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Creating a Curriculum for Preschool Educators in Asia: How to Teach Kindergarteners Speaking and Listening Skills in English through Games

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University of San Francisco

**Creating a Curriculum for Preschool Educators in Asia: How
to Teach Kindergarteners Speaking and Listening Skills in
English through Games**

A Field Project Proposal Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language

By
Yue Kuang
May 2017

Creating a Curriculum for Preschool Educators in Asia: How to Teach Kindergarteners Speaking and Listening Skills in English through Games

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MASTER OF ARTS

in

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:

Luz García

Instructor/Chairperson

May 4, 2017

Date

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ABSTRACT

There is a rapid development of science and technology, and international information exchanges have become increasingly frequent as well in 21st century. English learning is becoming a requirement of career success, especially in Asia (Graddol, 2006). So people are beginning to pay more attention to English education, especially early childhood English education. However, most Asian kindergarten teachers prefer to pay more attention to teaching English reading and writing skills, while ignoring the teaching and practices of English listening and speaking (Wang, 2016). Most 3-6 age children do not have the attention span of adults (Garba, Yusuf, & Busthami, 2015), and more importantly the quality of early childhood English education in Asia is not guaranteed, yet it needs to be. So the main purpose of this project is creating a curriculum for early English educators in Asian countries to teach children (3-6 years old) fundamental English speaking and listening skills by using games as teaching methods. Total Physical Response (TPR) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are used as the theoretical frameworks for this project.

Key words: English education, early childhood education, Asia, TPR, CLT

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In the 21st century, there is a rapid development of science and technology, and international information exchanges have become increasingly frequent as well. People are aware of the importance of cooperation, but at the same time, the competition among countries to attract top talent is increasingly fierce (Jacobson, 2016). Under these circumstances, English has been called “a basic skill” for the purpose of career success in the 21st century, so learning English as a second language plays an important role in Asia (Graddol, 2006). Asia is the largest continent on earth, but the development of its economy is slower than Europe’s while its independence was earlier than Africa’s; as a result, Asians pay more attention to traditional education about local culture and patriotism (Souto-Manning & Vasquez, 2011). However, because of the different status of different countries, early childhood education (ECE) in Asian countries shows their differences: India's investment in ECE is far less than their investment in national defense, while the government of North Korea believes that they should make as much investment in ECE as their national defense. Comparatively speaking, East Asian countries pay more attention to ECE in foreign language learning: Japanese children should learn English or Finnish besides their native language. South Korean children need to learn English or Chinese besides Korean (Lim, 2016). And Chinese children are widely required to learn English (Souto-Manning & Vasquez, 2011).

Among all age periods, 3-6 years old is the key period for young children to learn English. Children who are in this age period have the advantages of strong imitation, great understanding, good memory, and rich energy (Nikolov, 2009). Because of this, early

childhood English education has gotten more and more attention from people (Nikolov, 2009). There are always some Standard English textbooks used in schools, and most children can receive primary and simple reading and writing skills through these textbooks in class.

In recent years, many Asian countries also have begun to pay more and more attention to early childhood English education (Ping, 2015). There are increasing numbers of English preschools which have been built and developed; some of them are supported by the government, while some are private English preschools. As early childhood English learning is becoming more popular, the issues about early childhood English education have come to light.

The first issue with early childhood English education in Asia is that most Asian teachers prefer to pay more attention to teaching English reading and writing skills, while ignoring the teaching and practices of English listening and speaking (Wang, 2016). Early language learning starts from language listening, and then language learners combine the practices of listening and speaking, which is the proper and natural way to learn a language (Wang, 2016). English educators should not ignore the importance of teaching listening and speaking skills (Wang, 2016).

Secondly, because children who are between 3 to 6 years old are at a very young age, most of them do not have the attention span of adults (Ping, 2015). However, in Asian areas, most English teaching methods are traditional. The classroom environments are ordinary with children sitting still, and this does not attract children's attention for an extended amount of time. So, making teaching methods more innovative and classroom

environments more attractive is really worthy of attentions of all educators (Garba, Yusuf, & Busthami, 2015).

Thirdly, because people are aware of the importance of English education, there are more and more private kindergartens that teach in both the native language and English (Hu, Dieker, Yang, & Yang, 2016). However, the quality of English teaching in these private English language kindergartens cannot be guaranteed by Education Bureau, so it is becoming more important make sure the quality of English teaching is effective (Hu et al., 2016).

In conclusion, there are three primary problems with the current state of early childhood English education in Asian countries: 1) teachers are not accustomed to focusing on listening and speaking; 2) children between the ages of 3-6 do not have attention spans for traditional English instruction; 3) the quality of early childhood English education in Asia is not consistently effective. Due to these three problems, it is necessary to create and develop effective and engaging curriculum for 3-6 year old English learners in Asia. This way, early childhood educators can teach English skills in the most acceptable and appropriate way for these young learners.

Purpose of the Project

The first purpose of this project is helping teachers who are not used to focusing on listening and speaking. Because listening and speaking learning are more important parts for language learners to begin with, the first specific purpose of this project is reminding educators of the importance of English listening and speaking skills teaching and this project is helping educators to arrange a curriculum containing more activities about English speaking and listening practices (Wang, 2016).

The second purpose of this project is helping educators attracting kindergarteners' attentions by playing games in class. Because the target language learners of this project are 3 to 6 years old and most of them cannot concentrate on learning for a long time as adults, so it is significant for educators who teach young language learners to have rich facial expressions, wide range of body language, and attractive teaching methods (Garba et al., 2015). Furthermore, this curriculum can help educators build a more active English learning environment for children, and there will be rich teaching materials and language games offered to be considered.

The third purpose of this project is to help improve the effectiveness of early childhood English education, and make early childhood English education consistent in Asian countries. It is important to ensuring the teaching quality while the number of kindergartens is increasing.

