Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru

Supported environment, tools, library, small number of students

Teacher
- Student centred
- Less teacher’s present
- Giving praises and support to children
- Respect children

Children
- at young age start to be the master of themselves
- have freedom
- learning by drilling
- develop some aspects:
  - cognitive,
  - motoris,
  - social

Parent
- lead and help children study at home
- accompany children
- watch children’s improvement in learning
- connect to teachers and school
Goals
of learning English language at
Singapore Piaget Academy International
School
Solo Baru

Cognitive Aspect
- Mathematic
- Reading
- Writing
- Scientific experience
- Drawing

Motorist Daily Aspect
- Making tea
- Cleaning table
- Washing furniture
- Buttoning shirt
- Folding dress

Social Aspect
- Learning from friends
- Performing shows
- Playing with friends
- Working together

Assessment
- written

Assessment
- rehearsal

No Specific Assessment
Field Note

Montessori Teaching System Implementation

To know, learn and understand the implementation of English language using Montessori Method in Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru. The researcher spent her time to be among the students, teachers and staff of the school. She had made big efforts to make the research accomplished, by making several visits to Singapore Piaget Academy Solo Baru. There were some steps as she did there, starting from the first until the fourth visit. With different length of time, days, different persons she met and also different topic to talk about. Singapore Piaget Academy International School which is still considered a new school in Solo town, is not an easy school for conducting an observation. Besides they still need a lot of time to manage the school, the lecturers there are very discipline and professional, so there are many steps that the writer should break through. Those several visits were:

1. The first meeting
   Opening:
   The first meeting was conducted on the 27 of August 2013. It was at 10 0’clock am when the writer did her first visit of the research. She started with a preliminary talk with the school guard wearing formal uniform, because not anyone is allowed to enter the school. She had to fill in the guest attendance book first, before she was allowed to enter the reception desk. After she received a guest card and clipped it on her shirt, she was lead to the information desk.
   Main Activity:
   On the reception desk she was welcome by an Indonesian woman secretary who spoke English fluently, then the writer had a conversation with her about her intention to conduct a research in Singapore Piaget International School solo Baru. It took about 15 minutes. The researcher handed a letter to her that contained of her intention of making a research in Singapore Piaget International school Solo Baru. The secretary was not an ordinary secretary, but she was smart,
polite enough to handle the guest, and she was able to make an appointment to meet with the Principal of the school the other day. At that time the Principal was still going abroad. She suggested the writer to come back the following week.

Closing:

After she arranged the exact meeting date for the writer to meet the principal, the researcher left the school.

2. The Second meeting

Opening:

It was on Monday the third of September 2012 when the researcher went to Singapore Piaget Academy international School Solo Baru for the second visit. She met Miss. Ema who was the chief of education program in that school. She was a Pilipino, and she really knew Montessori teaching learning well, if not an expert of Montessori teaching method. After introducing each other, the writer explained her intention of knowing a lot about the implementation of English language in Montessori teaching system in Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru, and how she did Montessori research for her paper. And she mentioned to the writer of her expertise in that school. The warm regards from miss Ema made the writer met the principal of the school then.

Main Activity:

The Principal asked some questions to the writer related to her intention of making a paper about Montessori. He stated that Montessori style of teaching proved to be very effective for kids in learning, even more for young kids, because even though there weren’t many rules to comply, but children managed to know what they had to do, the responsibility came out from their inner need, It happened because children did a lot of activities.
3. The Third Meeting

Opening:

On the 17 September 2012, the researcher made another appointment with Miss Ema, who then explained a lot about the application of English language in Montessori Teaching method in Singapore Piaget Academy Solo Baru. She started to tell about how Montessori teaching style applied in Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru.

