

# **YOUNG AND OLDER LEARNERS: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES**

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# AGENDA

Who are children ?

How do children learn their first language?

# TASK 1 OBSERVATION

15'

- ▣ What does the child do to learn a language?
- ▣ What does the mother (adult) do to support her child learn a language?
- ▣ What condition that facilitates language learning?

**Kate, a 15-month old baby, was having tea with her mum when suddenly she stared at something in the corner**

Kate: /gae/

Mum: what can you see?

Kate: /gae/

Mum: the ball? Where's the ball?

Kate: (menunjuk bola di sudut ruang)

Mum: yes, over there

S. Foster. 1990. *The Communicative Competence of young children*. Longman, p. 65

# What does a child do to learn a language?

20'

- ▣ Tries to communicate verbally and non-verbally
- ▣ Uses her natural ability to understand what's happening
- ▣ Uses feedback from her parents to confirm that her prediction is correct
- ▣ Observes her parents' facial expressions to get clues
- ▣ Imitates words used by adults
- ▣ Combines her words and something that has been mentioned by her parents
- ▣ Uses gestures to support her effort to communicate

# What does the mother (adult) do to support her child learn a language?

- ▣ Shows interest in the child's effort to communicate; and responds to the child as if the child's words were meaningful
- ▣ Talks to the child about things they like
- ▣ Adapts her talking style to the child's language level, e.g babyish talk
- ▣ Tries to understand things from the child's perspectives
- ▣ Uses context to understand what the child is trying to communicate
  - ▣ Confirms that her interpretation is correct
- ▣ Confirms the meanings communicated by the child
  - ▣ Adds or clarifies meaning

# What condition that facilitates language learning?

- ▣ Plenty of exposure
- ▣ Lots of repetition and routine
- ▣ Friendly environment
- ▣ No compulsion of communication – based on desire
- ▣ Unlimited time
- ▣ Parent and child do things together



# Children and adults

- ▣ In group, match the characteristics to a suitable column (children, adolescents, or adults)



# Pedagogical implication

- ▣ **Good Teachers who know the learners' characteristics need**
  - to provide a variety of resources for the students to get information from
  - to plan a range of activities for a given of time
  - to be flexible to move on the next activity when the students are getting bored

# What should a classroom for young learners look like?

- The classroom should be: bright and colorful, with windows for the children to see things out of, with enough room for different activities to be taking place
- Friendly environment

What the teacher can do with the young learners' characteristics (love discovering things - respond well to being asked to use their imagination?)

- In games;
  - in physical movement; or
  - in songs
- 
- In puzzle-like activities;
  - in making things;
  - in drawing things;

SEE YOU ALL NEXT WEEK

DON'T FORGET

YOUR LEARNING JOURNAL