

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This section delves into the theoretical background and earlier studies related to children learning foreign languages at a young age.

#### **2.1. Theoretical Background**

##### **2.1.1. Teaching**

Teaching can be interpreted as an act that requires quite heavy moral responsibility. Because success or failure depends on the responsibility of the teacher or parents in this study in carrying out their duties. In essence, teaching is the effort of teachers or parents in this study to create and design learning processes and provide practice to students or children. According to George Picket and John J. Hanlon, teaching is a profession as well as a skill. Not everyone is suitable for such a challenge because it must be based on training, temperament, and experience. Meanwhile, according to Muhammad (1992), teaching is all deliberate efforts in order to provide the possibility for students to have a learning process in accordance with the objectives that have been formulated. Teaching, according to Hamalik (1992), can also be said to be an activity of organizing or managing the environment as well as possible so as to create opportunities for children to carry out the learning process efficiently. And, Hight (1954) opined that teaching is an art, not a science, teaching is in the form of “becoming” not “being made”, the value that every teacher has outside of the scientific work, emotion, and that is why according to him teaching is an art. From several opinions about the definition of ways and teaching, it can be concluded that teaching methods are ways, rules, or systems that are applied by a teacher or parents in organizing and managing the learning environment as well as possible to create

opportunities for children to carry out learning efficiently and can encourage students to learn properly to achieve the learning objectives.

### **2.1.2. Learning**

Hilgard and Bower quoted from Sanjaya (2006) said, *“Learning is the process, by which an activity originates or is changed through training procedures (whether in the laboratory or in the natural environment) as distinguishes from changes by factors or not attributable to training.”* And Woolfolk (1995) stated that learning occurs when experience causes a relatively permanent change in an individual’s knowledge or behavior. Learning outcomes can only be observed from behavior, from unskilled to skilled. Without observing the behavior of learning outcomes, we cannot know whether there are learning outcomes. Changes in behavior do not have to be immediately observed when the learning process is in progress, these changes are potential and changes in behavior are the result of practice or experience. The same as the previous definitions, in a book entitled *“Seven research-based principles for smart teaching”* by Ambrose (2010), learning is defined as a process that leads to change, which occurs as a result of experience and increases the potential for improved performance and future learning. However, there are three critical components to this definition:

1. Learning is a process, not a product. However, because this process takes place in the mind, we can only infer that it has occurred from students’ products or performances.
2. Learning involves a change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, or attitudes. This change unfolds over time; it is not fleeting but rather has a lasting impact on how students think and act.

3. Learning is not something done to students, but rather something students themselves do. It is the direct result of how students interpret and respond to their experiences— conscious and unconscious, past and present.

There are three theories of language learning experts in Adžija (2014):

1. Nativist: Child learns language by listening and detecting formal categories (grammar) that are part of their innate knowledge (Chomsky, *Language and Mind*, 1968) and Lennenberg (1967) opined that we are born with an innate Language Acquisition Set, which is a mental program for how to handle language, but Lennenberg (1967) suggests that there are deadlines for language acquisition, “a critical period” in a child’s life, which occurs upon reaching puberty.
2. Skinner (1989), empiricists-behaviorists: children learn language/speech by using it in communication situations, by imitating adults and other children. He believed in parenting theory that we could explain language development in terms of familiar learning principles, such as association, imitation, and reinforcement.
3. Cognitivist: In the field of cognitive abilities, cognition precedes language development, whereas – it is a combination of nativist and empiricists (Jerome Bruner, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Sapir-Whorf). Piaget (1967) first developed a stage-of-developmental theory that deals with the nature of knowledge itself and how humans gradually acquire, construct, and use it. Vygotsky (1986), the founder of cultural psychology – history claims that there is a reciprocal relationship between the development of language and thinking and that it establishes an explicit and deep connection between speech (inner speech and spoken language) and the development of mental

concepts and cognitive awareness. According to Brunner (1966), in his research on children's development, there are three modes of representation: active representation (action-based), iconic representation (image based), and symbolic representation (language based).

### **2.1.3. Learning Foreign Languages**

Teaching and/or learning a foreign language is a complex procedure which is influenced by many factors such as teacher, learner, individual differences, learning style, etc. The teacher has an important role in managing every step of this procedure, what is to be taught, when to teach, how to teach, etc. Learners are another important part because each learner has a different learning style and background that influences their learning. It is known that each student has a different learning style and speed. One can learn by rote while another can learn by writing etc (Şanal, 2017). There have been many theories that affect language teaching during the history. Two theories called "Behaviourism" and "Mentalism" have influenced the language teaching in many aspects.

