

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, in the globalization era, English is considered to be the first foreign language in Indonesia and it's the most prominent one. The development of English as the first foreign language has a close relationship with the English role in business, science, and technology in recent years. Most of us realize that in the near future Indonesia will follow a free market system completely. This fact will motivate everybody to learn English if they do not want to be left behind.

Having realized the importance of English in almost all fields that can be read in many books, articles, magazines and journals written in English, the government makes a policy for the English teaching in Indonesia. According to the Curriculum of 1984, English is taught as the first foreign language in Indonesia from junior high. Further, the curriculum of 1984 is rather different from the 1994 Curriculum which states that English is taught to the elementary school pupils starting from grade four if it is possible. The pupils will be more curious to learn both domestic and international culture, science, and technology after the teachers introduce English as an International Language earlier.

This is based on the consideration that a critical period for children to learn a language is at the age of two to fourteen years old (Gleason, 1993:5). Lennerberg (1966:196) states that normally, children begin to learn a language when they start

to talk, at the age of two years old. Further, he points out that when children learn a language during their critical period, they will acquire the language better than adults. The notion of a critical period is consistent with several facts. First, children learn a language easily but adults find it hard; second, children who learn a second language before puberty speak it without foreign accents (Ur, 1996:282-288).

Mc Carthy (1992: vii) states that vocabulary is important in language teaching and learning. Harmer (1991:23) also points out that vocabulary is one of the most significant aspects of language development. Harmer also states that the English program should be developed toward the learner's four basic skills of communication: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In order that learners can listen smoothly, speak fluently, read better and write well they must have adequate vocabulary.

In fact, most pupils still find difficulties in memorizing and understanding the vocabulary given. The writer observed that during her teaching at one of elementary schools in Kediri, the English teachers at that school used a translated wordlist in teaching vocabulary. The teachers taught vocabulary by asking the difficult words found in the passage. Then, they gave the meaning of the words in Indonesian to be memorized or they could consult the words that pupils did not know in their dictionaries.

The result was that some pupils again and again asked the meaning of words that had been taught before, and soon they forgot them again. Others were very passive since they got bored of the lessons and they got only some

vocabulary to be memorized. This observation proves that the recent ways of teaching vocabulary at the school in which the writer did her teaching was quite inappropriate, since most children easily got bored or monotonous activities in English lesson.

The writer is of the opinion that it is time to give a special attention to the techniques of teaching vocabulary as Carter and Mc Carthy (1988:viii) state that vocabulary itself is the heart of language teaching and learning. Good ways of teaching can develop learners' vocabulary acquisitions. Scott and Yterberg (1990:2) add that in the teaching-learning process a teacher should avoid doing monotonous activities since it will invite children's boredom.

Based on the reasons above, the writer wants to observe the teaching techniques that include the pre-instructional, while-instructional, and post-instructional activities which applied to the third-grade students of Cita Hati elementary school Surabaya, as Carter and Mc Carthy also (1998:vii) claimed that vocabulary is the key of success in learning a language for elementary pupils.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In line with the background of the study, the central question in this thesis is "In what way is the English vocabulary taught to the third-grade elementary school pupils using storytelling through miniature diorama?"

1.3 Objective of the Study

By doing some observations in “ SD Cita Hati “, the writer wants to know the activities that happen before teaching, and the teaching-learning activities include pre, whilst, and post instructional activities in the classroom when the teacher teaches English vocabulary using storytelling through miniature diorama.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

From the theoretical points of view the result of this study will hopefully provide a clear description about one of the techniques in teaching vocabulary to elementary school pupils, especially in grade three.

From a practical point of view this study will hopefully give some motivations to the English teachers to use the technique, so that they may make teaching-learning activities more lively, enjoyable, and successful. In addition, the results of this study are expected to give some contributions to the success of teaching vocabulary at elementary school in Indonesia.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The writer finds out that it is necessary to limit the scope of this study. This study deals with teaching English vocabulary to the third-grade pupils of Cita Hati elementary school, other grades and schools are not observed. The reason of choosing SD Cita Hati is that it is considered to be a school which emphasizes the use of storytelling and gives priority on the English subject at the early age.

