

# Actualization of Children's English Skills Towards Society 5.0 Era

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## Abstract

Facing the Society 5.0 era, the world of education plays an important role in improving the quality of human resources. As well to education some elements and stakeholders such as the government, community organizations and the whole community also participated in welcoming the coming Society 5.0 era. To answer the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0 in the world of education required life skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> century or better known as 4C (Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication, and Collaboration). This research method using questionnaire survey by asking several questions to the respondents and doing direct observation at the research site. The total number of them was 12 with details 7 teachers and 5 parents of students respectively.

The results of the study show that the majority of respondents agree that it is very important to hone children's English skills for preparing the challenges in the Society 5.0 era. Where the times are getting more advanced and global competition is a necessity. Self-preparation through English language skills started from the education is a solution today. So that children have no difficulty to adapt in the modern or digital world and it is hard to be competitive looking for job vacancies in the future. Consequently, children are expected be technologically literate and fluent English in Society 5.0, considering that English has been established as an international language, business language, and technology language.

**Keywords:** *Children, English Skills, Society 5.0 Era.*

## Introduction

Industry 4.0 was first introduced by Klaus Schwab, executive chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF) at the Hannover Fair, April 4-8, 2011. The term was used by the German government to advance the industrial field to the next level, with the help of technology.<sup>1</sup> In its introduction, this revolution is said to fundamentally change human life and work. Compared to its predecessors, this industrial revolution has a wider scope, scale, and complexity.<sup>2</sup>

Based on world economic forum (WEF) 2020 research, there are 10 main abilities that are most needed toward the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era, namely being able to solve complex problems, critical thinking, creative, human management skills, can coordinate with others, emotional intelligence, the ability to judge and make decisions, oriented to prioritize services, negotiation skills, and cognitive flexibility. These 10 capabilities are also relevant in the face of Society 5.0.<sup>3</sup>

The Society 5.0 era is well-known as super smart society introduced by the Government of Japan in 2019, which was created in anticipation of the turmoil caused by the industrial revolution 4.0, which caused complex and ambiguous uncertainty (VUCA). It is feared that the invasion can erode the values of human character that have been maintained so far.<sup>4</sup> Society 5.0 is a society that can solve various social challenges and problems by utilizing various innovations born in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), data in large quantities (Big Data), and Robots to improve the quality of human life. Society 5.0 can also be interpreted as a concept of a society that is human-centered and technology-based.<sup>5,6</sup> In other words, the

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<sup>1</sup> Kominfo. "Apa Itu Industri 4.0 dan Bagaimana Indonesia Menyongsongnya". Retrieved February 28, 2022, from [https://kominfo.go.id/content/detail/16505/apa-itu-industri-40-dan-bagaimana-indonesia-menyongsongnya/0/sorotan\\_media](https://kominfo.go.id/content/detail/16505/apa-itu-industri-40-dan-bagaimana-indonesia-menyongsongnya/0/sorotan_media).

<sup>2</sup> Binus University. "Sejarah Revolusi Industri 4.0 dan Bedanya dengan Society 5.0". Retrieved March 01, 2022, from <https://onlinelearning.binus.ac.id/2021/05/23/sejarah-revolusi-industri-4-0-dan-bedanya-dengan-society-5-0/>.

<sup>3</sup> Sevima. "Perguruan Tinggi Menghadapi Era Society 5.0". Retrieved March 05, 2022, from <https://sevima.com/perguruan-tinggi-menghadapi-era-society-5-0/>.

<sup>4</sup> Kemdikbud. "Menyiapkan Pendidik Profesional di Era Society 5.0". Retrieved March 05, 2022, from <http://ditpsd.kemdikbud.go.id/artikel/detail/menyiapkan-pendidik-profesional-di-era-society-50>.

<sup>5</sup> Sevima, Op.cit.

<sup>6</sup> FP Insider Access. "How Japan is Preparing its Students for Society 5.0". Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/sponsored/how-japan-is-preparing-its-students-for-society-5-0/>.

Society 5.0 era has a human-centered society that balances economic advancement with the resolution of social problems by a system that highly integrates cyberspace and physical space.<sup>7</sup>

Today, the rapid development of digital and robotic-based technology has its own challenges for children. The development of technology also has a big impact on humans. The rapid development of technology makes humans required to immediately make various updates in several aspects of life. Conversely, if we do not do any updates or late to the update then it is most likely to be part of the people left behind or eroded by the times. In the present day there is no possibility to be a human being who stutters technology or is left behind by various information updates. A wide variety of activities or life jobs have been made easier by the many technologies available. By another meaning, technology is available, just how to make good and proper use of it. All existing or available technologies in the future are all made and prepared to alleviate and streamline all the work that is charged to humans, especially in the future.

