TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS BY MEANS OF SONGS AND FOLK TALES WITH INDONESIAN SETTINGS: INDONESIA – INDIA GLOBAL PROJECT PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT
Global Project (GO PRO) project mainly aims at creating competent students in four English skills with the global knowledge. One of the most pivotal aspects of GO PRO is live-video conference. The Indonesian classical songs and folktale were translated to English and performed in the conference representing Indonesian local wisdom. The teacher’s narrative writing was the source of this research data to explore how she organized the activities to support the live-video conference. To complete, semi-structured interview was employed for investigating the advantages of the event for the students’ experience in global communication. The data were narrated by grouping them in themes as it is suggested by the Narrative Inquiry design. It was found that GO PRO has benefitted students from Indonesia as the opportunity in performing the songs and folktale in English motivated them to practice their English more actively and frequently. For Indian students, it contributed to their new insight about Indonesian local wisdoms.

KEYWORDS
Young learners, English Songs, English Folktales, GO PRO

INTRODUCTION
GO PRO was initiated by a teacher from a public primary school, located in Batu, East Java, Indonesia. The program has been a mutual engagement with some primary schools English speaking countries like the United States of America and those non – English speaking countries like India, Italy, Turkey and Spain. The activities included video conferencing with agreed themes, exchanging e-mails and greeting cards between paired students using the www.epals.com, www.sesawme.com, and WhatsApp. Furthermore, the activities had provided opportunities for students to get along with international friends and used English to communicate. This initiative program was initiated to interpret the government policy on English for Young Learners (EYL) to be shifted from subject to extra – curricular activity. It was intended to invite the EYL teachers to design the materials and chose the methods that provided the young learners to use the target language based on selected themes. English as an International Language (EIL) pedagogy, requires greater focus on providing students with greater access to the complexity of English and more experience in ELT interactions. Shifting the status of English as the subject to extra-curricular amended by 2013 curriculum in primary schools gives the wider arena for Teaching English for Young Learners (TEYL) in Indonesia.

The need of having the learning environment similar to their first language acquisition should be supported by a lot of meaningful exposure and practice as they do not learn language through
explicit grammar (J. Shin & Crandall, 2014). TEYL is expected to improve the English language overall input for students before enrolling the secondary levels (Zein, 2015) and it has been summarized by Rachmajanti and Anugerahwati (2019) that some scholars concede that teaching of English in primary school gives positive impact the students’ performance in the lower secondary level. Meisani and Musthafa (2019) found that over fifty percent of the total numbers of primary schools in Malang – East Java committed to teach English for some main reasons. They are, the school's understanding of the importance of incorporating English as a foreign language for global communication, the school's efforts to prepare students for secondary education, and equip them with Basic English to take part in the Science and Mathematics Olympiads. In addition, those reasons correspond to the EIL principles that English is learned by the students for accessing vast amount of information globally (McKay, 2003), and interacting with people whose English background varied (McKay, 2018; Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018).

The recent situation requires options of how to conduct EYL classes for the sake of catering young learners experience of language learning naturally as a skill mediating them to live (Sehan, 2018). Preparing an EYL lesson which includes young learners’ holistic needs should be considered instead of teaching the young learners the language components in isolation. Harmer (2007) mentioned that EYL teachers should recognize that young learners like exploration activities that they can respond to by using imagination, that they can participate well in puzzle-like activities, in creating things, in drawing items, in sports, in physical movements or in songs. To date, technology-based tools can engage young learners in repetitive meaningful and authentic language practice (Pinter, 2019).

Songs and rhymes were effective in second language learning (Jarvis, 2013). The benefits of integrating songs in TEYL has been summarized by J. K. Shin (2014) as they provide authentic and meaningful context, introduce children to target culture, create enjoyable classroom atmosphere, provide opportunities to practice the language orally, aid in retention and comprehension, as well as enhance literacy instruction. Meanwhile, Stories including folk tales which are believed as the effective approach in learning vocabulary (Chou, 2014). Therefore, introducing the songs and folk tales to the young learners of English are suggested by taking some consideration of strengthening the intercultural communication competence (Schlueter, 2019).

Integrating technology in teaching English to young learners has been in exploration of myriad researchers (Chik, 2014; Hung, 2018; Sari, 2015). This research focuses on using technology for TEYL by providing young learners experience of learning English by songs and stories with Indonesian local wisdom to perform online through GO PRO.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Teaching English to Young Learners**

Young learners are those who are 7-12 years old and still in the process of the holistic development, including language development. Born with the innate ability of using the language, young learners are prospective agents of any language learning, including English. There are
various points of view about the best time to start learning foreign language, in fact in most countries, children are learning English younger (Cadierno & Eskildsen, 2017). Wallin and Cheevakumjorn (2020) affirmed that the younger the children learning the language the sooner they get the language immersed in their language acquisition.