Main Activity:

The levels of Montessori students in this school were based on children ages. It was divided into five levels, they are: Play Group Preparation, Play Group 1, Play Group 2, Kindergarten 1, and Kindergarten 2. Different levels also show different length time of their study, and different achievements and goals.

a. Play Group Preparation:

Singapore Piaget Academy International School uses English Language as the medium of communication among teachers and all students. At this level of class, teachers gave some examples how to do simple home daily activities. The ages of the children are from 20 months up to 2 years old. Students start studying from 8- to 10 am everyday from Monday to Friday. Each Class consists of 8 students. Each class is managed by two teachers. There are two parallel Play Group Preparation classes. Each subject takes only 15 minutes. The goals of the students learning are from some aspects:
Oral language:

Children learn to be able to express their opinions, feelings and needs. They perform short words and sentences. Children manage to interact with their friends and teachers at school by communicating with simple sentences, the words that they usually practice, or have been taught by their parents at home. Such as:

I’m tired mom
I want to drink
Help me please!
I need some glue
Where can I put my bag?

Cognitive development

It is one of the goals of learning in that school. Children learn from teachers and friends, their surrounding influence them a lot. They learn and imitate very fast from others. From the examples given by teachers, children manage to:

Clean their mouth
Shake hand with others
Behave well in class
Say goodbye

Physical development

It includes either “gross motorist” or ‘fine motorist‘. “Gross Motorist Skill” is the skill that children start to learn to walk well, sit down properly, run, stand on line, etc. So children practice their big muscles. English as the medium language is used by teachers to teach them to do those activities. Whereas in “Fine Motorist Skill” teachers teach children how to start learning daily activities such as; holding a pen, a book, a spoon, learning to eat, write, and draw.

From teacher advice and instructions, children learn how to control their emotion, learn not to depend on their parents, learn to be discipline, and to know
how to be responsible of themselves. At very early age children are also able to gain convenience and children become more creative.

Teacher’s Role

Children at this level are very sensitive, because this is the first time for children to study at school. This is also the first time for them to stay long alone outside their house, and learn from teachers where they must listen, think, do and obey what teacher’s orders to them. They learn from friends as well, they usually bring their habit at home to school. It may happen that because of one cry of a child makes some children in the class also cry. This situation occurs at the early meetings, and at this situation parents companion are still needed.

Teacher’s competence in teaching was really an obligation. They have to be able to control the class, as one out of order attitude of a child might break the situation of the class thoroughly. Three teachers in a class in Singapore Piaget Academy International School make children in the class controlled and easy to manage.

b. Play Group 1

At this level, children ages are from 2 up to 3 year old. They learn at school from 8 to 11 am from Monday to Friday. Each class consists of about 10 students. There are two parallel classes at this level. Children learn each subject for 15 minutes. Teachers give examples how to do activities but at this level, children are easier to control than when they are at Play Group Preparation. The goal of learning at this level is not far different from Play Group Preparation level, such as: oral language and physical development.

Children at this level are easier to manage, and control than those in the Play Group Preparation level. Children are more creative and they have bigger curiosity. Parent’s assistance and help at this level is not needed any more. The goal of the study at this level is that children are able to create more sentences, not
only a single sentence. Children Gross motorist skill and Fine motorist skill are both well developed. At this level children starts to learn general knowledge, phonetic, and they also learn simple words of mandarin language. The assessment to the children is to ask them to perform their ability directly, such as: counting, doing the daily activity that they have already learnt. For each activity usually takes 15 minutes to do. As the time of learning is long enough, children need a break, children have a break time from 9.00 am to 9.30 am. At this moment children will refresh themselves by playing with some friends or they may meet the parent or nanny.

c. Play Group 2

The ages of the children are from 3 to 4 years old. They study everyday from Monday to Friday from 8 am to 11 am. Starting to learn academic lesson makes children curios to learn more, as children character want to know new things. Children learn in 30 minutes for each subject. Learning becomes a bit serious activity for them, it is not a play anymore. They learn reading, counting, writing, speaking and general knowledge, Children learn sound 26 of letters (a to z). They need to be more patience and attentive, but they do all activity in joy because in Montessori teaching principle children are respected, so they feel secure and convenience to do activities.

