

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, mastering foreign languages is highly demanded. All aspects in our daily life are connected to the world outside, so we need to be able to communicate with people from other nations. There are so many foreign languages in the world and it is hard to master a lot of languages. However, there is a language that is admitted as the universal language and used by a lot of nations in the world, which is English. That is the reason why learning English as foreign language is essential.

Learning a language is just the same as learning to do anything else (Wilkins, 1972). It is similar with the way people learn to ride a bicycle or to draw. It has to be learned step by step regularly. The more people practice, the better the result will be. It needs diligence, patience, and strong motivation.

One of the language components to be learned is vocabulary. Although it is not the most important, vocabulary is needed as it builds the sentence structures. Without sufficient vocabulary, people will get stuck and stop in the middle of conversation or writing (Allen, 1983). Therefore, learning vocabulary is important. There have been a lot of ways to master vocabulary recently. The earlier method used is to memorize a large number of words, which brings the learners get stuck in boredom and difficulties (Meara, 1982). Based on that fact,

the teacher should find other methods how to teach vocabulary effectively and with fun.

Language can be learned anytime. It will never be too late to start learning language although it is best to start learning since the early age. Children's mind and brain is easier to gain information than the adults'. However, teaching vocabulary to young learner may arouse some problems. It is difficult to teach vocabulary, but it is even more difficult to teach it to young learners. Children are not easy to handle. They like to play all day long but they cannot be quiet for a minute to study. They have such a unique characteristic. It seems that they have unlimited energy and a wide beautiful world of imagination. They can gain more than adults do if the teacher knows how to make them enjoy the lesson. As stated by French (1975), children are active little people and their school must not be a sort of prison where they are forced to sit still. The teacher should understand their characteristic well and have the right method to make them learning and playing once at a time.

The purpose of this thesis is to present The Nursery Rhymes and Total Physical Response as the methods that can be used in teaching vocabulary to young learners. It will also discuss the characteristics of children, the details, the advantages, and the application of the methods.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

In line with the above background, the research question is formulated as follow: “What is the effect of using Nursery Rhyme and TPR as a method in children’s vocabularies achievement and retention?”

1.3 Objective of the Study

Through Nursery Rhyme and TPR, young learners are expected to improve their vocabulary acquisition and also be able to use it in their daily life. This study will test the effect of Nursery Rhymes and TPR in teaching vocabulary on the students’ vocabulary achievement and also the retention of the learning process’ result.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Teaching learning process should be effective but fun and enjoyable for both the teacher and the students. Effective means the aim of the lesson is achieved and an effective learning process does not have to be boring and too serious. Teachers in Indonesian schools tend to use wordlists to teach vocabulary because they think that using other methods is just spending much time. Wordlist seems to be effective but torturing the students because they have to remember a great sum of words, sometimes, without knowing what they exactly mean. Nursery Rhymes and TPR can make the students acquire the language unconsciously with fun (Oller, 1993).

Another significance to be considered in this study is the importance of making the students remembers the lesson (in this case, the vocabularies) for a long period of time. The students also have to be able to use the vocabularies in their daily life.

1.5 Scope and imitation

The subject of the study are young learners aged 6 -9 in regular school. In this case, all the students are considered to have an average ability based on their semester achievement report. The vocabulary taught here are limited words that can be expressed by body language or gesture such as, verb, part of the body, animal, and some other nouns.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Vocabulary is the total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language (Hornby, 1974). Vocabulary teaching is described as activities of presenting new words (Krashen, 1988). This activity can be done in various ways (Allen,1983). In this paper, there are two methods used, Nursery Rhymes and Total Physical Response. Nursery Rhymes are rhymes, jingles, or simple songs for children during the childhood (Chiu,1980). Total Physical Response is a method of learning language through actions, firstly introduced by James Asher (1988)

1.7 Research Hypotheses

The writer formulated some hypotheses before conducting the experimental research. The hypotheses are made based on the related literature that will be discussed clearly in Chapter 2. According to McMillan (1992), by forming a hypothesis a researcher can synthesize the information to make the most accurate prediction possible. The hypotheses can be tested after gathering and analyzing the data of the research. Here is the research problem followed by hypotheses which are going to be confirmed later:

Research Problem : What is the effect of using Nursery Rhyme and TPR as a method in children's vocabularies achievement and retention?

Alternative Hypothesis : The students in the experimental group will have a better result in vocabulary achievement and retention test than those in the control group who are given wordlist only.

Null Hypothesis : There is no significant difference in vocabulary achievement and retention test between the students in the experiment group and the students in the control group.