Some countries start the English lesson in young learners ‘classes and some of them start even in very young level. In 2011, Shin and Crandall conducted a survey of EYL teachers from 55 countries around the world, and found that more than 50% of the countries introduced compulsory English language courses by third grade. Furthermore, English is highly demanding choice of parents who believe that English is advantageous. There are two major reasons why English lesson should be started earlier; the value of English for education and employment and the benefits of early language learning (Shin & Crandall, 2014).

Furthermore, Shin and Crandall (2014) mentioned that there are four reasons of starting language learning earlier, namely; the value of increased time, the possibility of better pronunciation and fluency, the possibility of greater global awareness and intercultural competence, as well as the value of bilingualism. A part of that, the EYL program should be conducted as soon as possible with the most appropriate lesson planning. According to Nikolov and Curtain as cited by Shin and Crandall (2014) there are characteristics of effective young learners’ programs from 20 countries such as: focusing on meaning, integrating language instruction with mainstream curriculum, using task-based and content-based approaches, providing fun atmosphere in the classroom and boosting possibilities for students’ success. Besides, it should foster learner’s autonomy with a set realistic expectations and assessment, as well as provide continuity between primary and secondary school programs.

Young Learners Learning from Songs
When a mother likes to sing a song for her baby before sleeping, it is the time for the mother to communicate with the little one. Not to mention, the baby might be more comfortable with the rhythm other than request for her/him to sleep. By the time the baby grows, she/ he will recognize some different rhythms with different purposes. As for learning, the teacher uses songs and movement to engage children in the classroom (J. Shin & Crandall, 2014; J. K. Shin, 2014). Furthermore, they mentioned that using songs and movement is one of the best ways to ensure that second-and foreign-language classrooms demonstrate all these qualities.

Songs and movements are benefited for both child development and language learning. By moving along the songs, the learners activate their motor skills, build sensitivity, hear sounds of the language to improve speaking skill, retain a new language, and enhance literacy instruction. Besides, the learners get the opportunity to recognize authentic materials in meaningful context and get to know the target culture.

To get the maximum benefit of using songs in young learner activities, the teacher has to consider whether the song is:

a. connected to the language and content in the lesson
b. compatible with learners’ level of language proficiency
c. attractive in melody and rhythm
d. musically simple  

e. repetitive text, rhythm and melody  

f. easily adaptable to actions and/ or dramatization  

g. motivating and interesting to children (Shin, 2014).

The songs that can be integrated into TEYL can be the English classical songs of those which have been translated professionally by giving a care on their authenticity. Shin (2014) suggested that songs for TEYL can be children’s songs from countries or cultures where English is taught. The songs can be adapted that the young learners could enjoy them while learning the English language. In addition, the translated version has to include details on the phenomenon of the original version that the singers can fully understand and sing accordingly (Setyaningrum & Warnanda S, 2018).

**Integrating Stories or Folk Tales in Young Learners Classroom**

Stories can share exciting and entertaining contents, everyone enjoys them and learn something new from the stories. J. Shin and Crandall (2014) confirmed some reasons why storytelling is beneficial for young learners’ English learning. It is authentic form of communication, introduces new cultures to children, teaches young learners in an entertaining way, and helps develop critical thinking skills. In addition, Widodo (2016) affirmed that in storytelling there is a socio-cognitive method that includes not only telling a story, but also creating a story through a series of processes, such as discovering a story that is important to a student's personal experience, developing a story, and presenting a story.

EYL activities are suggested to be integrated with the daily classroom activities. During storytelling, the learners are also learning something that they commonly find in their daily life. Moreover, to engage the young learners in storytelling, the activities have to include question and answer sessions, repetition, Total Physical Response (TPR), create the learner own ending. They can be followed by checking predictions, retelling the story, playing related games, and storyboarding. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) suggested TPR for teaching a new language to young learners. By This statement it was proved by Lestariyana and Widodo (2018) that digital stories had engaged the primary school students in learning English.

What important to remember by the teacher is that as a performer she/ he should prepare theatrics, storytelling script, properties, and rehearsal beforehand. Also, storytelling has to integrate language skill, manner, as well as communication skills. The teacher is teaching both listening and speaking skills at the same time (J. Shin & Crandall, 2014). As for the story is part of literature, Bland (2019) summarized the roles of literature form myriad scholars for teaching young learners for its educational benefit, intercultural understanding, aesthetic pleasure, visual literacy, critical literacy, and deep reading. Therefore, a story is rich of values that young learners can learn.