The length of time for every lesson at this level is 30 minutes. Children endurance to sit, write and listen is longer than in Play Group 1. They enjoy doing activities with friends, being in touch with different friends make them learn from others, and from here children build their character, social life and their cognitive ability and self- esteem.

d. Kindergarten 1

The class in Kindergarten 1 consists of children from 4 to 5 years old. They study from 8 am to 11.30 am from Monday to Friday. Almost all of the subjects of
the study are the same as in Play Group 2 but the result of their work, activities of course should be different. Such as: the ability in reading; besides children now are able to read three letter words: cat, map, hat, hen, bed, they are also able to say short phrases, such as “a boy must be strong”, “a girl must be cute”.

The ability of hand writing should be increased, children should be stable in writing, they are able to write on the line paper. In mathematic students learn to count until number 100, they learn additional, subtraction, and comparing number. Children also gain more confidence to speak to learn and to get along with others, so at this level they are able to participate in performing a show, such as short drama, poetry reading, sing a song, or dance. At this level children learn 5 area: language, mathematic, sensorial Art, practical life, and cultural act.

e. Kindergarten 2

The class in kindergarten 2 consists of children at 5 to 6 years old. They study from 8 am to 12.00 am from Monday to Friday. Children learn more complex sentences, learn diphthong, and learn writing in a short paragraph. Children also learn to read books more, they understand more and they know who the writers of the books they read, and also understand the content of the texts.

Children at this level also start to have some homework from their teachers. The homework makes them practice more of what they have learnt at school. The homework given aimed to develop children motorist skills and cognitive ability.
Closing:

The researcher planned to have another meeting to interact and have conversations with teachers and the children either in the classroom or outside the classroom. Miss Ema informed the time and the schedule of the lessons in details.

4. The Fourth Meeting

It was on the 8th October 2012 when the researcher went to Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru. At this visit the writer attended the class of Kindergarten 2. This time she had some interactions with the students, teachers, and some parents. She attended the class, spent about two hours in the school, being involved with the student activities.

Opening:

The children were queuing in front of the class when the writer came. There were two teachers standing among the students, Miss Ema introduced the writer to those two teachers before the children entered the classroom. They were Miss Nana and Miss Martha.

Main activity:

After the children entered the classroom, they directly placed themselves standing next to their own seats. The teacher informed them kindly to take the chair out from its place, under the table.

All teachers’ words are presented in English language. Five children were sitting in circle with a table in the middle. The lesson started with a prayer, a teacher say words and the students repeated them.

The teacher then gave them some explanation and asked the children to do their activities that day. Children do their own activities individually, such as;

- To button a shirt and fold it properly
- To put on a dress by herself.
- To arrange pictures according to the grades of the size, from the small to the big ones.
- To pour water from one place to a bottle.
- To pile up different size of blocks from the big one at the bottom and the smaller ones at the top.
- To clean a chair, a table, a pair of shoes.
- To wash a plate, a glass, a spoon, with water.
- To color different types of pictures.
- To make some tea, paint pictures, create things from clay or rubber.

Children commonly perform their activities without making noise, they experience doing the activities again and again. Their inner will within make children execute them eagerly. Some children sometimes asked question to the teachers if they didn’t know. And teachers gave some solution of their problems. Sometimes children interacted with their friends especially when they succeed in doing their activities. Some said cheerful words, some clapped hands, and some brought the thing to show to their teachers and friends. They have freedom to express their inner will and creativities. Each session of lesson took about 10-15 minutes, they did the activities repeatedly, before then change to another kinds of object. The position of the teacher in the classroom might either sat down among the students or sometimes she took a walk around the children.

Closing:

Students ended the activities after the bell rang, it was the time for a break, and teacher gave some evaluation of what the children had done that day, some praises to students, and also some correction if they made some mistakes in doing the activities.
Children are going out from the classroom to play.

Learning objects and motoric skills.

Children handycraft.

Psychomotoric development exercise.

Mathematic device for counting.

Parents companion on special day.
Learning in groups.

Fine motoric skills device.

The researcher and the principal of Singapore Piaget Academy.

Individual practice.

Group exercises.