#### **a) Behaviourism**

Behaviorism, which consists of three phases - stimulus, response and reinforcement - is based on the theory that animals can be trained to do anything. Conditioning is most important. According to behaviorists, there is no theory of language learning, only the application of general principles of language learning. Learning is driven by the conditions under which it occurs, and as long as individuals experience the same conditions, they learn in the same way. In contrast, in language learning, every expression appears as a result of stimulation. Physical, verbal and internal stimuli are sources of language that

shape the learner's response. As the child learns to respond to the above stimuli, this initial effort must be reinforced. Children become stronger in many ways. The baby's physical needs, pain or discomfort act as stimuli to which it responds by crying or making noise. Parental consent is an important support for children learning their mother tongue. If children say something that the people around them don't understand, they get an answer, not a twisted tongue and wrong expressions. By learning the mother tongue, children learn which answers are right and which are wrong. In this way he developed a series of formal and thematic responses. With the right stimulation, statements are automatically generated by the child.

#### **b) Mentalism**

According to mentalists, a baby is born with an innate capacity for language acquisition. Their innate abilities enable them to construct hypotheses about language. They make their own sentences according to the hypothesis, and they test the suitability of the hypothesis by comparing it with the language they hear from the people around them. They are exposed to the adult language system because their cognitive abilities will mature gradually along with mastering the mother tongue. A child formulates language rules according to this level of cognitive maturity and thus the "creative construction" of language is based on rules he himself creates (Şanal, 2017).

#### **2.1.4. Foreign Language**

A language is considered foreign if it is primary learned in the classroom and it is not spoken in the society where the teaching occurs (Moeller & Catalano, 2015). According to *Wikipedia*, a foreign language is a language that is not commonly used by

people who live in a certain area. For example, since Indonesian is not the common language in Australia, it is considered a foreign language in that country. A foreign language is also a language that is not used in one's homeland/country of origin, for example; an Indonesian speaker living in Australia may say that English is a foreign language for himself. However, these two definitions still do not fully cover the meaning of 'foreign language'. In addition to the previous forms, the term is sometimes applied in ways that are misleading or imprecise. A foreign language is a language that is not used by people who live in a certain place. Foreign languages can be considered as exotic languages in certain countries and trace their origins to other countries. For example, French could be considered a foreign language for Scots living in their country. The concept can also be understood differently (Panda, 2022). Meanwhile Jeremiah (2005) said, the foreign languages do not only improve on an individual's professional value. They positively influence the individual's ability to adapt to new cultures. And, a foreign language is a language that is not an official language of, nor typically spoken in, a given country, and that native speakers from that country must usually acquire through conscious learning-be this through language lessons at school, self-teaching or attendance of language courses, for example.

### **2.1.5. Young Age Children**

The definition of early childhood according to law number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system which is called early childhood or young age children are aged 0-6 years, while according to experts are children aged 0-8 years. Montessori stated that early childhood is the absorb mind phase, namely the period of absorbing thoughts. At this time, children easily absorb everything that happens in their environment from the sounds they hear, the places they see and the objects they touch. Their minds certainly are like a sponge that's absorbing water. This period is commonly

referred to as the golden age, in which the child's brain's ability to absorb information is very high. Whatever information the child gets will affect their development in the future. According to Aisyah (2010) young age children have a number of characteristics, namely a great curiosity, is a unique personality, likes to imitate, rich in fantasy and imagination, likes to explore, has the most potential for learning, shows an egocentric attitude, and is part of a social being. The same opinion of definition was also expressed by Mansur (2005) that a group of children who are in unique process of growth and development. They have specific patterns of growth and development according to their level of growth and development.

#### **2.1.6. Advantages of Learning Foreign Languages at a Young Age**

##### **a) It creates an opportunity for early diversity.**

Multilingualism is an opportunity to learn from differences instead of afraid of them. According to Koenig (2019), when young children learn a foreign language, they develop a natural accent that is similar to their native language. For both children and adults, learning a foreign language can result in better opportunities both in college and in their careers. Language created as part of family activities can also build relationships. Cultural connections are much easier for children and adults learning foreign languages and can lead to friendships and business relationships. Children who learn foreign languages also have consistently higher test scores than their non-learning counterparts.