And the main purpose of this project is creating a curriculum for early English educators in Asian countries to teach children (3-6 years old) fundamental English speaking and listening skills by using games as teaching methods. Learning English has become increasingly important all over the world, but the status of most Asian kindergartens still has room for improvement.

The curriculum designed focuses on how to train children's English speaking and listening skills through various kinds of games for attracting the attentions and developing the interest of children. This curriculum can help teachers to build a "student-centered" learning environment because students have to play a leading roles during the language games, which can mobilize the initiative and creativity of children (Saha & Singh, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

For this project, Total Physical Response (TPR) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are used as the theoretical frameworks.

TPR is a language teaching method developed by James Asher, a professor emeritus of psychology at San José State University, which is based on the coordination of language and physical movement (Asher, 2008). In TPR, instructors give commands to students in the target language, and students respond with whole-body actions (Kissling, 2012). The goal of total physical response is helping language learners to enjoy the language learning experiences and to relive the language learning stress. Educators play a role of directors to give children instructions and children give responses with their body actions only (Asher, 2008).

CLT is also called as the communicative approach, which is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study (Kissling, 2012). The aim of communicative language learning is to help language learners to make conversation with others in the target language. Educators play the role of an advisor to offer answers for language learners and monitor how they act during language activities. And language learners go through communicative activities, like games, role-plays, problem finding and solving tasks by using the target language (Kissling, 2012).

Significance of the Project

It is often believed that children who learn a second language at an early age can be proficient like native speakers (Hu, 2016), yet people who are adolescents or adults who start to learn second language may fail to achieve language fluency; they may

become “near-native” rather than “native-like” (Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2009). So early childhood language education is beneficial (Hu, 2016). On the one hand, bilingual teaching can promote practical application of the second language, combine professional knowledge to strengthen learning, and broaden the interface of learning and communication to meet the urgent needs of bilingual talents. On the other hand, bilingual education can make children think in several different ways, so better quality education can be carried out.

Children have a sensitive period of language learning, this sensitive period, once missed, will be difficult to make up (Hu, 2016). From birth to adulthood, the plasticity of the people’s brain is in a constant process of a change, the plasticity of the young children’s brain is very strong. And the plasticity of the brain is gradually decreasing with age. The brain is naturally responsible for language acquisition of nerve tissue, the nerve tissue in a certain period of time if the outside world to accept the appropriate language input stimulation, its function will be fully developed, so that people develop a complete language skills (Hu, 2016). In a certain period of time, if people do not receive the appropriate language input stimulus, the brain function will shrink or even disappear. The 3-6 years age of children are the best age of cerebral cortex stage development, which is the fastest growing period of intelligence as well, and they master the language instinct is unparalleled. And the ECE are not perfect in most Asian areas, so it is important to lead ECE to an advanced direction to develop. The curriculum created can help educators attract children’s attentions by playing games, which focusing on English listening and speaking training (Hu, 2016).

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

English teaching and learning have been popular in Asian in recent years, and 3 to 6 are the best age for children to accept and learn a second language, so people begin to think highly of the necessity of the preschool English education. However, English is the second language in Asia, whose teaching and learning still need more work to do. The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) states that “the younger the better” in language learning as a widely held notion among the general public, which fully reflects the significance of the early childhood bilingual education (Bulter, 2014). Children who are 3 to 6 years old are a special group of language learners, so the educators should take special teaching attitudes and methods for children learners as well (Bulter, 2014).

The literature review covers three themes. The first theme is Asian early childhood education, which describes preschools in three Asian countries (China, Korea, and Japan). The second theme is the second language acquisition for children, which shows how children learn multiple languages as their second language. And the third theme is how games help children to learn.

Early Childhood Education

The Status of South Korean Early Childhood Education.

The South Korean population structure presents the characteristics of the population aging rate is increasingly becoming faster while the fertility rate is increasingly getting lower (Taguma, Litjens, Kim, & Makowiecki, 2012). The effect of low fertility for the social economy is very profound, and the sustaining low birth rate leads to the continuous

reduction of the population of young people in the labor market. At the same time, there is also a social problem of blocking the female labor force employment in South Korea. According to the traditional rules of the labor market in South Korea, professional women have to stop their employment when they get married or get pregnant, and go back to their families for educating and taking care of the children (Taguma et al., 2012).

Under the background of aging population and economic depression, the Korean government adjusted the social investment strategy and investment direction: taking the preschool education as the main areas of investment for improving the quality of preschool education and reduce the cost of early education, so as to improve the fertility rate and prevent the loss of female labor force (Taguma et al., 2012). Under the human capital activation and mobilization social investment strategy, early childhood education in South Korea developed in a great and fast trend. Since 2012, all 5 year old Korean children in early childhood institutions have begun to enjoy free early childhood education, which get extended to children aged 3 to 4 in 2013. At the same time, the South Korean government has begun to build a free child care program for 0 to 2 year old children as well (Taguma et al., 2012).

About the early childhood education quality, the South Korean government focuses on the following aspects: implementation of certification system, strengthening the quality of kindergartens nurseries facilities safety management, improving kindergarten teachers' salaries, perfecting the quality of the kindergarten curriculum and promoting teachers' professional training. South Korea's national child care agency certification system was authorized in 2003, and officially started in 2005 (Ock, 2007). At present, the childcare agency certification system has been written into the childcare support, and become

legalized. Since most childcare agencies in South Korea are privately owned, the government has taken the initiative to encourage childcare agencies to voluntarily participate in the certification process in order to obtain a certificate of conformity. Since 2005 the certification system of nurseries test runs, about 3300 kindergartens, were certified until 2007 (Ock, 2007). However, considering there were about 29,000 kindergartens in total in South Korea, the number of the certificated childcare agencies is relatively small, which is expected to increase in the future. Since 2008, South Korea began to implement the quality certification system of kindergartens. At present, in order to promote the participation of the childcare agencies and kindergartens to participate in the certification and evaluation process. The government began to try to link the results of the assessment with the basic subsidy system and the staff salaries (Ock, 2007).