The researcher was interviewing the principal.
a. Cognitive Aspect

Children in Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru learn mathematics, reading, writing, singing, and drawing. An effective learning style applied to develop cognitive ability of a child is by doing repeating exercise. Children are encouraged to read more, for young children who still can’t read, looking at pictures in books will give pictures to them of what they see, and by doing this activity, children feel happy and enjoy whereas at the same moment they learn a lot. Children learn mathematics from educative tools. Children learn in happy feeling because the tools are just fit to them as their toys and the tools are specially made to be attractive for children to learn.

b. Motorist Aspect

Children motorist abilities include fine and big muscle exercises. It grows maximum in their early age when they learn, practice, and do experiments, such as do daily activities independently, activities that they see in their surrounding and they can apply those at home such as; eating, drinking, walking, making tea, washing plates and kids furniture, dressing up, etcetera. Children also learn farther to venture about the world. Going out of the classroom for Play Group Class is kinds of activities which is driven by children’s personal interest because they become more and more independent, they may play some sand, play water in the pond or dig a hole on the ground. Those kinds of exercises will create strong fine muscles.

Whereas taking some sport exercises definitely creates strong big muscles of children. Children enjoy interacting and playing with friends, they imitate their friends who have different capabilities from them. Doing activities in a group is an interesting practice for children, they have one goal of learning though they are from different background of family and have different capabilities. Unity seems can be seen in a child in their early age.
c. Social Aspect

Children also need respect as adults, so giving respect and cares to children as the subjects not as the objects will bring good impacts to the growth of children’s characters. They would have strong, healthy character, and they are confidence because they are not blamed when they make mistakes. In Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru, children mistake in learning is considered to be as the process of children to be in higher level of their abilities.

Children learn from their teachers and friends. A Shy and lacked confidence of child learns from his friends who are confidence and brave. He learns that when he is strong and brave he will be more appreciated and accepted by friends. Daily interaction with friends makes children able to strengthen and build their confidence. This social aspect life is important for children in the future. When a child is easy to adapt with different situation, he will be a person who has good social life. So to create a foundation of social life should be from the early age.

In Singapore Piaget Academy International School Solo Baru, children learn to gain good social life, easy to adapt with others, and become brave, discipline, honest and responsible children.
A Scheme of a child learning

Innate desire to learn

Parent’s support  Teacher’s Professionalism  Peer’s influence

Teaching Method

Output

A child who is sociable, discipline, creative, and competence.
Montessori Approach

Education is like roots

English language one subject of education as a key of other knowledge
Functional Notional Approach from Council of Europe according to “Transforming English language learning for children” (2001, p 7)

**Functions:** Using the language to accomplish tasks, such as:

- Providing/seeking information
  - Identifying (This is the bedroom).
  - Reporting (He said the train left.)
  - Asking (Where did you go?)

- Expressing/finding attitudes
  - [Dis]Agreeing (Yes, I like cookies).
  - Enquiring (Do you think it will rain?)
  - Denying (No, I didn’t do it.)

- Getting things done
  - Suggesting (Shall we play?)
  - Advising (Why don’t you…)
  - Warning (Be careful.)

- Socializing
  - Greeting (Hello, how do you do?)
  - Responding (I’m fine. How are you?)
  - Toasting (Cheers! Here’s to success!)

- Structuring conversations
  - Opening (Hello, do I know you?)
  - Closing (So, I will see you later.)
  - Correcting (Sorry, I meant…)

- Follow-up communications
  - Asking to repeat (Sorry, can you…?)
  - Expressing ignorance (I didn’t get…)
  - Clarifying (Can you speak slowly?)

**Notions:** Communicating real world concepts, such as:

- Existential
  - [Non]Existence (Is there any sugar?)
  - Availability (When will it be ready?)
  - Occurrence (Will it happen?)

- Spatial
  - Location (He has been to Paris.)
  - Distance (The rain is far away.)
  - Dimension (This is big.)

- Temporal
  - Days of the week; months
  - Time zones; time of day
  - Durations, earliness, lateness

- Quantitative
  - Singular/plural (cat, dogs)
  - Quantity (more, full, half, less)
  - Degree (not as much, somewhat)

- Qualitative
  - Shape, taste (square, sweet)
  - Quality (good, bad, right, wrong)
  - Desirability (like, don’t like)

- Relational
  - Contrast (same, different)
  - Ownership (mine, yours, theirs)