##### **b) Multilingual improves a person's working memory**

Koenig (2019) states that when children or adults start learning a foreign language, cognitive skills develop especially in children. According to the American Council on Foreign Language teaching, children who begin learning

foreign languages in childhood display certain cognitive advantages over children who do not. Research studies conducted in Canada with early childhood education show that children who are bilingual or multilingual develop the concept of object permanence more quickly than those who are not. In other words, they learn that objects that have different names in other languages are the same no matter what they are called and that object functions don't change. It also gives children greater mental flexibility and creative thinking skills than their monolingual counterparts. Multilingual education serves to improve the working memory of individuals learning multiple secondary languages. These enhancements provide enhanced information processing capabilities when there is exposure to new audio stimuli. Ideas, concept, and real-life experiences. At the same time, individuals who pursue multilingual education opportunities experience lower levels of fear and anxiety while being less likely to experience mental health disorders (Sari, 2019).

**c) Grow children's creativity and imagination**

Early childhood learns by playing. Providing early childhood education institutions is the right place to facilitate children's needs. If the children learn in a fun atmosphere, it will be easier for him to absorb the various instructions given. In addition to learning the basic skills of reading and writing, children will also get a lot of stimulation that will inspire thought and creativity (Sari, 2019).

**d) Build confidence and understanding**

Children who begin to learn and master a foreign language achieve greater confidence over time, and gain the ability to communicate with people



outside their immediate language group. Children develop self-confidence over time and can be encouraged to speak a foreign language. Children and adults alike have no fear of travel and enjoy the ability to converse with people in their own mother tongue as well as foreign languages. Many education experts recommend that adults and children learn their chosen language through listening to songs and speaking rhythmically to build confidence in their abilities (Sari, 2019).

### **2.1.7. Disadvantages of Learning Foreign Languages at a Young Age**

#### **a) BLAST (Bored Lonely Afraid-Angry Stressed Tired)**

Children who learn at an early age can feel bored with the material and regulations that he gets both at school and at home, as a result children can feel depressed and feel boredom while learn. In another way, a psychologist and child observer, Elly Risman (2019) states “The impact of entering school too early for children is like sowing seeds of cancer. We don’t know when cancer will appear and in what type. The children’s brain is not ready. We never know when they lose their motivation to learn. The younger we send to school, the sooner he experiences BLAST.” Mulya and Pratiwi (2017) cited in PsychoNews state BLAST stand for: A. Bored, feeling bored with daily routines and school routines. B. Lonely, the company is quiet because children are not close to their parents in quantity and quality. C. Angry-Afraid, feeling angry because of the situation, rooted in dissatisfaction and fear of stories to parents. D. Stress, feeling depressed because of the situation at hand. E. Tired, tired due to accumulated problems.

#### **b) Language Decline**

According to Hoff (2004), learn several languages at the same time it will limit the number of words that children can learn in the allotted time. A toddler's cognitive abilities only can learn an average of 20 words per month. If parents teach a child two languages, the child can only learn 10 new words in his native language and 10 new words in foreign language. This certainly affects language development in children his age. If a child is taught a foreign language or second language while learning their native language, this can lead to comprehension and hinder language acquisition. Children are confused about their native language, and their second or foreign language. In fact, it is not uncommon for a child's new vocabulary not to improve due to accent or confusion with languages they are learning.

### **c) Cultural Confusion**

A Foreign language is certainly different from the mother tongue. Such as grammar, use of letters and different ways of reading. And when a child is asked to learn thousands of foreign language vocabulary, it will definitely stress them out because different from their mother tongue. Introducing foreign languages to children from an early age can cause children to forget their original culture. Children can be confused with their own culture and even forget that culture. For example, if a child lives in Indonesia but learns English, or Chinese then he may question his identity. This again can lead to cultural confusion (Sari, 2019).

## **2.2. Earlier Studies**

In their research in Turkish' pre-school institutions inferred parents fully agree with the statement of the importance of children learning foreign languages from an early age (Kocaman

& Kocaman, 2015). The researchers stated that there are several effective methods in learning foreign languages, for example: games in foreign language teaching, music in foreign language teaching, and drama in foreign language teaching. In the study, parents who attended the survey were asked what is the most important reason they want their child to learn a foreign language in the pre-school period, 60.7% expressed the opinion that learning a foreign language should start at a young age.

When we have a look at Chanifa, Redjeki, Dayati, & Umi (2020), in their journal, it is said that parents must stimulate a lot of their children in connection with the teaching of foreign languages. Parents play an important role in introducing foreign languages in early childhood. Researchers said there are advantages, but there are also disadvantages in the introduction of foreign languages to early childhood. However, today foreign languages are one of the keys to a person's success, especially in international classes. This is because language is a communication tool. Without language, humans cannot be said to be social creatures because they cannot interact without language.