At school, the writer observed on how the teacher taught vocabulary to the third-grade pupils and how the pupils using the technique of storytelling through miniature diorama.

There are actually various techniques in teaching vocabulary to elementary pupils such as dialogue, puzzles, games, songs, charts, flashcards, pictures series and storytelling. The writer limits herself in this thesis just to discuss the teaching technique used by the schoolteachers during the writer's observation.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To clarify the terms used in this thesis and to avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation on the part of the readers, it is necessary to define the following key terms:

1.6.1 Technique:

Anthony (1972:7) states "technique" contains activities which take place in the classroom while Paulston (1976:X) points out that technique is an actual classroom behavior of specific strategies which the teacher selects to achieve his objective. In other words, "a technique" is a strategy which takes place in the classroom and is selected by the teacher to achieve the teaching objective.

1.6.2 Teaching:

Brown (1980:7) states that teaching is showing or helping something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, and causing to know or understand. So, teaching means giving instruction, guiding in the study of vocabulary, and then causing to know or understand the use of the vocabulary given.

1.6.3 Vocabulary:

There are a large number of educators who define the term vocabulary. Philips (1995:5) states that vocabulary is a transient of any person's command of a language. Kulfaishi(1988:42) states that vocabulary is a vehicle for thoughts, self-expressions, interpretations and communications.

From all definitions of vocabulary, the writer chooses the definition proposed by A.S. Hornby (1987:959). He defines vocabulary as the total number of words which make up a language. This definition is considered to be the most suitable definition for the study.

1.6.4 Elementary school students:

Students who are in the early stages of a course or study which are taught to children between 6 and 12 years old (Oxford Dictionary 1995:394). In this study, the writer was observing the third-grade pupils, which are at the age of 9 -10 years old.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This study uses the theories of the teaching learning at elementary school, and the importance of teaching vocabulary at elementary school and miniature diorama. These theories are briefly discussed as the main theories of this study.

1.7.1 Teaching-learning Process at Elementary School

The success of teaching and learning process in Elementary School depends much on both teachers and pupils. The teacher should vary her ways of teaching in accordance with the pupils' interest. In the teaching and learning activity, include pre, whilst, and post instructional activities, pupils are not self-motivated and they do not have an immediate need to learn. Therefore, it is the teachers' role to lead their ways while they are teaching, as children consider their teachers as models (Scout and Yterberg, 1990:2). Thus, the teaching should not be monotonous and the pupils will be interested and give responses enthusiastically to the teacher's questions in a classroom.

1.7.2 The Importance of Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary mastery is prominent in the process of language learning since Allen (1971:149) states that vocabulary is an important factor in all language teaching. Vocabulary is the most important component that pupils should master first in acquiring the target language.

In line with Allen's statement, Anderson (1964:12) points out that vocabulary makes up the words of a language. Words do not only help people to

communicate their thought and ideas, but also help listeners to understand what the speaker think, feel and mean.

1.7.3 Storytelling through Miniature Diorama

The use of miniature diorama is important in the presentation of storytelling. Diorama is a visual medium which presents an illusion of reality. Cross (1961:197) defines miniature diorama as the three dimensional group consisting of small modeled and colored figures and specimens, with accessories placed in an appropriate setting against a curved background, and some instances artificially lighted. Miniature diorama is one of the media which keeps the clarity of the storytelling concepts and ideas.

1.8 Organization of the Paper

This paper is presented in five chapters. Chapter I, Introduction, discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation, the definition of key terms, the theoretical framework, and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter II presents the review of related literature which describes the importance of vocabulary, the role of vocabulary teaching, some important considerations in teaching vocabulary through storytelling and the techniques in teaching vocabulary. This chapter also discusses the previous related study which attempt to describe the theses written by the students of Widya Mandala Catholic

University Surabaya concerning the use of techniques and teaching aids in teaching vocabulary.

Chapters III deals with the research method employed in this study. It gives the description of the research design, the subjects, the instrument, the procedure of data collection, source of the data and the data analysis.

Chapter IV serves the finding and discussion of this study to determine the answer to the research question under investigation.

Chapter V concerns with the conclusions and suggestion of this study.