In conclusion, with the continuous implementation of preschool education policy in South Korea, the South Korean government pays more and more attention to the development of preschool education institutions. The South Korean government not only really thinks highly of early childhood education, but also introduced several policies and investment strategies for developing and improving the quality of early childhood education.

The Status of Chinese Early Childhood Education.

With the arrival of 21st Century, education has become more and more important, especially the children's education has greatly attracted the attentions of young parents. The following are about the status of China's early childhood education ten years ago and the current status of early childhood education of China.

Early childhood education in China serves the world's largest preschool population. China has more than 100 million of the population aged 0 to 6 years old, which is accounting for about 20% of same age population in the world (Hu, Roberts, Leng Leong, & Guo, 2016). According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) "global monitoring report" statistics in 2007: the global children's education gross enrollment rate was 37% in 2004, and the preschool enrollment of three quarters countries of the world reached more than 75%, while the preschool enrollment of China was only 40.75%, which was slightly higher than the global average. Although "preschool education reform and development outline" of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China in 2003 provided that the preschool enrollment of 3-6 year-old children in China should reach 55% by 2007, and 5 to 6 year-old children should reach 80%, and also large and medium-sized cities of China should spread preschool education for 3 to 6 year-old children. However, based on the huge preschool population base of China, even if it is possible to achieve this plan, the number of preschool aged children who cannot accept early childhood education in China is still very large (Hu et al., 2016).

In recent years, the ECE of China has gained a lot of improvement (Liu & Pan, 2013). Firstly, the position of ECE is improved, which shows in the "Opinions from State Council on the current development of ECE". And the spirit of the National Conference on education and the national medium and long term education reform and development plan from 2010 to 2020 showed that the ECE will be covered by the compulsory education in the near future (Liu & Pan, 2013). Furthermore, the Chinese government also encourages the social forces to run kindergartens in various forms by ensuring reasonable land use and reducing tax methods. Secondly, the Chinese government began to pay more attention to

expanding rural preschool education resources and try to balance the level between ECE in cities and ECE in rural areas. Thirdly, the Chinese government tries to achieve the goal of the professionalization of preschool educators (Liu & Pan, 2013). And the regions of China tries to meet the requirements of government by combining with the local realities: Making the determination of the ratio of students to teachers reasonable, approving the establishment of public kindergarten staff, perfecting the admittance of preschool educators' qualification, and enacting the professional standards of preschool educators (Liu & Pan, 2013).

The Status of Japanese Early Childhood Education.

Entering the 21st Century, the development of the early childhood education of Japan has been a new stage. And there are three stages of the development of the Japanese ECE (Taguma et al., 2012).

The first stage of Japanese ECE development is learning from China (Taguma et al., 2012). Since 607 A.D. Onono Imoko visited the Sui Dynasty as the Sui ambassador of Japan, the cultural and educational exchanges between China and Japan have gradually increased. Through these ambassadors and international students who returned to Japan, some ECE teaching methods of China were spread in Japan. At that time, some wealthy families of Japan were generally invited educators to come home for children's ECE, which was similar to the family education in ancient china. The second stage of Japanese ECE development is learning from the west (Taguma et al., 2012). In 1868, Japan launched the Meiji restoration movement which carried out a top-down bourgeois reform. And Japan began to enter the era of learning from the west. The Meiji government carried out the "civilized" policy, which brought a comprehensive reform in the field of education to Japan.

In 1876, Japan's first public preschool education institutions, Tokyo women's normal school affiliated kindergarten was formally established, which is based on the establishment of the United States kindergarten. The third stage of Japanese ECE development is self-improvement period (Taguma et al., 2012). After learning other advanced educational concepts from other countries, Japan has also developed a system of ECE which is suitable for its own development. Japan organized three ECE promotion programs, which effectively promoted the development of ECE in Japan: The first revitalization plan also called seven year plan in 1964 and 1971, which mean to improve the enrollment rate of 5 years old children. The second revitalization plan also called ten year plan in 1972 and 1982, which mean to improve 4 - 5 years old children the enrollment rate of kindergartens or nurseries. And the third revitalization plan also called ten year plan in 1991 and 2001, which required that all the children who are 3 - 5 years old enter the kindergartens or nurseries. These three ECE promotion programs thoroughly changed the traditional education concept and made not only parents but also the whole society take ECE more seriously (Taguma et al., 2012).

In 2006 the Japanese government promulgated the new "Education Basic Law" for the first time into early childhood education, which shows that the government attaches great importance to early childhood education. The new law played an important role in promoting the development of ECE in Japan and facilitating the management (Taguma et al., 2012).

Why Second Language Acquisition (SLA) for Young Children is Important

The age period of the second language learning is the aspect that people pay close attention to, which is also a controversial topic (Singleton & Ryan, 2004). Because some people think second language acquisition for young children will affect the speed and correctness of the first language acquisition, while others believe second language acquisition is beneficial for the future development of young children. And Singleton and Ryan believe that there is a critical age period for children in the second language learning, which shows it is easier for younger language learners to learn the correct pronunciation of the second language. And then there are two reasons on the significance of SLA for children.

The first reason is because children can actively respond to the language and they cannot respond to meaningless language and non-language sound (Hu, 2016). Children can not only perceive the differences of various kinds of intonation, but also can imitate the different intonations. The perception and imitation of intonation require children pay attention on the pitch of speech.