Behind the rapid development of digitalization of the world, indirectly humans are really required to compete with the advancement of technology, especially in the world of robotics. All future human jobs will most likely be aided by advanced robots. So it does not rule out the possibility of the emergence of a new problem that is quite intense, namely the increasing human unemployment rate, which is causing an increase in the value of social and economic inequality. Because of the many human jobs that are replaced by advanced robots. Other negative impacts that will arise such as cybercrime, hacking, and hoax news as technological crimes that can cause a decrease in the stability of human life.

Facing the Society 5.0 era, the world of education plays an important role in improving the quality of human resources. As well to education some elements and stakeholders such as the government, community organizations and the whole community also participated in welcoming the coming Society 5.0 era. According to Sevima (2021), to answer the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0 in the world of education required life skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> century or better known as 4C (Creativity, Critical

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<sup>7</sup> Cabinet Office. Science and Technology Policy. Council for Science, Technology and Innovation. "Society 5.0". Retrieved March 01, 2022, from [https://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/english/society5\\_0/index.html](https://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/english/society5_0/index.html).

Thinking, Communication, and Collaboration). Meanwhile, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the competencies expected by students are to have the 6 ability of Basic Literacy (numeracy literacy, science literacy, information literacy, financial literacy, cultural literacy, and citizenship).<sup>8</sup>

One of the potential and abilities that are needed in the Society 5.0 era is to speak English. English is the international language of instruction. English as the basis of communication has an important role, especially in the world of technology development and renewal. According to Diah (2008), English has been taught as the first foreign language in Indonesia since early 1950s. In the past, it was only taught in high school. Then, based on *Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan R.I. No. 0487/4/1992, Bab VIII*, English is allowed to be taught in elementary school in 1992, starting from grade 4.<sup>9</sup> This shows that the government gives positive attitudes towards English learning for young learners. In fact, parents also send their children to schools that use English as the medium of instruction while the children still very young.<sup>10</sup>

Through English as the international language, children will find it easier to have conversations with people from various countries. Due to a language is a tool used to communicate with each other, so there is an understanding between the parties involved. The language itself can make it easier for us to channel ideas, ideas, feelings and many other things (Putra, 2020).<sup>11</sup>

So that, English has a very important role in preparing human resources. English is required to be used as a foothold in obtaining various digital information. In addition, English is also a tool in order to show the potential and abilities of each child, in order to facilitate the mastery of technology and renewal in accordance with the times. Therefore, in this study was conducted on Actualization of Children's English Skills Towards Society 5.0.

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<sup>8</sup> Sevima, Op.cit.

<sup>9</sup> Diah. *Persiapan Mengajar (Bahan Ajar, Metode, Media)*. (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Rina Kristiana and Maria Christina Eko Setyarini. Elementary School Teachers' Beliefs of English Teaching and Learning for Young Learners. *Journal English Education*. Vol. 11, No. 2 (2013): 131-141.

<sup>11</sup> Erlangga Putra. 2022. "The Importance of Learning English Nowadays". Retrieved March 03, 2022, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346400434>.

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## Method

This research method using questionnaire survey by asking several questions and doing direct observation at the research site. Preston (2009) stated that a questionnaire survey is only appropriate for certain research questions. Its suitability depends on the types of information needed to answer a research question and the people from whom the researcher wants to elicit information.<sup>12</sup>

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), researchers are often interested in the opinion of a large group of people about particular topic or issue. They ask a number of questions, all related to the issue, to find answer.<sup>13</sup> According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005), surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific events.<sup>14</sup>

The type of survey was used by the researcher was cross-sectional survey. A cross-sectional survey collects information from a sample that has been drawn from a predetermined population (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009).<sup>15</sup> The researcher collected the information at just one point in time, although the time it will take to collect all of the data may take anywhere from a day to a few weeks or more.

