

APPRENTICESHIP REPORT AT BINTANG KECIL KINDERGARTEN

English as an international language is widely used in the world. In the globalization era many people need to speak English fluently in relation to the business world and education. Considering those facts, I want to improve my English skills in teaching. Therefore, I am looking for some experience to be a teacher assistant at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten. I love children so it makes me realize that if they learn English as early as possible, it will be easier for them to study English well in the next level. I will describe my teaching experience and provide an evaluation of my performance as well as suggestion to the related institutions in this report.

Bintang Kecil Kindergarten was established in 1997 and it is located at Kopo Permai I A-0 on an area of 5000 m². The school facilities include a computer laboratory, a playground, an audio visual class, a sandbox, a swimming pool, a library, a music room and a playroom. Bintang Kecil Kindergarten has an English programme for children to introduce basic uses of English, for example, in greetings, prayer and singing. This school expects that the programme will help the children to say greetings, to pray and to sing in English fluently. The use of English inside and outside the classroom was started last year. This school has a vision to be a Christian school which emphasizes on Faith, Integrity, and Knowledge. This school also has three missions. First, it aims at providing holistic education, integrated learning, and life transformation programmes. Second, it attempts to empower quality manpower with Christian faith, morality, and social

concern. And the last mission is to create a good study environment and to equip the school with good education facilities. The motto of the school is "Learning for Life Is Fun". It means that Bintang Kecil Kindergarten is committed to providing an enjoyable learning environment so that the children will be highly motivated to study as preparation for the future. In this school, there are several classes, namely, "Pondok Batita" (for children aged 2-3 years old), "Kelompok Bermain" (for children aged 4 years), "TK A", and "TK B" (for children aged 5 years). The number of pupils at "Pondok Batita" and "Kelompok Bermain" is about 14 children, whereas, the number of pupils at "TK A" and "TK B" is about 20 children. Each level has two classes, so there are eight classes. The number of teachers at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten is about 32.

There are some requirements to be a teacher assistant at Bintang kecil Kindergarten. She must be a Christian, must love children and must be able to tell stories to the children based on the Christian faith so that they will learn about God. Furthermore, she must be responsible and patient to follow all the activities at school. When doing story telling, she must be able to use gestures and body language. In doing so, the children will be interested and will pay attention to the teachers. The teacher also has to be cooperative with anyone at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten.

As a teacher assistant at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten, I have a fixed schedule for my classes. My regular schedule is Monday to Friday from 8 A.M. until 12 P.M. I also have to attend devotion and prayer time at 7.30 A.M. for teachers at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten. If I do not have any classes at Maranatha or other activities, I have to stay at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten until 3 P.M. to help the teachers to prepare some teaching aids such as arts and crafts. Every morning, I will stand with other teachers outside the class to welcome the children by saying "Good Morning" and shaking hands with them. As a teacher

assistant, I also have to take care of the children when they are playing and accompany the teachers to teach children inside and outside the class. When it is time for story telling in English, I will translate the story that the teacher reads in Indonesian. I enjoy helping the teacher in story telling. However, I find it difficult when I have to talk in English to the teachers and the children because some teachers tend to speak in English and sometimes I feel nervous.

As a teacher assistant, I can practice my English skills. I mostly use English for speaking, listening and translating. I practice my speaking skill to greet the children, for example, I say “tidy up”, “take off your shoes”, “wash your hands”, and “time is up”. I must check whether the children pronounce the words correctly when the children say “thank you miss” or “good bye miss”. When the teacher says “take off your shoes” or “wash your hands” to the children before lunch, I will translate those phrases into Indonesian. Besides practising my English skill, I can also apply what I have learnt in Learning Styles and Strategies class. I find the material is useful to help me become a good teacher. For example, I have to pay attention to the children so that they will not disturb another child in the class. I also learn that there are various roles of a teacher. Therefore, besides taking a role as a teacher assistant, I also try to be a friend to accompany them playing.

After having done the apprenticeship for three months at Bintang Kecil Kindergarten, I realize that I have made some improvement. For instance, I become more familiar with the children’s behavior and their characteristics when I get along with them and try to understand what they need and what they feel. Basically, they can listen to and say greetings in English such as “good morning”, “thank you miss”, and “good bye miss”. The vocabulary is not difficult for the children because they are still basic forms of English so that I do not have any problem in translating. I can do story telling to the children and make them

interested in learning English. Moreover, I can build a good relationship with the teachers and the children all around me. I have a new experience in the working world, especially in teaching, when I accompany the teacher to teach the children. I learn that I must be on time when doing all the activities in my life. The most important thing that I learn is that I must be patient and thoughtful as I do my job in the name of Jesus.

In spite of the strengths, I also have some weaknesses, I realize that sometimes the children regard me more as a friend than a teacher when I accompany them playing because I am not strict to the children. So, it makes me rather impatient if they do not want to listen to what I have said to them. Besides saying the greetings, I seldom talk in English to the children and the teachers at school because some of the teachers do not really understand English so they want me to talk in Indonesian. Therefore, I do not have a lot of opportunities to improve my speaking skills.

I have some suggestions for Bintang Kecil Kindergarten and the Non-Degree programme. For Bintang Kecil Kindergarten, it will be better if the teachers at “Pondok Batita” class pay more attention to the children when they are playing so they do not fight over toys. For the Non–Degree programme, I hope the networking programme can give more information about the places for the apprenticeship so that the students will have more options to choose.