

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. 1 Background

English which is taught as a foreign language at our formal schools is one of the compulsory subjects that has to be taken by all Indonesian students especially the SMA students.

The teaching of English subject itself is divided into the teaching of structure, reading comprehension, vocabulary, speaking (conversation), and writing (composition) as it is stated in the "GBPP (Garis-garis Besar Program Pengajaran)."¹ Structure plays an important role that the students have to master, as it is said by Carol . Fisher that grammar is a set of ruler, which tells how language should be used.²

There are many factors that influence the success

¹ Kurikulum SMA GBPP Bahasa Inggris, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 1987. p.iv.

² Carol .J. Fisher , "Children's language and the language arts", USA, Mc Grow Hill Book Company 1977, p.117.

and result of the English structure instruction. During the writer's observation while she was doing her teaching practice at the SMA, she noticed that the results of the students' test, especially the structure tests, were not satisfying. So, the English teacher often made remedial tests. Almost 50 percent of the students got bad marks. By interviewing some of the students, the writer concluded that most of the students got difficulties in understanding the materials explained by their teacher concerning the sentence patterns. It was difficult for them to memorize the rules or the sentence patterns as they were not able to do the structure tests correctly. Once the writer had the opportunity to observe the structure instruction given by the English teacher, she noticed that the English teacher usually used the following technique :

- (1) He explained the topic,
- (2) He gave the students the sentence patterns and some examples,
- (3) We asked the students to do the exercises,
- (4) He checked the students' work and then
- (5) He tested the students' mastery on the pattern.

// According to the writer, this technique of teaching //

structure needs more variation. The teacher should vary his way of teaching to avoid boredom. This idea is supported by Maria Eugene Monreal in her article, she says that "variety is one of the most important factors in maintaining a high level of motivation and interest among your students".³ If the students get bored, they will not be active during the teaching and learning process and the success of teaching can not be achieved; Therefore, the teacher should apply different technique of teaching the English structure. Among the various techniques of teaching structure, there is a technique of teaching structure through reading passages. This technique of teaching presents the structural items into meaningful contexts. Through contexts the structural items will be more meaningful and it will be easier for the students to understand them.

Based on the above reasons of teaching structure the writer would like to choose teaching structure through reading passages as the topic of his research thesis. Hopefully it will be of some help for the English teachers in presenting the structure materials to their students.

³ Maria Eugene Monreal, "How I Use Songs", English teaching Forum, July 1982, Vol XX No.3, p.44.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Closely related to the background of this thesis, hereby the writer is trying to solve the problem:

1. What are the advantages of teaching structure through reading passages ?
2. What are the steps of teaching structure through reading passages ?

This thesis aims to suggest a different technique in teaching structure. Hopefully, this idea would be of some help to English teachers in helping their students to understand and master the English structure better.

1.3 The Objective and Significance of the thesis

Being aware of the importance of the English structure in teaching the English language, this thesis is written with the following objective:

- (1). To present some advantages of teaching structure through reading passages.
- (2). To give the steps of teaching structure through reading passages.

The writer does hope that this technique can help English teachers realize that teaching structure through reading

passages will be more interesting. She also hopes that the students will understand more the structural items and the function of the English structure when it is given in context. In addition, the writer encourages English teachers to be more creative and innovative to find out new technique of teaching structure. '

1.4 The Scope limitation and definition of Key-terms

The grammar in this thesis is the grammar which is stated in the English curriculum for SMA 1987. So, in this thesis the writer limits her study on the variation of teaching structure at the SMA. Hereby, the reading passages are used as a variation to support the aim of teaching structure at the SMA. And since the technique proposed here is meant to be used in teaching the SMA students, the examples chosen and used will also be the ones which are stated in the English curriculum for SMA 1987.

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms used in this thesis, the writer finds it important to define the following key terms so that the discussion about this thesis will be easily understood by the readers.

According to A.S. Hornby, "Teaching means giving

instruction or giving lessons to somebody".⁴ Hans P. Guth states "Structure is the study of how words work together in sentence".⁵ French confirms that :

"Structure of language is kinds of materials that go to make up language and the way the materials are put together, arranged and used to build up sentences, which as statements, questions, commands and exclamation for-in the living language and are the means of expressing what we feel, want to do, talk about and so forth".⁶

So what is meant by teaching structure in this thesis in giving instruction of: the study of how words work together in a sentence.