This research was conducted on March 2, 2022 at SDI Ar-Roudloh Miru Sekaran Lamongan. The research sample used is taken from the population of teachers and parents of students. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the researcher would like to generalize the results of the study.<sup>16</sup> Sugiyono (2012) said that population is the generalization area that contain the

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<sup>12</sup> Preston, V. 2009. "Questionnaire Survey (in International Encyclopedia of Human Geography)". Retrieved March 04, 2022, from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/earth-and-planetary-sciences/questionnaire-survey>.

<sup>13</sup> Jack R. Fraenkel and Norman E. Wallen. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (7<sup>th</sup>Ed.). (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2009), 390.

<sup>14</sup> Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison. *Research Method in Education* (5<sup>th</sup>Ed.). (London: Routledge Falmer, 2005), 186.

<sup>15</sup> Jack R. Fraenkel and Norman E. Wallen, Op.cit, 391.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 91.

object/subject which has certain quality and characteristic to be learned and concluded by the researcher.<sup>17</sup>

In this research, the researcher used cluster random sampling. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), cluster random sampling is the selection of groups, or clusters, of subjects rather than individuals from classes already in existence. If simple random sampling is more effective with larger numbers of individuals, cluster random sampling is more effective with larger numbers of clusters.<sup>18</sup> Based on the technique of sampling above, the researcher clustered all the population and took some teachers and parents were randomly selected as the sample of the research. The total number of them was 12 with details 7 teachers and 5 parents of students respectively.

The most common types of instruments used in survey research are the questionnaire (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009).<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the researcher used questionnaire for collecting the data from the teachers and parents. They answered the questions in the questionnaire about the importance of English for childrens. The questions in the questionnaire were formed based on the theory of Supriyanti (2012), about the three reasons for providing English in the elementary schools. The three of them were 1) The widespread assumption that the younger the child learn a new language the better the result will be, 2) The fact that economic globalization has pushed the demand of English in the form of the workforce who speak English to meet the need of the international economic forces, 3) The parents' enthusiasm for their children to learn English early in order to have social and economical benefit in the national context.<sup>20</sup>

Then we develop it to the questionnaire contained 5 close-ended questions on teachers' perception about the importance of English for young learners. The respondents were allowed to select the answer from the number of options or items. The researcher used simple Likert scale with two-level Likert item, they were 1) agree and 2) disagree as can be seen in the Table 1.

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<sup>17</sup> Sugiyono. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*. (Bandung: Alfabeta Bandung, 2012).

<sup>18</sup> Jack R. Fraenkel and Norman E. Wallen, *Op.cit*, 96.

<sup>19</sup> Jack R. Fraenkel and Norman E. Wallen, *Op.cit.*, 395.

<sup>20</sup> Nury Supriyanti. Why do Our Children Need to Learn English at Elementary Schools? A Critical Review on the Provision of English to the Indonesia Elementary Schools. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. *Proceeding TEYLIN 2: from Policy to Classroom*. (2012): 146-152.

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Table 1. Research questionnaire sheet in SDI Ar-Roudloh Miru Sekaran Lamongan

No.	Questions	Agree	Disagree
1.	English is important for facing the digital era (Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0).		
2.	Studying English must be started since early stage such primary schools.		
3.	English skills of children affect technological and economical progress in the future.		
4.	Phenomenon of children now more able to speak English than the local and national language.		
5.	Children who are able to speak English are definitely intelligent and successful.		

To analyze the research data, the researcher used descriptive analysis method by using simple basic statistical techniques. According to Sugiyono (2012), the statistical techniques often calculated are Means (M) showing average score, Median (Med) showing the middle point in the score distribution, Modes (Mo) showing a point where most scores are obtained, Standard Deviation (SD) showing the average deviation of each score from the mean, and percentage (%) showing proportion of the group in the population.<sup>21</sup> The graphs are used by researchers to represent data assisted by Microsoft Excel 2010 software, then describing the data.

## Findings and Discussion

### Findings

From the research conducted on 12 samples, the results of the questionnaire data were obtained which can be shown in the following Figure 1.

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<sup>21</sup> Sugiyono, Op.cit.