The participant’s understanding of integrating the translated classical English songs and folk tale has motivated her to bring them to GO PRO project. The songs and folk tale were taken from a book entitling *Little Sunshine Bilingual Book* (Setyaningrum et. al. 2018). As an example mentioned by Bland (2019) that a children literature in form of picture books can be scripted into
an interactive plays, the participant of this research scripted the Indonesian folktale *Roro Jongrang* to a play. Thus, her experience offers insight how teach English to Young Learners by means of Indonesian songs and folktale English translated versions.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The design of the research is Narrative Inquiry which describes a story and involve the researcher and the participant in collecting the data about certain phenomenon (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). In addition, the detail story will be written based on the research participant’s experience (Creswell, 2012). The participant of this research was an EYL teacher of a public primary school in Batu City, East Java, Indonesia, who had been practicing the international collaboration for her EYL classes. By her initiative, the GO PRO project had made her students learning English from their friends form some designated countries.

The data of this research were collected from the participant narrative writing about GO PRO and in-depth interview. By the participant’s narration, the obvious information about integrating songs and folk tales for GO PRO project, the researchers collected the information about the background and procedures to organize the activities. Meanwhile, from the in-depth interview, the researchers could get the data in details (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2018) about the benefits of the designated activities. Hence, data coding for this research was manually processed. Saldana (2013) indicated that the creation of categories triggers the creation of a data-fitting conceptual scheme to code the data. This scheme allows the researcher to ask questions, compare categories through data, alter or drop, and make a hierarchical order.

**RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Live-Video Conference that has been agreed by two schools from Indonesia and India was set by providing the times of preparation. In preparing the Live-Video Conference, the teacher worked in collaboration with an English Language Education Department of a private university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The personal were the consultant for running the project. They were lecturers of English for Young Learners, Linguistics, and Literature as well as students who enrolled in English for Young Learners Pre-Service Teaching program.

**Steps of Live-Video Conference Preparation**

**Deciding Songs and a Folk Tale**

For Indonesia – India live video conference, some songs representing the local wisdom were selected. Some careful considerations were taken like the familiarity of the songs and folk tale for the Indonesian students, level of difficulty that the Indonesian students should deal, and how they were representing Indonesian custom. The chosen songs are Gecko on the Wall (*Cicak di Dinding*), Climbing the Mountain Top (*Naik-Naik ke Puncak Gunung*), and Dear Rainbow (*Pelangi-Pelangi*). Meanwhile, the chosen story to be performed by the students is Roro Jonggrang.
The abovementioned songs and story were chosen as they are rich with Indonesian local wisdom of culture. For example, Climbing to the Mountain Top song is originally depict Indonesia as mountainous country with enormous scenery and *Roro Jonggrang* is one of Indonesian legendary folk tales. They were good choices that the Indonesian primary school students could learn the intercultural awareness. This awareness should be introduced to young learners when they are learning other language because a cultural studies should be integrated into the language learning for young learners (Schlueter, 2019). What to care is about how to integrate the culture. Schlueter (2019) highlighted how young learner educators are helping the young generation to cross boundaries with their counterparts in other cultures. It can be started first between the diversity of culture around them in their region, then in their country, and then out of their country. In addition, for the Indian students, while they were learning English language, they got new insight about Indonesian culture from the performance.

**Preparing the Choreography for the Songs**

Total Physical Response (TPR) is necessary for activities in TEYL. As a child-friendly methodology (Pinter, 2011) TPR includes movement related to the songs. J. K. Shin (2014) affirmed that the use of realistic gestures connected to the context and vocabulary of the song can improve language learning and interaction. The teacher’s creativity in setting the choreography could support the success of her teaching.

Three choreographies were made by the teacher and for GO PRO project. All of them activated the students’ multiple intelligences like linguistic, visual, kinesthetic, and musical. It is believed that multiple intelligences is a system that enhance the students’ achievement (Faidah, Fauziati, & Suparno, 2019). After the choreography had been set up, they were recorded in a form of a video clip. This was intended to make students easier to remember each movement of the dance as they could later on practice it anywhere.

**Scripting the Folk Tale**

Similar to the preparation of the song choreography, the folk tale was scripted by considering the simple language use that the students could memorize them easily. They were put into a story line that every cast of the play easily follows then every character should memorize the script of the play. The following table exemplifies the story line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scene 1</strong>: Prabu Baka sits down in the center of the stage.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Prabu Baka enters the stage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Prabu Baka sits down in the center of the stage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Prabu Baka exits from the stage.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The narrator:</td>
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<tr>
<td>“A long time ago in the kingdom of Prambanan, there lived an ogre king named Prabu Baka.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scene 1: Roro Jonggrang enters stage and stands behind the Prabu Baka.