"Through" according to A. S. Hornby means : up to including.⁷

"Reading" is receiving and sorting out information from the words.⁸

⁴ A.S. Hornby, Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary of Current English, USA : Oxford University Press, 1974, p.886.

⁵ Hans .P. Guth, a _____, Wordsworth Publishing Company Inc, Belmont, California, P.489.

⁶ French, The f _____ English, The English language Book Society and Oxford university Press, 1963, p.7.

A.S. Hornby, op.cit., p.901.

⁸ Lynn Quitman Troyka, "Structured Reading", New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978, p.2.

According to A.S. Hornby, "passage" means short extract from a speech or piece of writing.⁹

Thus reading passages in this thesis means sorting out information from short extract from a speech or from a piece of writing.

1.5 The Methodology

This thesis is the result of a library research. Consequently, the content of it is not based on any experimental studies which are carried out at formal schools. To complete its background, the writer has read and taken various opinions of some experts in language teaching to discuss the technique to teach structure. The title::; of the books can be seen in the bibliography section.

1.6 Theoretical Framework.

In this section, the writer intends to discuss several papers or theses which are written by the English Department students of Unika Widya Mandala about the topic under discussion.

⁹ A.S. Hornby, up.cit., p. 612

Hariati Santoso says that by using visual aidn, the teachers can improve the students' achievement in learning English, especially in grammar. Visual aids are kinds of tools which can be used by teachers in order to facilitate the teaching learning process in the class. Visual aids are useful in the teaching learning process because they can motivate and arouse the students' interest to learn and enjoy the teaching learning process so ttthey will participate in the lesson attentively.¹⁰

According to Sri Widyastuti Pinardi, "In teaching grammar through guided conversation", the grammar lesson should consist of grammatical rules which explain the particularities of the structural pattern to be learned and a series of drills from a mechanical to communication level give the students optimum practice in language production.¹¹ The steps in teaching grammar, according to

¹⁰ Hariati Santoso, "The Effect of Visual Aids on Students' Achievent in English Grammar At SMA Dapena 2", Surabaya, Fakultas Keguruan Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra, Inggris Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala, 1988, p.8.

¹¹ Sri Widyastuti Pinardi, "Teaching Grammar Through Guided Conversation Surabaya, Fakultas Keguruan English Department : Universitas Katolii Widya Mandala, 1984, p.9.

her, are as follow :

- (1) The presentation of pattern in dialogues.
- (2) Comprehension question to make sure that the students have understood the models.
- (3) Identification of the pattern in which the teacher writes one example from the dialogues and then asks the students to find the other occurrences of the same pattern.
- (4) Formal explanation which can be given before or after the mechanical memorizing drills.
- (5) Mechanical drills to help the students learn the forms of the new pattern and memorize it.
- (6) Functional explication, the teacher should explain the use of the pattern.
- (7) Meaningful drills. In this steps, the students are concentrating on meaning rather than on form.
- (8) Communicative drill., the purpose is to use the language for communication and the focus is on what is¹² said rather than on how it is said.

In her paper, Lucy Budi Setyawati talks about singing as a means of teaching structures. She states that structures do not only play an important role in the written language but also in the spoken language. In order to avoid boredom, the teacher has to make all those words, phrases, and sentences in the book play a useful

¹² Sri Widyastuti F'inardi, Ibid., p.10-14.

part in some real situation or imagined real situation.¹³ She also states that by learning to sing songs in English, the students not only improve their English and enrich their vocabulary but they also get to know a bit about the culture and spirit of the people whose language they are studying.¹⁴

In connection with this thesis, the theses mentioned above, namely theses written by Mariati Santoso, Bri W. Pinardi, and Lucy B. Setyawati talk about several techniques of teaching structure and the students' achievement of the English structure. According to them it is very important that English teachers should motivate their students in learning structure. By mastering the English structure and the vocabulary, the students can improve their English and moreover, the goal of teaching English at our formal schools can successfully be achieved.

¹³ Lucy Budi Setyawati, Enforcing Structures Through Songs, Surabaya : Fakultas Keguruan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala., p.1.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.2.