The second reason is because there is a critical age period for SLA of children (Hu, 2016). The earlier the age of children's SLA, the higher the accuracy and authenticity of the language got, which may be due to the recognition of neurons in the human brain earlier than other neurons. According to the cognitive theory, the difference of age is mainly the difference of cognitive style, and the development of adult cognition has entered a new stage: they have the ability of abstract thinking, which makes adults cannot learn a second language as natural and effective as children. Furthermore, from the perspective of children's physical and psychological development stage, children who are 3 - 6 years old

have a great hearing ability, a strong sense of imitation and a thirst for new knowledge, which are the keys to the development of intelligence and language learning. So it is a sensitive period for children who are 3 - 6 years old to learn a second language (Singleton & Ryan, 2004).

Furthermore, second language acquisition is beneficial to the future development of young children (Ginsburg, 2007). Second language acquisition plays an important role in early childhood education, and early childhood English learning experience can promote the development of intelligence of young children. The cognitive development of young children is closely related to the early education. Children who have been trained in sensory training and intelligence in the early days can have a significant increase in their IQ scores. If children are mentally deficient, they will be corrected if they have an early education.

How Games Help Children to Learn

It seems that playing time and learning time are opposites, but it is not true. Spontaneous play is healthy and beneficial for children, and children can learn best through playing (Ginsburg, 2007). All areas of the development of children can be improved through play, and play can strongly support children's emotional, physical, social, cognitive, and language development. Hirsh-Pasek states that "play offers a key way to support the learning of whole children in developmentally appropriate play" (Sugarman, 2009). Here are three benefits to children's learning that games can bring.

The first benefit of game teaching is stimulating young children's interest in learning (Ginsburg, 2007). In order to stimulate and develop the learning interest of young children, educators should fully grasp their interests, and then select and design games that are

relevant to the teaching content and also novel (Ginsburg, 2007). For example, because most young children are interested in listening to music, educators can use music activities in the language they are teaching, and lead children in moving their bodies by following the rhythm of songs. In the English song 'If You are Happy', the lyrics "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet" lead young children to clap their hands and stamp their feet. Using music into teaching is helpful for attracting attentions of young children, relaxing their bodies and minds, and getting better learning results. And moving body by following the song is also a novel game for young children (Ginsburg, 2007).

The second benefit of game teaching is improving the intelligence level of children (Sugarman, 2009). The application of game teaching method in the teaching of young children can cultivate cognitive ability, communication ability, language expression ability, memory ability, and comprehension ability of young children (Sugarman, 2009). Taking the game " Pointing Competition" as an example, the educators can stick a lot of pictures or words on the blackboard, and the choose three to five students who can represent their own groups to come to the front and have a pointing competition. This game asks students to listen to commands carefully and try to point to the corresponding pictures or words as quickly as possible. The one who can first point to the correct pictures or words will win the game. The competitive games can motivate the desire to win in young children, so young children will give their full attention to the progress of the games, which can successfully improve their response time and memory abilities. At the same time, competitive games work with children's eagerness to know right answers, which can

increase the learning enthusiasm and initiative of children, and achieve the aim of improving children's intelligence level in the end (Sugarman, 2009).

The third benefit of game teaching is a child's cultivating the innovative ability (Sugarman, 2009). The innovative ability plays an important role in promoting the development of social productivity, social systems, human thinking and culture. Furthermore innovation is the soul of the development of a country and a nation (Sugarman, 2009). Therefore, it is essential to cultivate the innovative ability of the children who are the hope of the future. The application of game teaching methods can make children feel the benefits of innovation, which can cultivate and improve the innovative ability. Taking the game of building blocks as an example, educators can let children build a lego house. Since children have their own ideas and imaginations of the house vision, they can design the shape and build the house by giving full play to their imagination. Although the building block game is simple, it plays an effective role in the cultivation and improvement of the creative thinking ability of children (Sugarman, 2009).

Educators should communicate and interact with children in the process of teaching, and educators should guide and lead children to learn the relevant knowledge in a relaxed learning environment and atmosphere. It is the purpose of teaching to cultivate and develop good learning interests and hobbies of children.

Summary

There are three themes in this literature review. The first theme is early childhood education, and it introduces the status of South Korean early childhood education, the status of Chinese early childhood education and the status of Japanese early childhood education. The second theme is why second language acquisition for young children is important. Finally, the third theme is how games help children to learn.

The main findings from this literature review can be divided into three parts. The first finding was that many people in Asian countries think highly of early childhood education and there was some room to improve. The second finding was that many linguists suggested that there was a critical period to learn a second language, which was 3-6 years old. They also found that younger children could learn English better and faster than adults. Finally, the third finding was that playing games in class was helpful to attract children's attention to learn English.

This literature review supports my writing with many strong opinions and brings me a lot of information of real worth. The topic of this field project is my interest in how to teach kindergarteners speaking and listening skills in English through games, and this literature review helps me to know more about this area. I believe that everybody interested in this area would benefit a lot from these articles as well.

CHAPTER III THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Brief Description of the Project

This project focuses on creating a curriculum used to teach 3-6 years old kindergarteners speaking and listening skills in English through games. The purpose of this project is helping educators to develop kindergarteners primary speaking and listening skills in English through games. The main theory supports for the field project are Total Physical Response (TPR) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). There are four parts of the curriculum: Ice Breaking Activities, Learning Interest Cultivation Activities, Knowledge Learning Activities, and Communication Activities. There are also directions on how to organize activities and the goals of activities.

Development of the Project

I was sent to learn English by my parents when I was 6 years old, and my interest in learning English was developed at that time. I was really lucky that I met an excellent English teacher at the beginning of English learning, and I can still remember her -- Miss Yuan. This interest had a great influence on my major selection and keeps me learning English. In order to learn English in a more professional way, I chose English and Chinese Translation as my undergraduate major and I chose TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) as my graduate major. I believe the power of interest plays a significant role in English learning.

