

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Parents nowadays like their children to learn a foreign language. The foreign language that is most preferable is English. For this aim they send their children to English courses to learn it. They even start it at the early age of their children. Rubin and Thompson (1994: 4) support this by saying that "Some people think that the best time to begin studying a foreign language is in childhood and that the younger you are, the easier it is to learn another language." English becomes a familiar chosen language for them but children as young learners usually find some difficulties in achieving it. They have to learn it piece by piece. Wilkinson (1986: 117) as quoted by Puspawati (1997: 1) states that "People begin to learn the language from one word, phrase, clause, and sentence. They learn one by one until they know what the language is about and how to use it."

Teaching English for children especially elementary students is sometimes difficult. Children usually get bored easily. It usually happens because the procedures of teaching that the teachers use are almost the same from time to time so that they become monotonous. Besides, the children also have so many subjects that they have to learn everyday. All of these create boredom among the students. It can be sure that the students' motivation in learning will be decreased. They face this situation almost every day and it seems that what they have learned so far about the lesson will be meaningless. As quoted by Bernaus (1987: 45), Harmer (1984: 3) writes that "Motivation is some kind of internal drive that

encourages somebody to pursue a course of action. If we perceive a goal and that goal is sufficiently attractive, we will be strongly motivated to do whatever is necessary to reach that goal." He explains further that "The teacher must provide the proper conditions for learning and must stimulate the students' interest in learning." So the students need something new to reduce this boredom. As it is said by Allen and Valette (1977: 32) in Wibisono (1988: 10), "In order to hold the interest of most students, it is necessary to provide a large number of varied activities." Celcemurcia (1984: 5) also confirms this statement by saying that "Introducing variety into learning activities is a more external form of motivation. If the teacher can use some varieties in each lesson to make the class more enjoyable and less routine, this will also motivate the students to learning English."

There are some variations that can be used to teach foreign language such as using realia, pictures, games, songs, drama, puzzles, and short stories. One of the easiest and enjoyable variations among these is using songs. Concerning the use of songs in teaching English, Jaffe (1976: 15) as quoted by Wibisono (1988: 11) confirms that "The use of familiar songs enables the teacher not only to enrich the class and to add some variety to the lesson but also to create a feeling of warmth."

Chenfeld (1978: 166) explains further about singing that:

Singing is an important and enjoyable type of oral language activity. Not only are children exercising their vocal cords (so essential in successful oral language experience) but also they are learning about language, the world and themselves. Singing is a delightful way to free the spirit and make way for ease in personal expression. Involved in song, children often forget their insecurities and fears.

So songs deal with children's world. Children's world is a fun world where playing and learning should deal with all of the fun. Parents and teachers cannot force their children to learn something that they do not like. They should find other alternative that is interesting and fun for teaching a foreign language to their children. Freeman (1986: 115) says "Language learning is more effective when it is fun". Kline in Dryden and Vos (1999: 9) also supports this idea; he says that "Learning is most effective when it is fun". Hernowo in Dryden and Vos (1999: 10) adds further by saying that "Fun condition would push someone to try seriously, get involved, and get passionate in doing something- including in learning." Moreover Brien in Dryden and Vos (1999: 131) finds that "Most of the students of elementary and secondary school learn better when they get involved and move." The children can accept it easily and it also can attract their attention to it.

Children like to sing songs. They find their happiness in it. They learn from what they hear and see. Vos in Dryden and Vos (1999: 32) says that "You learn through what you see, what you hear, what you do." Magnesen in Dryden and Vos (1999: 100) supports this by saying that "We learn 90 % from what we say and do." Sometimes while singing the songs, they also like to make some gestures as the expression of their happiness. Celcemurcia (1984: 2) supports this idea by saying that in human communication, giving and receiving information can be conveyed nonverbally via gestures, body language or proxemics. So the children enjoy learning something from what they do. Schank in Dryden and Vos (1999: 26) says that "In learning something, you should practice it. Dryden and

Vos (1999: 25) add that "The complex information can be absorbed and remembered easily if the students really get involved." Many researchers in Dryden and Vos (1999: 129-130) also say that "People learn better when they get involved, move, experience, and try." Adults should guide the action that they create in order to make learning much more valuable. The adults will be the models first before the children can imitate it. It is because the action that they learn should be meaningful. The actions that the students make can refer to the action mentioned in the Total Physical Response, because the students have to listen first to the instruction of their teacher through songs before they act it out.

Songs according to many scholars are among the best ways of teaching a foreign language. Silviera (www.Esl/games.com) quotes that:

The authors of spectrum in Prentice Hall Regents Publications state that songs are an important aspect of culture, representing the history, folklore and current idiom of a country. Singing can build students' confidence by allowing them to enjoy a degree of fluency in English before they achieve it in speaking. Moreover songs can be incorporated to all language skills, like speaking, writing, listening and reading.

