



PROPOSAL OF RESEARCH

**REINVENTING BEHAVIORISM APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH
TO YOUNG LEARNERS**

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LEGALIZATION SHEET

Title	Reinventing Behaviorism Approach in Teachinh
Field of study	Education
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**A. Title : Reinventing Behaviorism Approach in Teaching
English to Young Learners**

B. Basic Consideration

In Indonesia, the teaching and learning of English in the elementary schools does not emerge on the surface, so the result can not be measured. In addition, as a foreign language in Indonesia, English is not taught on a daily basis as the main subject in the school. Furthermore, there is no standard guideline on how to teach, what to teach, how to deliver the subject material and how to manage the English classroom especially for the young learners. These situations lead to the ungeneralized way of teaching. Teachers sometimes are still confused about what the good way to teach English so that it can be acquired easily by learners. Whereas, in the language learning theories, learning and acquiring a new language should be begun by the early age to be successful. As what Lennerbeg assumed that there is a critical age period for language learning which is between 2 and 13 years (Cane, 2006:3). It means that on that period of time the children's LAD or Language Acquisition Device functions to receive input as many as possible.

Using psychological principles, linguist found that mechanization of language learning to young children are mimetic. It means that they will learn language easily if they are given many inputs. A Skinner (Fatsah, 2005:20) state that in the behavioristic is view, children imitate language in their environment to a considerable degree, and imitation is a strong contributing factor in the language learning process.

Lenneberg (Cane, 2006:4) assumes that language development does not come to a halt at adolescence. Further he says that vocabulary actually undergoes a period of rapid growth at this time. However, most people find it easier to learn languages when they are young especially with regard to pronunciation so a 'sensitive' period may exist when acquiring languages is easier. From this fact, the need to elaborate more on how to find the best of presenting the new language to the young learners is crucial. There are many theories approach or methods that actually can be used to

teach a new language, for example English, for the young learner, one of them is *behaviorism*.

According to (Richards, 2001:57), behaviorism basically is a process of mechanical habit formation. It is formed by giving correct response continuously then become a habit and it is only true of language on young learners. Further he says, in behaviorism there is a form of pattern drills where it gives chances of producing mistakes as minimize, also the learning of language in human is more effectively if learning the language is presented it in spoken form before they are seen in written form, and the language is more perfect if the meanings of the word learned only in their situation of the environment themselves.

In a way, these patterns are basically matched with the patterns of learning a new language that belongs to the young learners. After I reading some statements of linguist about behaviorism, I conclude that there are some positive correlation between characteristics of behaviorism and characteristic of the process of language learning of young learners. So, I propose that behaviorism approach is a good way to teach young learners.

A child does not suddenly decide to learn to talk. Children acquire language without making any conscious decision about it. They appear to be naturally programmed to extract all the necessary grammatical elements of the language for themselves provided they are exposed to a rich variety of natural speech (Cane, 2006:10). They have language development like a sponge then will absorb language easily and expose it without our having to force them to speak. Based on this principle, the psychologists propose an approach of teaching language namely behaviorism approach.

According to Jonassen in (Brown, 1991:29), a behavioral approach can be warranted in some circumstances, usually in the case of beginning learners in a specific curriculum area with other more appropriate strategies being employed as the learners acquire more knowledge. However, all the statement of the behaviorists rejected Chomsky's ideas. It is based on his argument (Fatsah, 2005:22) that a

description of external stimuli and response has to be a description of the innate ability of human beings to learn a language. This has become a dispute among theorists of behavioral and others. So that to make process of teaching and learning language successful and easily acquired by young learners, as (Farris, 2001:37) says that behaviorist theory asserts that children are born with learning potential and their behavior can be shaped by manipulating the environment. I propose that behaviorism approach naturally has strong relation with psychology of human where in this approach there is a process of learning that can be acquired directly by young learners. Naturally, young learners have Language Acquisition device to make them acquire the language easily.

(Fatsah, 2005:20) states that behaviorism approach explains behavior using on SR – model that is established between stimulus and stimulus situation (s) and the organism's Response (R) to this stimulus. In behaviorist psychology, behavior of humans and animals may be learned. That behavior will be limited only the most elementary types of learning that is seen as an argument in favor of its fundamental characters, the more general the learning theory is, and the more valuable it is.

Based on the statement above, it is clear that in behaviorism approach is categorized in operant condition from stimulus to response and the last reinforcement which explains learning behavior as intention and attitudes.

Nowadays, behaviorism approach has been neglected in process of language teaching especially in English. However, some techniques of this approach are still being used, for example: learning by doing, learning by games, learning by understanding and so on. These techniques are based on the principles in behaviorism approach.

This time, there are many theories of language learning process of language; one of them is constructivism theory. As (Merriam, 2005:3) says, in constructivism the teacher is just as a facilitator who encourages the students to construct knowledge by working to solve or shared realistic problems or task. Aspect of constructivism can

be found in self-directed learning, transformational learning, experiential learning, situated cognition and reflective practice.

However, if we see in reality, this theory it is not always important in process of language learning for young learners because there are some situations in this process that make constructivism not fair in process of language learning. In constructivism we have to deal with a number of media in the process of learning, such as the student be asked by the teacher to analyze or solve the problem based on material that have given by the teacher. Quite the same with behaviorism, constructivism intended to give stimulus how the student build their new ideas or concepts based on their past knowledge. This is certainly not a problem with adult learners but for the young learners, this case is quiet impossible (4 – 13 ages). As we know young learners learn by miming what the adults are doing. In Ademola's article (2007:1), she discusses that the children have their own characteristics which are different from adults. It covers their ways of thinking, their attitude, their aptitude. They also respond the language well through concrete things rather than abstract things and need physical movements and real situation to stimulate their thinking.