I chose English and Chinese Translation as my first major so that I could know more about the connection between Chinese and English. In my first year of college, I taught English in the Urban Kindergarten as a volunteer with the Youth Volunteer Association

of my college. I benefited greatly from this experience, and I found it is hard to get children's attention unless you play games with them. Because of this volunteer experience, I started to become interested in teaching English, rather than just learning English. I chose TESOL as my graduate major, and I took some courses which I think are important and helpful: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: Theory and Practice, Structure of American English, Applied Linguistics, Preparation and Evaluation of TESOL Materials, Assessment/Testing of Second Language Proficiency, Media Lab, and Web Design.

Below is the timetable for the development of the field project:

Chapter	Description of the stages of the development of the project	Date of accomplishment
Chapter I Introduction	Statement of the Problem Purpose of the Project Theoretical Framework Significance of the Project	Feb. 10th
Chapter II Review of the literature	Introduction Review of the Literature Summary	Mar. 05th
Chapter III The project and its development	Description of the Project Development of the Project The Project	Apr. 15th

Chapter IV Conclusions and recommendations	Conclusions Recommendations	Apr. 25th
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The Project

The project in its entirety can be found in the appendix.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Because of the rapid development of science and technology in the 21st century, English is required for information exchange and career success (Graddol, 2006). There are more and more people noticing the importance of English education in Asia, especially early childhood English education.

However, there are three major issues with the status of early childhood English education in Asia. Asian early childhood teachers prefer to teach English reading and writing skills rather than English listening and speaking skills (Wang, 2016); generally speaking, young children do not have the attention span of adults (Garba, Yusuf, & Busthami, 2015); and more importantly, the quality of early childhood English education needs to be better guaranteed.

The purpose of this field project is creating a curriculum for Asian early childhood educators to teach children age 3-6 fundamental English listening and speaking skills through games. This field project regards Total Physical Response (TPR) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the theoretical frameworks.

Recommendations

This curriculum will help Asian students begin to study English during the critical period (3-6 years old), and lead them to acquire English ability naturally. The methodologies applied by this curriculum include Total Physical Response (TPR), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

In order to fully take advantage of this curriculum, here are some suggestions for teachers who are going to apply this curriculum in their classroom:

1. If there is any child who refuses to join in class activities, please just allow them to watch first and give them encouragement.
2. It is necessary and helpful for educators to use a variety of teaching methods, such as video materials, music, and pictures.
3. Teachers should be qualified bilinguals.
4. There should be rewards (like an apple, candy, or a red flower), or praise for students who have great performance in class activities.
5. Teachers can encourage parents to play these games with their children after class.

More importantly, the interest of English learning is the best motivation for children, so teachers are encouraged to lead children to enjoy games first. Once children get familiar with how to play these games, educators can use these games to teach different types of knowledge in class. If interest is the seed, the action is the fruit. So, teachers can encourage children to practice more, and let children understand the importance of continued practice.

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APPENDIX

The background of the cover is a photograph of a long, multi-span bridge crossing a wide body of water. The water is a vibrant blue-green color with visible ripples. The sky is a clear, bright blue with scattered white clouds. The bridge structure is visible on both sides, extending towards the horizon.

Teaching English through Games

A Curriculum Guide for Kindergarten Educators in Asia

By Yue Kuang

Introduction

- **In the 21st century, there is a rapid development of science and technology, and international information exchanges have become increasingly frequent as well. Under these circumstances, English has been called “a basic skill” for the purpose of success in 21st century, so learning English as a second language plays an important role in Asia.**

Introduction

- **Learning English has become increasingly important all over the world, but the status of most Asian kindergartens still has room for improvement. The purpose of this project is creating a curriculum for early English educators in Asian countries to teach children (3-6 years old) fundamental English speaking and listening skills by using games as teaching methods.**

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Part 1. Ice Breaking Activities

○ Goals:

Ice breaking games help children relax and become active to interact and learn from each other.



Activity 1. Remember who he/she is

○ Directions:

- 1. Divide the students into two groups.**
- 2. Make students stand in two face-to-face rows.**
- 3. Ask each student to do a self-introduction by using 'I am ...' .**
- 4. Make students turn to stand back to back.**

5. Pat the shoulders of any two students, who can turn around.

6. Ask the students to say each other's names.

7. The first student who can say the name correctly wins the game.

○ **Tips:**

If there is any child who refuses to join in the activity, please just allow them to watch first and give them encouragement.

○Ice Breaking Activity 1 Goals:

This ice breaking activity can get students familiar with each other and remember each other's names as soon as possible.



Activity 2. Remember the code

○ Directions:

1. Show the picture below

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
a	b	c	d	e	f	g
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
h	i	j	k	l	m	n
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
o	p	q	r	s	t	u
22	23	24	25	26		
v	w	x	y	z		

2. Ask students to remember each letter and its corresponding number.

3. Give an example of the game: the code of the word 'love' is 12,15, 22, 5.

4. Offer the names/words and making students say their code.

◎ Ice Breaking Activity 2 Goals:

This ice breaking activity can get students familiar with each other and help students to learn the 26 English letters.



Activity 3. Passing the ball

○ **Directions:**

- 1. Make students sit in a big circle.**
- 2. Give a ball to them.**
- 3. Play an English song.**

Ball

4. Ask them to pass the ball until the song pauses.

5. The student who is holding the ball will have the chance to do the self-introduction, and the rest of the students say ‘hello,...’ .

○Ice Breaking Activity 3 Goals:

This ice breaking activity can get students familiar with each other and help students to cultivate their confidence and courage to speak in front of others.



Activity 4. Who is lucky

○ Directions:

- 1. Give each student a letter or a number.**
- 2. Write their letters or numbers on the papers, and putting the papers into a box.**
- 3. Choose a paper from the box and saying the letter or number on the paper.**
- 4. And the student who has the letter or number begin to do self-introduction.**

○Ice Breaking Activity 4 Goals:

This ice breaking activity can get students familiar with each other and help students stay focused on listening class.