Action
- Roro Jonggrang enters the stage and stands besides Prabu Baka.
- Prabu Baka and Roro Jonggrang exit from the stage.

Dialogue
The narrator:
“Despite his ghastly look, he has a beautiful daughter. Roro Jonggrang.”

Furthermore, the following excerpt is the example of script of the play.

Excerpt 1

The narrator : “A long time ago in the kingdom of Prambanan, there lived an ogre king named Prabu Baka.”
“Despite his ghastly look, he has a beautiful daughter. Roro Jonggrang.”

Prabu Baka : “Roro my daughter I am worried about Pengging.”
Roro Jonggrang : “Why are you worrying?”
Prabu Baka : “It’s about Pengging’s warrior, Bandung Bondowoso. I heard he will attack our kingdom.”
Roro Jonggrang : “We have to prepare be prepared, Father.”
Raja Pengging : “Bondowoso! Prepare your troops. We will attack Prambanan.”
Bandung Bondowoso : “I am ready your majesty.”
Raja Pengging : “Come back to Pengging in victory.”

From the excerpt 1, it was evidenced that the language use for this script was based on the language and content accessible for the students (Bland, 2019). By the aforementioned two consideration of the language use, the story line and script were published for the students to read and practice for the audition.

Audition
The audition to choose the acts for the songs and play was carried out on the same day. The audition was open for grade 4 – 6 students who met the criteria for singing the songs and play the Roro Jonggrang. They included students’ confidence, voice, and English fluency. From the audition 12 students from were appointed for the Songs (3 students for Gecko-Gecko on the Wall, 5 students for Dear Rainbow, and the other 4 students for Climbing the Mountain Top). Meanwhile, 5 students from grade 5 and 6 were selected as the main casts of the play.

Song and Play Rehearsal
The rehearsal for songs and play were carried out intensively for making sure that there are no common mistakes in the English language. Rehearsal is an effort of repeating the information in written or spoken form (Pinter, 2011). It is a short term memorization that the students involved
to train the way they pronounce the English words for singing and speaking based on the play script.

Synchronizing the song lyrics, music, and movement is central for young learners. There some steps to follow as suggested by Shin (2014). The teacher started it with the introduction of the songs topic with the vocabulary review. The students repeated new vocabulary before listening to the song with audio. Then, the teacher taught them to sing the song line by line. As for the songs to perform in live-video conference were single verse songs, the students could memorize the songs easily. The rehearsal continued and finished by teaching the songs with music and movements.

Meanwhile, to play Roro Jonggrang, the students were involving in a series of preparation with rehearsal. It was complicated that the language performance, whole-body response to support the students learning linguistics resources and to extend their repertoire should be rehearsed (Bland, 2019). This process is beneficial for the students because they had more opportunities to learn English contextually. Hence, rehearsal provides the students opportunities to connect the language they produced with the movement that they made. By repeating the lyrics and dialogues, they developed their long term memories. Bland (2019) asserted that playing the script included the young learners ability to act out, as task-based, multisensory embodied learning.

**Video Recording**
After all were fixed, the singers recorded their voice separately from video taking. This consideration was taken to minimize the long process of recording because with song it required synchronization of lyrics, music, as well as choreography. After the sound recording was accomplished, the students practice the choreography in front of the camera. As, it was professional work, everything must meet its perfection; therefore, it took several times for the students to take either the sound or choreography recording.

Different from song recording, the play recording was conducted in a Drama laboratory with complete properties of the play. Narrated by lecturer of English Language Education Department, the play was recorded with professional documentation.

**Live – Video Conference**
This session is the most awaited moment for the students because they have opportunities to communicate with their friends from different countries based on the agreed theme. There were two sessions of live-video conference for each school’s performance. Based on the appointment, the event was held using online communication platform to enable all participants access it. During the session, the students greeted each other before they watch the video about the agreed theme. After watching the video, there was a discussion hosted by the teacher.

When the Indian students were asked their feeling about the Indonesian students’ performance, they agreed that they enjoyed both of them. For young learners, musical intelligence is the first intelligence to emerge in young learners that music can stimulate them to hum or sing in tune for their literacy development (Paquette & Rieg, 2008). Songs and rhyme are essential to set up the young learners foundation in learning a new language (Jarvis, 2013; Shin, 2014). The students’
enthusiasm to learn the English language through songs, music, and movement, like what was shown in the Indonesian performance, is contagious. They will find those activities enjoyable as they are repeated by the teachers.