In the current curriculum of the elementary school, we can see clearly that all the process of language learning of English just focuses on how they have habit of listening and speaking the first. This is in line with the characters of learning a new language which had been proposed by behaviorism approach. In behaviorism approach the student is presented by lots of stimuli, in this case many listening activities on the target language that is English, before they are required to give some responses, that is, to speak as the result of imitation to what they have heard in the listening process. Therefore, we can say that behaviorism approach and young learners share the same characteristics of learning and it is undeniable that behaviorism approach is still relevant to the teaching of a new language to the young learners.

This research aims to revive the position of behaviorism approach in English teaching. As a matter of fact, this approach is still relevant in teaching of English.

This research will also focus on what, why, and how to apply behaviorism approach in an English classroom of young learners. The title of this research is “Reinventing Behaviorism Approach in Teaching English to Young Learners” (A library research on what, why and how to apply it in an English classroom).

C. Problem Statement

The following are the problem statements of this research:

- a. What is the behaviorism approach?
- b. Why behaviorism approach is relevant to English teaching to young learners?
- c. How should behaviorism approach be applied to young learners?

D. Reason for choosing the topic

There are some reasons in doing this research, they are:

- a. Behaviorism approach is suitable to be applied to young learners who normally have perfect language acquisition device
- b. I would like to see whether the behaviorism approach is still relevant to be used in teaching English to young learners
- c. There are many techniques that have already been applied but focused on one part of the English language only, for example: learning by games, teaching how to master vocabulary.

E. The objectives of study

The study aims at:

- a. Exploring behaviorism approach
- b. Finding out why the behaviorism approach is still relevant to teaching English of young learners.
- c. Finding out how the approach should be applied to young learners.

F. Delimitation of study

In this study I just limit the study to the investigation of behaviorism approach applied to the teaching of English to young learners. In this case young learners who are 4 – 13 years of age.

G. Significance of study

This result will provide recommendation for the teaching of English to young children. It is expect that the result of analysis will show why and how behaviorism approach should be used to teach English to young children. In other words, the results of this research are expected to bring change to the method of teaching English to young learners. Probably, in large scale it will lead to the change of curriculum of English.

H. Method of Research

The method used in the qualitative method. Through this method, We gave a clear description about behaviorism, and explained that this approach is still relevant in process of learning and teaching English in young learners.

The characteristic of the qualitative research is to explain in the natural condition or natural setting without changing it into symbol or number. Beside that, some being the object of qualitative research is human life aspect as the whole, for example people with something that is influenced by another people.

Qualitative research uses the naturalistic approach, in other words, the subject behaviour is learnt in a natural setting without intervention or the research manipulation. Broadly speaking, in applying this method I will use the following steps:

- a. Browsing the resources on the internet and library
- b. Synthesizing the information found
- c. Reformulating the behaviorism approach which is appropriate to the English teaching especially for young learners.

I. Corpus of Research

Corpus of this research is data related to the teaching and learning English using principles of behaviorism approach. The sources of the data are from library and internet. The sources comes from some real documentation of research which have relate with behaviorism approach, the result of research about behaviorism approach and the articles told about how to teach behaviorism approach to young learners.

J. Technique of Collecting the Data

We collected the data from resources which consisted of theories and data related to the learning and teaching of English, in this case using behaviorism approach. These resources were taken from library books and internet articles. From some the resources above, the first one I read some books as the resources which had relation with behaviorism, after that I wrote and made some selection of the resources that supported this research; finally We made classification of the data resources that had relation with behaviorism approach. We wanted see whether behaviorism approach was still relevant to be used in process of teaching English to young learners at the elementary schools.

K. Technique of Analyzing the Data

We analyzed the data found on this research by using the descriptive qualitative analysis. (Miles and Huberman, 1990:10) say that qualitative analysis is an analysis consists of three executive flows, namely: Data Reduction; Data Display and Conclusion Drawing and Verification. *Data Reduction* is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written data resources or transcriptions. Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. Tesch in (Miles & Huberman, 1990: 11) also point out, that data reduction can be seen as data condensation; meanwhile, *Data display* is organized,

compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action; and the last, *the Conclusion drawing and verification*, is taken place from the start of data collection, we will begin to decide what things mean is noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configuration, causal flows and propositions.

The analysis of this research could be executed by conducting those three steps above to reveal whether behaviorism is still has a place and will be of useful in teaching English to young learners.

L. Schedule

ACTIVITIES	TIME
Writing proposal	January: week 1
Seminar of proposal	January: week 2
Rearrange proposal	January: week 2
Collecting data	January: week 3- Feb: week 2
Analyzing data	Feb: week 3- March: week 3
Writing report	March: week 4-April: week 2

M. Cost for doing research

1. Writing proposal	Rp. 200.000.-
2. Seminar	Rp. 300.000.-
3. Collecting data	Rp. 1.000.000.-
4. Analyzing data	Rp. 500.000.-
5. Writing a report	Rp. 500.000.-
Sum	Rp. 2.500.000.-

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