

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Learning English as a second language is important nowadays. In this globalization era, English takes an important role as an International language. Learning English is better started from the very early age of children. Brumfit (1994) stated that there are two important aspects of teaching English to young learners, teaching English and young learners. As 'teaching English' comes first, some teachers may sometimes forget the needs of the latter. Young learners, children ranging from four up to twelve years old, need special treatments in learning. To be able to help them learn well, teachers of young learners, therefore, should know children's characteristics.

The way children learn a foreign language depends on their developmental stage. Children are by nature in the process of development. They do not only develop themselves physically but also socially, emotionally, cognitively and even spiritually at the same time. It is good fact if teachers of young children are child oriented rather than subject oriented. They concern with the development of the whole child rather than with his/her learning of Mathematics or History (Garvie, 1994). The same thing should also happen in an English class for young learners.

In her article about the development of children's thinking and understanding, Shorrocks (1994) emphasized that the whole child is the basic

focus. In line with that, Rixon (1994) stated that language learning should assist the general educational objective of encouraging the conceptual development of the child. Further, she also said that it should form part of the skills/conceptual and cultural/social development of the child – literacy, numeracy, general language awareness, some curiosity about the world around him/her and outside the borders of his/her own country.

In general, it can be assumed that the younger children are the more holistic learners they will be. Young learners respond to language according to what it does or what they can do with it. Kramsch (1992) says speaking a language means more than referring to the world, it also means relating to one's interlocutors, and through interaction language is used and learned.

Interaction in English classroom of young learners is important. What is important is that the children are given clear guidelines on when they are expected to use English and when their first language is permissible. In interaction, usually a teacher does not use English all the time as a means of communication. She or he sometimes uses the mother tongue in the English class. The first language is used when the children do not understand what the teacher says. Actually, this should not be done. It is essential to use as much English as possible in class.

According to Sinclair (1992), a classroom teacher is a skilled verbal artist who can manage and control the pupils and guide them in the process of learning. That is why a teacher has to be a good language model for the learners. Traditionally, a teacher was viewed as an organizer, a controller over the implementation and an evaluator of students' performances of the activities

because a teacher is considered as the one who has most knowledge in the classroom.

In a foreign language class, teacher talk plays a big role since it is the major spoken exposure to the students. Thus, a teacher should know teacher talk well so that she can adjust her talk to make her sentences comprehensible for her students. This is in line with Nunan's statement (1991:189) that says teacher talk is crucially important, not only for the organization and management of the classroom but also for the processes of acquisition. Considering this, the writer is interested in investigating teacher talk in the holistic English teaching class in one class of Wima Kids. Wima Kids is an English course for children whose instructors are senior students of English Department. The writer chose the course as the place to take the data because it is a center of the English Education Study Program of WMCU dealing with teaching English to young learners.

1.2 Research Questions

In line with the background of the study, the research questions of this study are:

- What kinds of teacher talk are used by the teacher in the holistic English class at Wima Kids?
- What are the linguistic features of teacher talk in the holistic English class at Wima Kids?

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

In accordance with the research question, the objective of this study is to describe the kinds of teacher talk and the linguistics features of teacher talk used by the teacher in the holistic English class at WIMA Kids Surabaya.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to give some meaningful contributions to the English teaching and learning and the further researches about teacher talk. This study can also be a reflection for the teacher. One good reason why all teachers should study teacher talk is in order to monitor their own performances.

1.5 Assumption

The holistic English class was applied in one class at WIMA Kids Surabaya in which the teaching and learning are focused on communication. That is why classroom verbal interaction is very important for the students to acquire the target language. The holistic English teaching was applied in Basic Two Class. This class is chosen considering the grade and the numbers of the students which are fit with the need of this study. Before the technique applied, the teacher is being trained by the expert to master the holistic English teaching. The teaching and learning materials are also based on the special lesson plan made by the expert.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The writer has limited her study entitled “Teacher talk in the holistic English class at WIMA Kids Surabaya”. Although the class is applied the holistic language teaching, but this study did not deal with holistic language education itself. It is focusing on the teacher talk. The subject of this study is one teacher of Basic Two class at Wima Kids Surabaya. This study is done to find out the kinds of teacher talk in teaching and learning process. So, the writer focused on the teacher’s verbal activity in one classroom of Wima Kids which consist of Initiation, response, follow-up and evaluation. The writer did not analyze the form of those features but focused on the communicative learning. She also analyzed the linguistic features. Linguistic feature is the concrete act toward language such as intonation, facial expression, number of words, etc. The writer focuses the research on analyzing the number of words.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding, the writer would like to give definition of the key terms used in this study.

The terms that will be defined are:

(1) Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction is an interaction that happens between teacher and students and between students and students in the learning process.

(2) Holistic Language Teaching

A concept of language learning that emphasizes on the ability to communicate in English.

(3) Utterance

Stretch of speech preceded and followed by silence or a change of speaker (Crystal 1980:367).

(4) Linguistic Feature

Linguistic Feature is the concrete act of speaking, writing or signing toward language such as intonation, gestures, facial expression, etc.

(5) Teacher Talk

Teacher talk is a variety of language sometimes used by teachers when they are in the process of teaching. In trying to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners (Longman, 1992)

1.8. Organization of this Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. It begins with Introduction in chapter I, which consists of the background, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the definition of key terms, the theoretical framework and the organization of this thesis. The Introduction is followed by chapter II. It focuses on reviewing the related theory supporting the study. Chapter III deals with Research Methodology. It discusses the research design, the source of data and data, the subjects of the study, the procedure of collecting the data, the instruments, and data analysis. Chapter IV concerns the findings and the discussion. At last, chapter V presents the conclusion and some suggestions concerning the topic under study.