The results of a study conducted by Od (2013) shows that the teaching and learning of foreign languages to capture era has become a necessity in a world that develops and changes. In recent years, with the start of focusing on the importance of multilingual, teaching foreign languages at an early age has become an important problem. In Turkey, where this study was raised, the activities needed have begun in this case. Therefore, Researcher can say that in some public schools and private schools, foreign languages are taught to pre-school students in the age group 5-6. However, he must admit that there is a problem with course material in the practice of teaching foreign languages. For the solution to this problem, it has come to the conclusion that cartoons and audio-visual tools are useful for teaching.

Not entirely different from previous researches, in this study, one of the first assumptions at the beginning of this research study was that children's parents would have negative perceptions about the way their children learned English and that their relationship with English would not be positive. However, it was eye-opening to find that the results showed otherwise, 97% of the parents interviewed in the study had a positive perception of English. In addition, in this study, all parents support the idea that their children will learn English, as a foreign language because it will be a new experience for them to help them explore the world. Similar to the previous studies that have been discussed, regarding parents' perceptions of learning English as a foreign language, (Díaz, Acuña, Ravanal, & Riffo (2020) believe it is very important for teachers to find ways to involve parents or guardians in the student learning process, such as the bonds and support they can provide to them.

One of the important research studies was conducted by Alejandro, Lisseth, Miguel, Garmendez, & Menjivar (2010) broke down the same topic as the researcher in this study planned to write on. Looking at the results of this study, it is clear that children who learn two or more languages in very early stages present more significant advantages than those who are monolingual. They stated that children who are multilingual present disadvantages at the beginning they start to learn a new language. However, the disadvantages that the children face are not permanent: they will improve within the process itself.

Farzaneh & Movahed (2015) examines the learning of foreign languages like English for kids in Iran. This study has similarities with the study from Alejandro, Lisseth, Miguel, Garmendez, & Menjivar (2010). It broke down the importance of English, especially in the non-English-speaking country. The researchers here analyzed the reasons why it might be disadvantageous, including language interference, mixing languages, foreign accents, the additional effort for children, the additional effort for parents, and cultural discrepancy. In addition, some pre-schoolers do not have the talent or desire to learn a second language, and

for that reason, forcing them to learn it may not be wise. There is no specific age at when doing children have to start learning a foreign language. Children between the ages of 7 and 12 spend most of their time at school, participating in almost all educational and learning activities. They are more interested in doing activities with their peers – one of which is not likely to learn a foreign language, such as English.

When we look at Drăghici (2020), the author reveals that one thing is certain: parents are a motivating and determining factor when it comes to a child's education, as they have a tendency to influence the future of children by recommending fields of study that they should enter as adults in order to have a financially secure workplace and stable. Regarding foreign language learning, as parents, people aim for their children not only to learn foreign languages but also to perfect their knowledge to achieve a higher social status both inside and outside of school. At the same time, some parents condition their children to learn foreign languages as compensation for their own lack of opportunities to learn it as children.

In their article stated that parents have a great desire for their children to obtain foreign language education. The great desire of parents who are aware of the need for English for their children has sparked the rise of kindergartens being built to provide bilingual English programs in their schools. Pransiska (2020) concluded, to support a child's bilingual abilities, the environment is a very determining factor. The environment in question is home and school. At home, parents can get used to using two languages at once with their children. At school, the school can arrange and organize bilingual programs/classes at school.

In Indonesia, multilingual programs are growing rapidly. This fulfils the wishes of parents who wish their children to be introduced to English, and other foreign languages. Pransiska (2018) emphasized that, in addition to educators in schools, parents are figures who have a significant influence on the development of children at an early age. When the

kindergarten children carry out this program, parents stated that the cognitive ability to understand and speak directly in English is quite good and critical. As much as 75% of parents agree with this. The result of her research shows that this program makes children's cognitive abilities develop well where children have the ability to understand and be able to speak two languages, having two or more words for each object and idea.

Based on Faqihatuddiniyah & Rasyid's (2017) according to parents it is important for young age children to be introduced to foreign languages, especially English. Because English is now an international language in which almost all countries have studied English. Language is the key to everything, so it cannot be denied that if parents want their children to be successful, children must be taught/introduced to the language as early as possible. According to parents, the earlier children are taught, the easier it will be for children to accept lessons, children will often listen to English, and the longer children will get used to it, as well as other foreign languages.

If we look at the Hidayati's (2020), it is said that there are many studies that have developed to date that state that there are far more benefits for children with bilingualism and multilingualism, for example, children become more tolerant and appreciate differences, get better grades on verbal tests, and so on. In fact, some researchers say that bilingualism and multilingualism children are stated to have higher scores than monolinguals. The author also believes that there is nothing wrong with applying this to children because there are many studies that support this phenomenon.