Activity 5. Hugging game

○ Directions:

- 1. Play the English song 'walking walking'.**
- 2. Say a number when sings " Now let's stop'.**
- 3. For example, if saying number 3, there should be three students hugging together.**
- 4. The students who can not find the right group size will be eliminated.**

© Ice Breaking Activity 5 Goals:

This ice breaking activity can get students familiar with each other and help students make friends during the game as soon as possible.



Part 2. Learning Interest Cultivation Activities

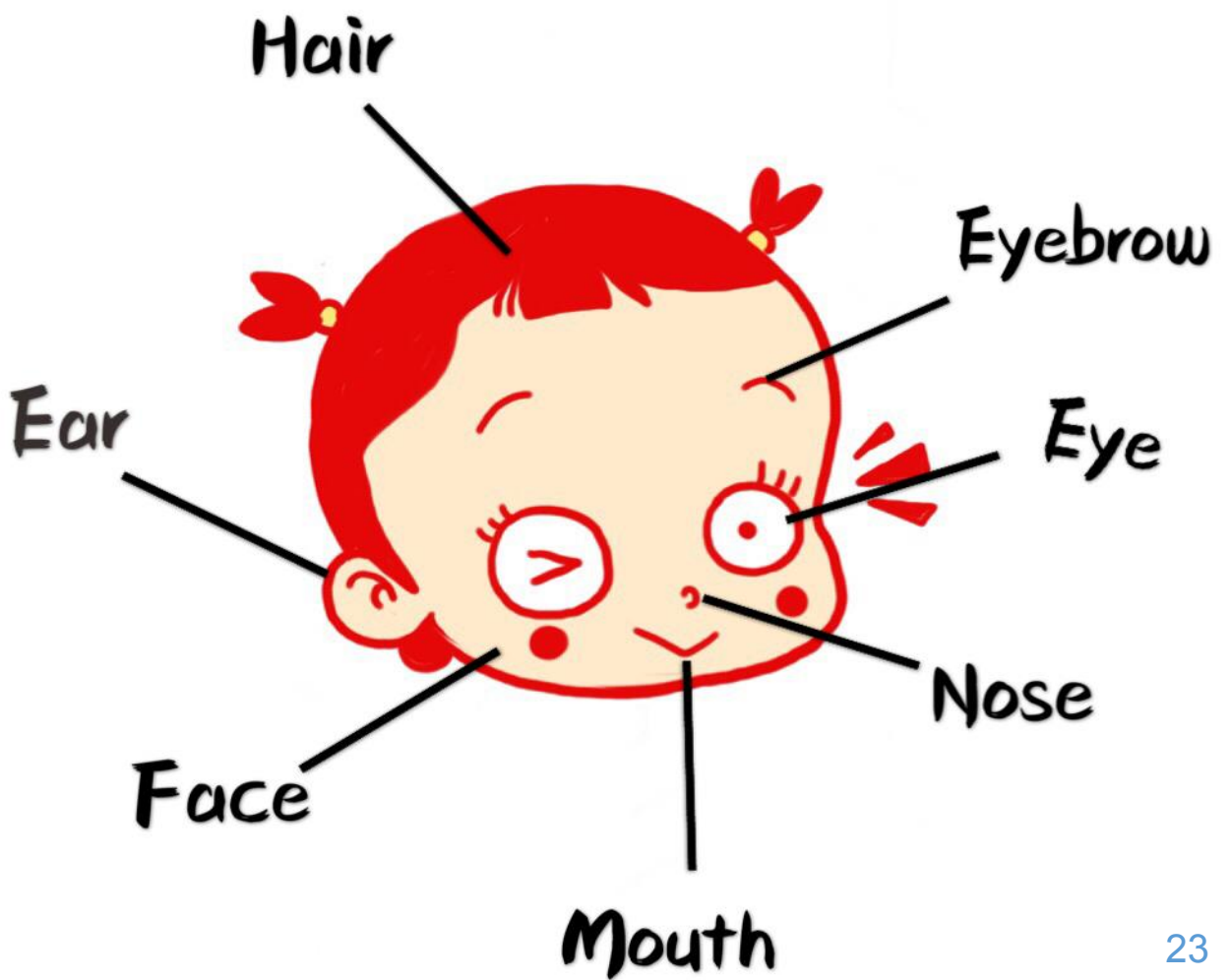
○ Goals:

Learning interest cultivation activities help children develop their English learning interest and listening ability.

Activity 1. Look in the mirror

○ Directions:

- 1. Touch a part of body and saying the English word (like touching the nose and saying the English word 'nose').**
- 2. Ask students to imitate and speak out the words.**



Learning Interest Cultivation

Activity 1 Goals:

This look in the mirror activity can help students to learn vocabulary by using children's great imitative ability and curiosity.



Activity 2. Little painter



○ **Directions:**

1. Draw a picture on the blackboard (like an apple).

Apple

2. Point to the picture and say “Apple” to students.

3. Ask students to repeat after listening.

4. Redraw pictures after learning new vocabulary through this method in class.

5. Ask students to speak out English words after seeing the pictures.

○ Learning Interest Cultivation

Activity 2 Goals:

This little painter activity can help students to develop their listening ability and to learn English vocabulary in an interesting way.



Activity 3. Hide and seek

○ Directions:

- 1. Prepare several vocabulary cards which are going to be taught in class.**
- 2. Read these new vocabulary terms to students.**
- 3. Hide these cards after teaching.**
- 4. Speak out one word (like orange) and ask students to find the cards.**



5. Ask students to say the word after they find out the right card.

Orange

○ Learning Interest Cultivation

Activity 3 Goals:

This hide and seek activity can help students to develop their listening ability and learn new English vocabulary through interesting games.