Griffiee (1992: 3) defines " 'Songs' as pieces of music that have words. Both songs and poetry are vocally produced, linguistically meaningful and have easy melody to be followed. Songs also have a personal quality that makes the listeners react as if the song were being sung for the listeners personally." Songs are good to be used for teaching young learners or children especially for teaching them a foreign language. Even adults can be moved to tears or other strong emotions by music. So, it can be accepted that songs can be used to teach foreign language because songs are enjoyable. From songs the children can learn something by doing it.

At the first time we learn a language, we should learn first about the vocabulary. Not only do adults have difficulties in learning, but children also do. We can find lyrics, which are identical to words in a song. The children can be taught vocabulary using these words. Campbell (2001: 11) states "Songs bound together the ability of language including vocabulary, ability in expressing something, fluently in communication, good social relationship with others and in all skills of language." The vocabulary that the children have to master is usually related to their daily activities and talk about their surrounding. In children songs, we can find that most of the contents of the songs is talking about the life of the children themselves. It is about their daily activities and their surrounding, For example a song entitled "This is the way". This song talks about daily activities like taking a bath, brushing teeth, wearing uniform, walking to school, etc.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Based on the importance of improving teaching vocabulary to young learners, the study will be conducted in the effect of teaching vocabulary to the fourth grade of elementary students through children song using Total Physical Response method. In this study the writer tries to answer the following question: Does the application of the children songs through TPR in teaching vocabulary have a different effect from the application of the word list on the fourth grade elementary students' vocabulary achievement?

1.3 THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

From the problem mentioned above, the objective of this study is to find out whether teaching vocabulary through children songs using Total Physical Response gives a different effect from teaching vocabulary using word lists to young learners especially the fourth grade students of the elementary school. The effect is the improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS

There are two hypotheses that the writer is going to use. They are the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis

HO : There is no significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the students who are taught through children songs using Total Physical Response method and those who are taught using word list

HA : There is a significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the students who are taught through children songs using Total Physical Response method and those who are taught using word list.

1.5 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The writer hopes that the result of this study can give some contributions for teachers who use teaching techniques for teaching English vocabulary through children songs using TPR to the fourth grade students of the elementary school.

For example the situation of teaching learning activities becomes more relax because sometimes the students are given variations in learning.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the teaching of English vocabulary to young learners by using Total Physical Response method through children songs for the fourth grade students of elementary school. The English vocabulary to be taught consists of certain verbs like get up, wash, sweep, take a bath, brush, wear, comb, eat, go, show, have, see, use, follow, hand up, hand down, wave, bend, turn right, turn left, jump up, jump down, turn around and certain nouns like face, floor, teeth, clothes, breakfast, head, eye, ear, mouth, nose, shoulder, knee, and toe. These verbs and nouns will be learnt together in the children songs and word list. The words that are taught are taken from the topics mentioned in their 1994 curriculum, but the students will learn about these topics in the second semester. The action that the students act out will be considered as the Total Physical Response. The children are the fourth grade of elementary school.

1.7 THE DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS

Before the writer comes to the next chapter, it is important to give the definition of the key terms first in order to avoid misunderstanding:

- Vocabulary: are all the words, which exist in a language (Collins, 1995: 927). In this study the vocabulary that are taught consist of certain verbs used in the daily activities, and physical education and certain nouns that describe parts of body.

- Song: refers to pieces of music that have words (Griffie, 1992:3)
- Teaching: refers to the teacher's effort to help the students to have clear understanding of what a word denotes or refers to, or to know the meaning of a word (Mukarto, 1989:66)
- Method: is an overall plan for representation of language based upon a selected approach (Edward, 1963 in Brown, 1994:48)
- Total Physical Response: is a technique in which the students respond physically to oral commands (Glison, 1986)
- Children: are students under 14years old (Kohnstamm (1950) in Suryabrata (1998:193)
- Word list: a list of new words that has not been taught yet that has meanings. It is used for helping people understand the meanings of the words easily.
- Effect: is the result of a change caused by somebody or something (Oxford, 1995: 134)
- Achievement: a thing done successfully especially with effort and skill (Homby, 1995:10)

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The writer makes this study based on the Total Physical Response method for helping the fourth grade students of elementary school or young learners to learn foreign language especially the English vocabulary. For this, the writer will combine both Total Physical Response method and children songs in order to make learning more enjoyable, interesting and easier to be followed. As it is said by Krakowian (1984:26) "The learning of vocabulary is usually classified as a kind of meaningful learning." It means that the teachers should make the learning becomes meaningful by presenting it into interesting and enjoyable learning.

Asher in Brown (1994:64) also notes that "Children in learning their first language, appear to do a lot of listening before they speak, and that their listening is accompanied by physical responses (reaching, grabbing, moving, looking and so forth), in the Total Physical Response, the students are expected to respond to the given commands." The commands can be found in the songs that are used to teach them to achieve the English vocabulary.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study will be composed of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction, discussing about the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, hypothesis, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the assumption of the study, the definition of the key terms and the theoretical frame work. Chapter II deals with the review of the related literature. In the Chapter III the writer will discuss about the research methodology, while data analysis and findings are in Chapter IV. The last chapter is about conclusion and some suggestions.