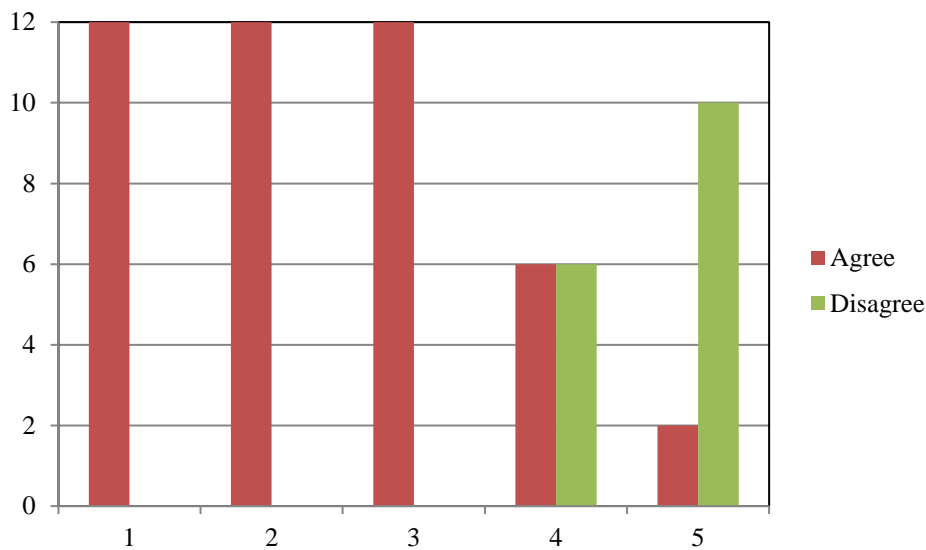


Figure 1. Graph of survey results to teachers and parents in SDI Ar-Roudloh Miru Sekaran Lamongan

The data above describes the entire sample, both teachers and parents agree with the question that English is important for facing the digital era (Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0), studying English must be started since early stage such primary schools, and English skills of children affect technological and economical progress in the future.

Unlike the case with the fourth question, it shows 50% : 50% agreeing and also disagreeing, regarding phenomenon of children now more able to speak English than the local and national language. In the digital era, children learn faster and recognize foreign languages more through the internet. Especially in the big cities, many children are found to be more fluent in English than the local and national languages. Based on the results of the study, it shows a balance of opinion about the importance of English, but the local language is no less important.

The last is the opinion about children who are able to speak English are definitely intelligent and successful. The data obtained showed that more respondents said they did not agree and there were 2 respondents from the parents of students who stated otherwise. It is alleged that parents must be proud and think their children are smart if they are proficient in English. It is hoped that students are now equipped with English from an early age, either



through lessons at school and tutoring or extracurricular activities to support students' ability to communicate in the international arena.

## Discussion

The results of the study which showed the majority of respondents agreed that English is important for children. This corresponds to the statement from Gary Motteram (2013) which explains that the use of English is not only a basis for communicating. In the middle of the rapid development and technological updates, the English language ability factor is required to be mastered by children. Through English proficiency, it is expected that children are able to learn and master various technologies that develop. The amount of information related to the update is poured through English. So that the use of English is expected to minimize the gap in mindset and technological orientation of children. Thus they will be able to integrate between humans and technology later. Furthermore, keep in mind that English has been established as an international language, business language, and technology language.<sup>22</sup>

According to Sri Handayani (2016), English has become a keyword that can grasp all aspects, be it economic, political, social, or cultural.<sup>23</sup> It means that almost all technological tools use English. If we are working in a multinational or automated foreign company, English language skills are highly questionable and become the most important key requirement. Based on these reasons, it is not impossible that the rapid development of technology demands to be more proactive in responding to global information flows as an asset in meeting market needs. As a language of association in the world of English is not only an academic necessity because its mastery is limited to aspects of language knowledge but as a medium of global communication.

However, English subject that is usually found in elementary school curriculum was disappeared. It was not belong to one of subjects taught at Elementary School anymore like in KTSP (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pelajaran*), the previous curriculum. Since *Kurikulum*

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<sup>22</sup> Gary Motteram. *Innovations in Learning Technologies for English Language Teaching*. (London: British Council, 2013).

<sup>23</sup> Sri Handayani. Importance of English language skills as in welcoming ASEAN Community 2015. *Journal of Professional Educators*. Vol 3, No. 1 (2016): 102-106.