Activity 4. Echo

○ Directions:

- 1. Prepare several pictures with English words underneath.**
- 2. Point to the picture and describe it in English (For example: They are friends and they are happy).**

3. If the description is right, students can clap their hands two times.

4. If the description is wrong, students should keep silent.

○ Learning Interest Cultivation

Activity 4 Goals:

This echo activity can help teachers to train the listening ability of students, and add much fun into studying.



Activity 5.

London bridge is falling down

○ Directions:

1. Ask two students to build a bridge face to face with their hands.

2. Ask the rest students to sing the song “London bridge is falling down” or other English songs, and at the same time ask them to pass through the bridge.

3. Ask two students who built the bridge put their hands down when students sing “My fair lady”.

4. Ask the student who is caught by the ‘bridge’ to answer a question in English

Learning Interest Cultivation Activity

5 Goals:

This London bridge is falling down activity combines English songs and games perfectly, which can help students learn English in an interesting way.



Part 3. Knowledge Learning Activities

🕒 Goals:

Knowledge learning activities help children learn correct pronunciation, 26 English letters, basic vocabulary, and basic speaking ability.

Activity 1. Throw and catch

○ Directions:

- 1. Prepare a big candy which is made of paper.**
- 2. Put a penalty inside the candy (like doing three rabbit jumps).**
- 3. Say an English letter.**
- 4. Give the big candy to a student.**

5. Ask the student holding the big candy to say the next English letter.

6. Ask students to pass the big candy and keep saying the next letters.

7. Ask the student who can not say the English correctly to open the big candy (receiving the punishment).

26 English Letters



Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg

Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn

Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt

Uu Vv Ww

Xx Yy Zz



Knowledge Learning Activity 1

Goals:

This throw and catch activity can be used for word spelling or reviewing the 26 English letters.



Activity 2. Bouncing the ball

○ Directions:

1. Divide students into two groups.
2. Prepare a ball for the class.
3. Bounce the ball.
4. Ask students to count how many times the ball bounces.

Ball

- 5. Ask students “How many times did I bounce the ball?”/ “What is the number?”**
- 6. Ask a student to answer the question.**
- 7. If the student answers correctly, that group wins.**

Numbers

1	2	3	4	5
ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE
6	7	8	9	10
SIX	SEVEN	EIGHT	NIGHT	TEN

Knowledge Learning Activity 2

Goals:

This bouncing the ball activity can help students learn numbers in English through games.



Activity 3. Driving the train

○ Directions:

- 1. The teacher acts like a locomotive.**
- 2. Drive in front of a student.**
- 3. Ask a question “ What’s your name?”.**
- 4. The student should use the sentence “My name is...”.**

5. The student who answered the question can get on the train.

6. The teacher and the student keep driving together in front of other students.

7. The game is finished until all students get on the train.

English names for boys and their meanings

Andy	Brave
Clark	Clever
Dave	Be loved
Eden	Sun shine; Happy
Felix	Lucky; Happy
Frank	Freedom
Gordon	Strong
Hyman	Life
Jeff	Peace
Kyle	Handsome

English names for girls and their meanings

Ada	Happy; Beautiful
Bonnie	Sweet; Beautiful; Kind
Caroline	Healthy; Strong
Dora	Gift of god
Elaine	Active; lively
Erin	Peace
Fay	Loyal
Grace	Elegant
Ida	Diligent; Rich
Sophia	Talented; Smart

Knowledge Learning Activity 3 Goals:

This driving the train activity can help students to learn/practice dialogues “What’s your name?” and “My name is...” .



Activity 4. Back to back

○ Directions:

- 1. Divide students into two groups.**
- 2. Paste words and pictures on the back of one student of each group.**
- 3. Show the back of these two students to the rest of the students.**

4. Ask the rest students to speak out the word.

5. The one who speak out the words correctly wins the game.

○ Knowledge Learning Activity 4 Goals:

This back to back activity can help students to learn new vocabulary in an interesting way.



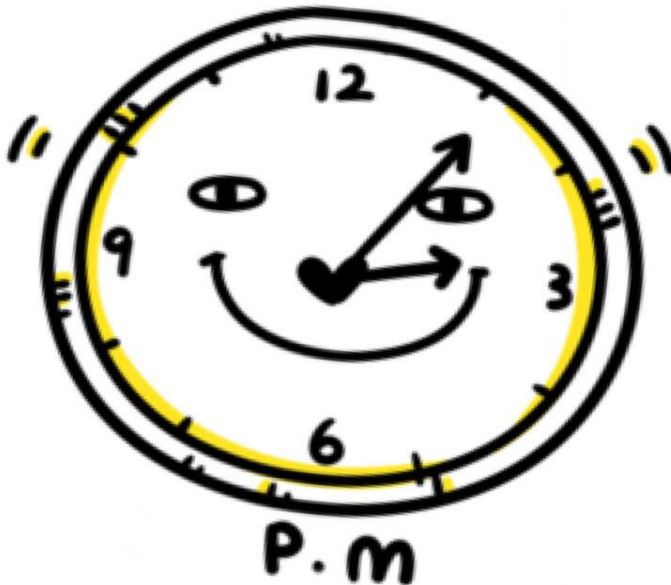
Activity 5. What time is it

○ Directions:

- 1. Ask 12 students to act 12 hours.**
- 2. Give them cards with number 1-12.**
- 3. Ask 12 students to stand in a circle.**
- 4. Ask students to ask “What time is it?” together.**

5. Point to the one student of the 12. (If the teacher point to the number 1.)

6. Ask students to speak out “It’s One clock.”



What time is it now?

Knowledge Learning Activity 5

Goals:

This what time is it activity can help students to learn how to ask about time and review English numbers through games.



Part 4. Communication Activities

○ Goals:

Communication activities help children develop their communication ability in English through different scenes.