In addition, Roro Jonggrang was attracted Indian students’ attention because of the story that they can follow. As it was scripted carefully from the folk tale, they could get a new insight about Indonesian culture. For young learners’ English language learning, visuals help them connect their knowledge and the language use. In Roro Jonggrang Play, body movement can be a semiotic device that the young learners can use to understand the language use in context. Rixon (2019) argued that situation is related to the TPR principle, that both Indonesian and Indian students shared the same experience.

Advantages of GO PRO
It has been evidenced that students enjoyed the activities for preparing the most awaited event – live-video conference. During the preparation they gradually learned how to use the language contextually. They started the process with new vocabulary memorization, language and movement connection, as well as whole language and context relations. The teacher affirmed that the Indonesian students enjoyed singing the English songs that were translated from the songs that knew in Bahasa Indonesia. The teacher found it easy to teach the students singing the songs and they learned the songs’ meaning from the movement or choreography.

Excerpt 2
“I am happy that the students make meaning of their English learning from the songs and the scripted Indonesian folk tale. They were learning English and local wisdoms at the same time by joyful and meaningful activities” (Ur, in-depth interview, 20 May 2020, 19.15, Zoom).

What has been explained by the teacher in excerpt 2 is true. The young learners do not learn the language as from its structure but they learn from the experience of using it with the non-native English speaker teacher (NNEST) in their classroom. Although the students did not learn the language from the native speakers of English, they learned the language like what has been suggested by the English as an International Language paradigm. McKay (2018) argued that EIL educators do need to understand how English is incorporated in the local context in the creation of an effective curriculum. Moreover, young learners in Taiwan were also exposed to stories for learning English to raise their interest and motivation in learning English (Chwo & Chen, 2015). The experience of the young learners in Taiwan was as an evidence that the learners need to be attracted and motivated by meaningful materials or activities.

Furthermore, recording the songs and the play for the live-video conference benefited the students with continued vocabulary and pronunciation practice. Rehearsal and repetition that they made affected their English language development since they learn to use the language until they could produce the most appropriate sounds. The teacher asserted that the students should be lucky for the opportunity.
Excerpt 3
“The more the young learners use the language the better sound production they made. Recording their sounds by singing the songs and speaking based on the script made them confident to see their peers from abroad, like India, and reduced their anxiety to discuss the songs and play using English”. (Ur, in-depth interview, 20 May 2020, 19.25, Zoom).

From excerpt 3, it is clear that despite the young learners were worry free in using any languages, they needed to have their confidence in speaking foreign language. Harmer (2007) has identified the young learners’ characteristic who like to focus on their lives and experiences. The video they played before the discussion was the point that the Indonesian students proudly discussed with their peers from India.

In addition, the Indonesian students’ performances gave the students from India new insight about the culture or local wisdoms that were performed in songs and play. The teacher’s initiative of collaborating with the English Language Education Department’s personals contributed the professional performances to show in international level.

Excerpt 4
“This international collaboration by means of GO PRO resulted the international accreditation of the schools in India. It was because of the quality of the project that involved students from both schools to interact by discussing cultural values form each country. The Indian students were happy to have their Indonesian peers’ professional performance in the language that they understood, English. Because of this collaboration, the Indian school is now certified by ISO 9001” (Ur, in-depth interview, 20 May 2020, 19.45, Zoom).

Not only for Indian students, based on excerpt 4 GO PRO project has resulted an international recognition for the Indian school as an international standard school. It has been legitimated by the world of communication that language can bridge the relations among different parties. Language is a means of communication that people in a given culture to communicate or to interact (Yule, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Providing young learners enjoyable and meaningful activities in their English learning is an effort of involving the learners with experience of using the language naturally. From the song lyrics they could add their vocabulary and from the play dialogues they could learn how to use language with appropriate expressions. As young learners build their language ability by memorizing the language use within certain context, they train themselves the senses of the language. International collaboration – GO PRO has contributed the students English language practice by involving themselves in the performances as well as by watching or communicating with their peers from abroad. Language and technology have made the international collaboration and
communication real and it is feasible to start from the elementary level of education with young learners.

Recommendation for Practice
A long process of preparing the international collaboration, particularly by GO PRO, requires the teacher’s times and energy. If any primary schools would like to held similar project, they have to consider the teacher’s availability in all process of the collaboration, school facilities, parents’ supports, and extra funding. Collaboration with English Language Education Department is recommended for providing experts and personalas language and content consultants for international standardized performance.

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