

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, definition of key terms, and organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the study

Nowadays all schools in Indonesia have English subject as one of their primary subjects. According to the 1994 Curriculum, English is a local content subject at elementary school, starting from the fourth grade. Some schools, however, start it earlier. This is also based on the consideration that there is a critical period for language learning. According to Khristianawati (2013: May 19), English has several advantages when it has been taught since elementary school. The advantages are elementary school age is a good time to learn a second language, preparation English in junior high school, and early preparation to face the globalization era.

The first advantage is that an elementary school age is a good time to learn a second language beside the mother tongue because at that age children have a good brain condition to receive something new. According to brain imaging technological research, that was conducted in California, Los Angeles, children aged 6-13 years old who are commonly known as being in the critical period, the research states that areas of the brain that organize a language skill experience the most rapid growth. The second advantage is preparation to face English in a junior high school. When the students have graduated from an elementary school, they enroll to a junior high school, English is not new anymore to them because they ever got an English lesson in the elementary school. In a junior high school, an English lesson is a compulsory object and English is a foreign language so the students should learn

it since in an elementary school to avoid difficulties. The third advantage is preparation to face the globalization era. In this globalization era everyone is supposed to be competent and improve his or her quality in order to face the challenges of life. Learning English since elementary school has many good effects for the globalization era; one effect is it will be easy for them to get a job because one of the requirements of every good job is to have good skill in English.

When students go to the elementary school, it means that they also go to the upper level of their study. Different materials will be given to them and teachers need different techniques also to teach the students. While teaching English for children is not an easy task, teachers should have various techniques to make students interested in learning English. Teachers also have to get students' curiosity to learn and to get the impression that English is fun and easy.

Therefore, various techniques in teaching English to young learners are important. One of the techniques that can be used during teaching learning process is by using media. According to Abe (1991:266-267), using media as a means of teaching English to young learners helps the teachers create the classroom situations to be more alive. The media also help the teachers render materials and help the students comprehend the given materials. In place of reading, teachers can use flash cards, pictures, various objects and realia to make the classroom more alive and resemble more closely the outside world.

According to Nye (1988), one of his strongest beliefs about second language teaching is that the whole process of teaching and learning should be fun. This self-developing motivation can be enhanced by the use of games in the classroom. Young learners, especially, have such a high competitive spirit that nearly any type of practice can become a contest in which the participants learn, almost without realizing what is happening to them.

Besides using media and games, teachers can also enhance students' interest by telling stories. Students especially young learners like to listen to stories especially fairy tales. Telling stories to children means that teachers can adapt the language to children's level, teachers can go back and repeat, or they can put in all sorts of gestures and facial expressions, and can keep eye contact most of the time. And also students can learn language from songs. One of the researchers says that the most effective way for children to learn language is through songs. It is because (Greenough, 1993:XI) songs enter one's brains in a different way from spoken or printed things, that they go to a different part of the brain, and that they often sink deeply in it.

Total Physical Response as well known as TPR also takes an effective part on teaching English for young learners. One of the main reasons TPR was developed was to reduce people's stress when studying foreign languages. One of the primary ways with which this is accomplished is to allow learners to speak when they are ready (Larsen: 2000:114).

Considering that teachers are coming from Teacher Training and Education Faculty when they are in the university, they usually learnt about the techniques used for teaching young learners. The application of teaching techniques that have been learnt by the teacher is the thing that would be observed in this study. By using several of techniques in teaching English, many things can be accomplished both by teacher and students. From the teachers' point of view, using various techniques helps them to explain the materials easily. From the students' point of view, the techniques used motivate them to understand and learn English in interesting ways.

1.2. Problem Statements

Based on the points presented in the background of the study, the study attempts to find the answers to the following questions:

1. What techniques do elementary teachers use in teaching English to the 1st grade of elementary students?

In more specific terms, the major question is stated in the following minor problems:

- 1.1. Does the Elementary English Teacher teach English using media such as pictures, real objects and puppets?
 - 1.2. Does she teach English using songs?
 - 1.3. Does she teach English using story telling?
 - 1.4. Does she teach English using games?
 - 1.5. Does she teach English using TPR?
2. What are the reasons of the teacher in using or not using a particular technique?

1.3. Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is:

1. To find out the techniques that are used by the elementary teacher in teaching English to the 1st grade of elementary students. And the specific objectives are:
 - 1.1. To find out whether the teacher is using pictures, real objects, and puppets in teaching English.
 - 1.2. To find out whether she is using songs in teaching English.
 - 1.3. To find out whether she is using story telling in teaching English.
 - 1.4. To find out whether she is using games in teaching English.
 - 1.5. To find out whether she is using TPR in teaching English.
2. To find out the reasons the teacher in using techniques in teaching English.

1.4. The Significance of the study

The writer expected that the result of this study can give contribution to the English teachers of elementary schools in teaching English to young learners. How to present the material to the students using various techniques plays an important role in teaching learning process.

1.5. Scope and limitation

This study is limited to the observation of the teaching techniques used by teacher of the 1st grade of elementary school. It is also limited to the teaching of English. The media that are taken into consideration are pictures, real objects and puppets. The teacher can use any songs, storytelling and games during the teaching-learning process.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Teaching English for Young Learners and suggested techniques of Teaching English to Young Learners; media (pictures, real objects, puppets) , songs, games, storytelling and TPR.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

1. Young learners: children who are between five years old to ten or eleven years old (Scott, et. al, 2003:1).
2. Media: the graphic, photographic, electronic or mechanical means for arresting, processing, and reconstituting visual or verbal information. (Gerlach, 1980)
3. Puppets: a head figure and a loose garment or dress fitted over the operator's hand. (Brown, 1977)

4. Story Telling: the art of using language, vocalization, and/or physical movement and gesture to reveal the elements and images of a story to specific, live audience. (NSA, 1997)
5. Song: a short piece of music with words that you sing (Oxford Dictionary)
6. Games: an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging, and an activity in which the learners play and usually interact with others. (Wright: 2006)
7. TPR: a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity. (Richards, 1986: 87)

1.8. Organization of the study

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is about the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, definition of key terms and organization of the study. In the second chapter reviews the literature and previous studies that are related to this study. While chapter three explains the design of research that will be done. The result and findings are written in chapter four and in chapter five, the conclusion and suggestion will be written.