Activity 1. Shopping today

○ Directions:

- 1. Create a shopping scene.**
- 2. Teacher acts a salesperson and students act customers.**
- 3. Prepare items that needed for class (preparing apple, orange, pear, strawberry and so on if teacher is going to teach how to shop for fruit).**

4. Do greetings: students say “How do you do ?” and teacher reply “How do you do ?”.

5. Ask students to speak out what they are going to buy “I want ...”

6. After shopping, asking students to say “Thank you”.

◎ Communication Activity 1 Goals:

This shopping today activity can be used to help students to practice new vocabulary and shopping dialogue.



Activity 2. The spring is coming

○ Directions:

- 1. Ask students to act as the spring, the spring wind, trees, grass, red flower, yellow flower, purple flower, white flower, birds.**
- 2. Teacher says: The spring wind is soft. The student who acts as the spring wind comes forward and says: Hi, I am the spring wind.**

3. Teacher says: The spring is coming. The student who acts as the spring comes forward and says: Hi, I am the spring.

4. Teacher says: The spring breeze and the spring begin to run around the trees, grass and flowers, and the trees begin to sprout out of the ground, and flowers grow out of buds. Students have to act out what the teacher says.

5. The students who act as trees (together): Hi, we are trees. The student who acts as grass: Hi, I am grass. The students who act as flowers (together): Hi, we are red/yellow/purple/white flowers.

6. Teacher says: The birds are waking up. The students who act as birds fly forward (together): Hi, we are birds.

7. Until every student comes forward, the teacher asks them to say: Let's play together.

○Communication Activity 2 Goals:

This spring is coming activity is a role play game, which can help students can active participate in learning and practicing English.



Activity 3. Sunshine restaurant

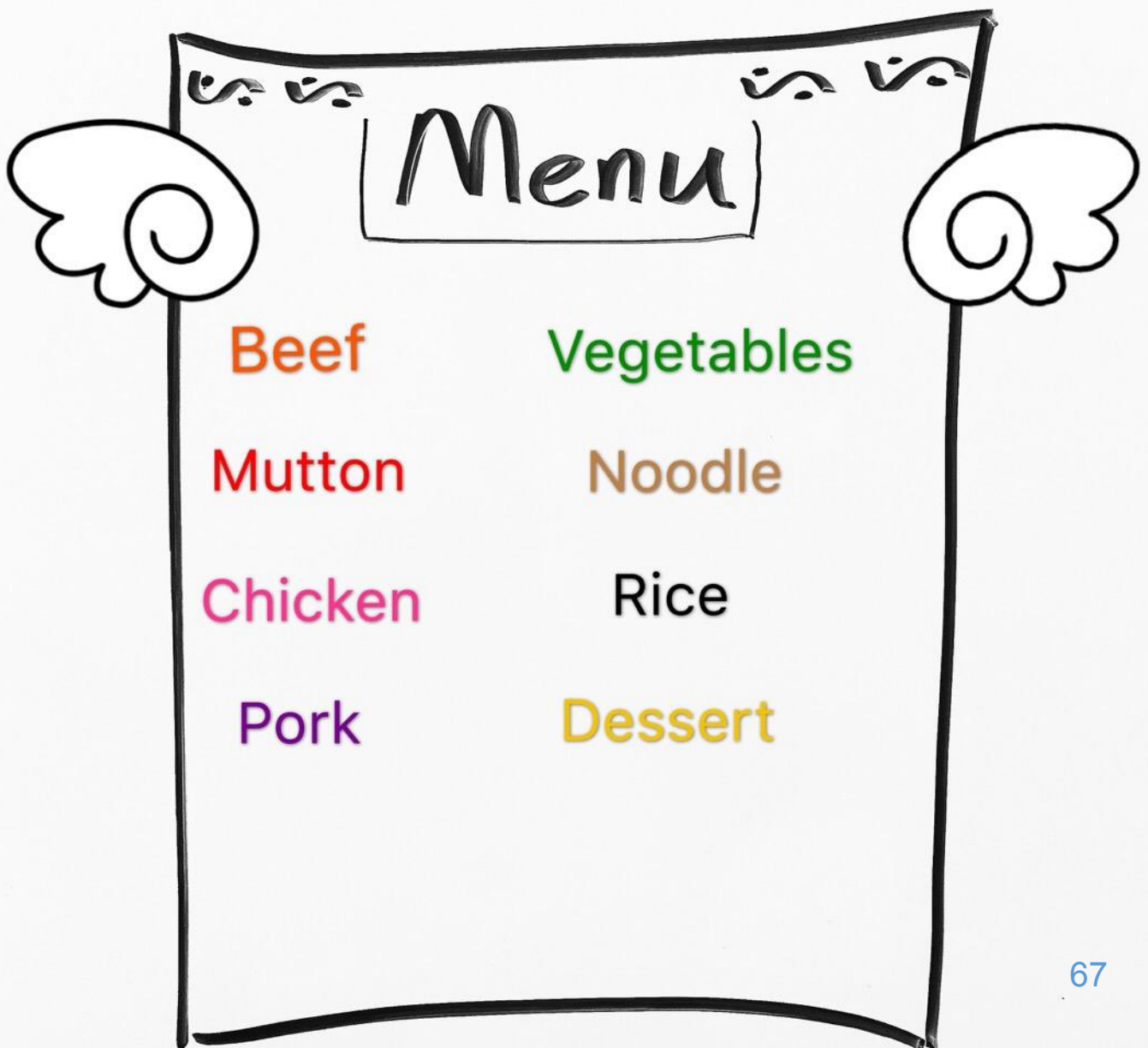
○ Directions:

- 1. Create a restaurant scene.**
- 2. Teacher acts like a waiter/waitress in the restaurant, and asking students to act like customers.**
- 3. Prepare a menu including new vocabulary which are going to be taught in class.**

4. Teacher asks students “ How can I help you?”.

5. Ask students to reply “ I would like to order...” “Thank you”.

Menu



Communication Activity 3 Goals:

This sunshine restaurant activity can help students learn how to order food and learn vocabulary through games.