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13 (K-13) focuses on the use Bahasa Indonesia as national language, where some communities think that *Bahasa Indonesia* is more important to be taught at Elementary School than English as foreign language.<sup>24</sup>

English subject for Elementary School students in the KTSP was stated clearly in KTSP through the brief content that let the students to learn the four basic skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It was categorized as “*Muatan Lokal*”, where the students learnt English once a week. Even though, it was allocated in limited time, teaching English at Elementary School is really helpful for the students when they start entering Junior High School. It is caused of the basic material that they have learnt in Elementary School.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, according to news reported by El-Madani (2022), the government began to implement a new curriculum called the “*Kurikulum Merdeka*”. There are several subject changes including English. Where previously it was only a local content in elementary schools, it is now a compulsory subject. However, this curriculum is still in the pilot stage which in its implementation must be evaluated and revised in order to achieve the best educational goals.<sup>26</sup>

Related to the importance of mastery of foreign languages, a contemporary psycholinguistic. Frank Smith once said, “One language shows you in one corridor of life. Two languages show you the way to all the corridors”.<sup>27</sup> This saying implies how important foreign language education is, as well as mother tongue and national languages. Therefore, in that context, there needs to be a paradigm of thinking about the importance of The English language, namely the new perception that in the face of Society 5.0 era,<sup>28</sup> where in the middle of rapid development and technological renewal, the competitiveness of individuals from various countries competes with each other in dominating many

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<sup>24</sup> Marsika Sepyanda. The Importance of English Subject in Elementary School Curriculum. *English Language Teaching and Research*. Vol. 1, No. 1 (2017): 206-216.

<sup>25</sup> Loc.cit.

<sup>26</sup> El-Madani. “Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Segera Berlaku Bahasa Inggris Menjadi Pelajaran Wajib di SD”. Retrieved March 07, 2022, from <http://elmadani.id/kurikulum-merdeka-belajar-segera-berlaku-bahasa-inggris-menjadi-pelajaran-wajib-di-sd/>.

<sup>27</sup> Roro. “Pentingnya Belajar Bahasa Inggris Menurut Para Ahli”. Retrieved March 03, 2022, from <https://azbahasainggris.com/pentingnya-belajar-bahasa-inggris-menurut-para-ahli>.

<sup>28</sup> Sri Handayani, Op.cit.

opportunities in the world of business, which can be in the form of relationships or financial. Just as Indonesian is the national language that must be mastered, English as an international language is also a second language that appropriates to be studied until we become an expert.

Because, English is a global language that plays a role in global interaction and communication along with the progress and competition of globalization. In other words, understanding of English as a global language should not be associated with extinction or threats and disruptions to the native language or mother tongue unless it is an option.<sup>29</sup> English language skills are an important ability to communicate. English is the basis of the scientific language used by many terms in science.<sup>30</sup> According to Wursanto (2001) communication is the process of passing information that contains the meaning of one thing to other things (person or place) in an effort to gain mutual understanding.<sup>31</sup> Cross-border communication is one of the reasons for the importance of mastering English. Communication is carried out by various people from different parts of the world. So that it encourages the existence of an introductory language that can be mastered by children to prepare them for the future well. Moreover, learning English is important because it helps to communicate effectively with colleagues all over the world (Nishanthi, 2018).<sup>32</sup>

## Conclusion and Suggestion

To actualize children's English skills in the Society 5.0 era, it can certainly be achieved through improving the education system from an early age. The role of children's education as the main support of connectivity and effectiveness to get a variety of actual and factual information about technological developments and updates. Children's ability is a priority part of the Society 5.0 era. The abilities that children have are very related to the direction of life in the future. Through the ability to collaborate the world of education with

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<sup>29</sup> Sri Handayani, Op.cit.

<sup>30</sup> Fenny Oktavia. Upaya Komunikasi Interpersonal Kepala Desa dalam Memediasi Kepentingan PT. Bukit Borneo Sejahtera dengan Masyarakat Desa Long Lunuk. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Universitas Mulawarman*. Vol. 4, No. 1 (2016): 239-253.

<sup>31</sup> Ignatius Wursanto. *Ilmu Komunikasi Teori dan Praktek*. (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2001).

<sup>32</sup> Rajathurai Nishanthi. The Importance of Learning English in Today World. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*. Vol. 3, Issue 1 (2018): 871-874.

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technology, supported by the ability of a good foreign language to make children ready to plunge in a global world. If English language skills of children are inadequate in nowadays, they will be difficult to adapt in the modern or digital world and it is hard to be competitive looking for job vacancies in the future. Consequently, children are expected be technologically literate and fluent English in Society 5.0, considering that English has been established as an international language, business language, and technology language.

As for further research plans regarding the importance of actualizing English for children, in the future further research will be carried out by studying deeper from the children's side. One example of the test method is using a post test and a pre test. Then, the data obtained will be analyzed by statistical formulas.

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