.1Speaking Assessments for Young Learners

2.3.1.1Performance-Based Assessment

The definition of performance-based assessments varies greatly depending on author, disciple, publication, and intended audience (Palm, 2008). In general, a performance-based assessment measures students' ability to apply the skills and knowledge learned from a unit or units of study. Typically, the task challenges students to use their higher-order thinking skills to create a product or complete a process (Chun, 2010). Tasks can range from a simple constructed response (e.g., short answer) to a complex design proposal of a sustainable neighborhood. Arguably, the most genuine assessments require students to complete a task that closely mirrors the responsibilities of a professional, e.g., artist, engineer, laboratory technician, financial analyst, or consumer advocate.

Most recently, the researcher worked with a high school math teacher to create a performance-based assessment for a unit on probability. Below is a simplified version of our planning, loosely based on the backward design process:

#### 1. Identify goals of the performance-based assessment.

In this instance, the teacher wanted to challenge her students to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills. She also wanted them to exhibit less co-dependence and more individuality while completing this assessment. She did not want students to rely on her direction about how to complete each step of the assessment.

#### 2. Select the appropriate course standards.

Once the goals were identified, she selected the Common Core standards to be addressed with this performance assessment. She decided that the assessment should measure students' understanding of conditional probability and rules of probability.

#### 3. Review assessments and identify learning gaps.

This was a very important step. We looked at the current worksheets that students were completing for the unit. Two-way frequency tables were a large part of the assignments. Next, we looked at what was missing and noted that there was very little relevant real-world application. As a result, we decided to create a performance-based assessment that was also reality-based. Moreover, this task would require students to analyze two-way frequency tables along with other charts and graphs.

#### 4. Design the scenario.

After brainstorming a few different scenarios, we settled on a situation where the students would decide if an inmate should be granted parole or remain in prison. This scenario included five key components:

1. Setting
2. Role
3. Audience
4. Time frame
5. Product

#### 5. Gather or create materials.

Depending on the scenario, this step may or may not be needed. For this particular assessment, we wanted students to calculate the probability of an inmate returning to prison. For their review, the researchercreated seven different documents that included pie charts, bar graphs, and two-way frequency tables. All of the information was based on statistics from government agencies, such as the Federal Bureau of Prisons and Bureau of Justice Statistics.

#### 6. Develop a learning plan.

We wanted to be careful not to "teach to the test" in preparing students for the performance-based assessment. We needed to strike a balance between teaching the content (e.g., probability given two independent events) and preparing students for the task (e.g., interpreting the validity of a media resource). We brainstormed six different formative assessments that would need to be in place before students completed the performance task. However, we also acknowledged that this part of our plan would need to be constantly reviewed and revised depending on student learning needs.

2.3.1.2 Aspects to be Assessed in Speaking Assessment

In the observational approach, the student's behavior is observed and assessed unobtrusively. In the structured approach, a student is asked to perform one or more specific oral communication tasks. His or her performance on the task is then evaluated. In either setting, students should feel that they are communicating meaningful content to a real audience. Tasks should focus on topics that all of them can easily talk about, or, if they donot include such a focus, they should be given an opportunity tocollect information on the topic.There are five types of activities to assess speaking skills:

1. Intensive Speaking

A read aloud Task: Teacher listens to a recording and  evaluates the students in a series of phonological factors and fluency.

Some variations of this task are:

1. reading a scripted dialogue with someone else
2. reading  sentences containing minimal pairs
3. reading information from a table chart

Sentence/ dialogue completion task: Students read through the dialogue so thatthey can think about proper lines to fill in. The teacher produces one part orally and the students respond.

1. Responsive Speaking

These are some of the tasks which can be used when using Responsive Speaking Tasks :

1. Question and answer: Students respond to questions that the test administrator asks;
2. Giving Instructions and Directions: The test-taker is asked to give directions or instructions;
3. Paraphrasing: The test-taker is asked to paraphrase in two or three sentences what he heard or read.
4. Interactive Speaking.

These are some of the most common interactive speaking tasks:

1. Interview: It is a face-to-face exchange between test administrator and test taker. The stages of an interview are warm-up, level Check, probe and wind-down;
2. Role play is a common pedagogical activities used in communicative English classes;
3. Discussions and Conversations: These two speaking tasks provide a level of authenticity and spontaneity that other assessment techniques may not provide;
4. Games are an informal assessment task but they are not commonly used;
5. Extensive Speaking.

These are some of the most common extensive speaking tasks that you can use to assess speaking:

1. Oral Presentations are the most common task for evaluating extensive speaking, these are evaluatedbased on content and delivery;
2. Picture-cued story telling: Students describe a story based on series of pictures that they previously saw;
3. Re-Telling a story, News Event: Students are asked to tell a story of something they heard or read;
4. Imitative speaking.

Imitative speaking tasks are based on repetition. You just need to repeat a sentence you hear.

Examples include directed response tasks, reading aloud, sentence and dialogue completion, and limited picture-cued tasks.