

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

English, as an international language, is widely used to communicate the findings of science and technology. Consequently, people regard English as a high language. In Indonesia, English is the language which is considered as the most important foreign language. People who can speak English are considered well educated. Therefore, English is learned and taught either formally or informally in many parts of the country. It is taught as a compulsory subject in schools and universities in an environment where it is not used for daily communication.

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 based on the consideration that there is a critical period for language learning. It starts when the brain has matured enough to begin acquiring language, at two years old, and it ends when the brain has completely matured, at about fourteen years (Lennerberg as quoted by Adisutrisno, 1995: 3). He also states that normally children begin to learn a language when they start to talk, at the age of two. 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 the 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 accent (Ur, 1996: 282-288). Therefore, Ciputra Elementary School starts to present English from kindergarten. It also tries to use English as the daily language in the classroom.

Teaching English to children is different from teaching it to adults. It seems trivial, but some teachers sometimes forget that children are different from adults. Since all teachers are practically adults, they tend to teach in their world, while the children are learning in their own world, which is quite different. The ideal learning environment for children is not the same as that for adults. Strevens (1983: 7) says, “. the kind of teaching which is appropriate to a young child is different from the kind of teaching that is most helpful to an adult learner.” Teaching children like adults will be a very big mistake, then. Furthermore Piaget, as quoted by Fisher and Terry (1986:24) claims that the teaching of children should be created as concrete as possible since their thinking is grounded in the concrete.

The students' attitude, motivation, and interest should be also considered as important factors in determining their achievement in their learning. Therefore the teachers should vary their techniques in presenting the materials. One of those techniques is by using visual aids. Wright and Sofia

Haleen (1991: vi) say that using visual aids will make teaching more effective, communicative and interesting. Furthermore Bowen (1989: 112) also says that learning is a complex process and visual aids are a great help in stimulating the learning of a foreign language, the students must use their ears as well as his eyes but it is the eye that is the primary channel of learning. Good visual materials will help maintain the students' motivation. As we learn, most through visual stimulus such as pictures and others teaching media which are the more interesting and varied these stimuli are, the quicker, and more effective our learning will be.

Besides using media to attract the students' attention, the teacher also needs to engage students to participate actively in the teaching learning processes. The students should not be treated as 'empty vessel', who only sit and listen to the teacher explanations, but they need to be active. The active involvement in learning is also important in teaching a second language, because the learning process is a learning through doing (Skehan in Kartio, 1998: 20).

Since the writer had her teaching practice in Ciputra Elementary School for about two months, she found that the teaching – learning process is completely different from other elementary schools. The way they carry out the teaching learning process is not the same like what the writer usually sees. The way the teacher presents the material, which involved the students actively; and the roles of the teacher during the teaching learning process are several things

that differentiate Ciputra with other school. In this thesis she concentrates on grade five because the writer did the teaching practice mostly at that level.

It is under all these reasons that the writer writes this thesis, entitled “The English Language Teaching of the Fifth Grade Students of Ciputra Elementary School Surabaya.”

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the above background, it is necessary to find some evidences of the implementation of the English language teaching conducted at Ciputra elementary school. The research problem of this study can be formulated as follows:

“How can the implementation of the English Language Teaching of the fifth grade at Ciputra Elementary School motivate the students to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process?”

1.3 Objective of the Study

In line with the statement of the problem, the objective of this study is to give description and evidences about the implementation of English language teaching of the fifth grade at Ciputra elementary school that motivate the students to be involved in the teaching learning process actively.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is designed as an attempt to give description and proofs about the implementation of the English language teaching conducted at Ciputra where the students are motivated to be involved in the teaching learning process actively.

The writer also expected that the result of this study can give contribution to English teachers of elementary schools in teaching English to their students. How they present the materials to the students plays an important role in teaching English. The more it attracts them, the more they are motivated to be involved in the teaching learning activity. The teachers can create an atmosphere, like what Ciputra teachers do, where the students enjoy and interested in learning English. And finally, the teaching objectives can be achieved.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The subject of this study is limited to the fifth grade students of Ciputra elementary school. The reason why the writer chooses the subject is because the writer had already done her teaching practice in Ciputra elementary school, especially in grade five, for about two months. So, the writer knows how the teaching learning activities are carried out there. During the writer's teaching practice there, she finds out that the way the English language teaching at Ciputra elementary school conducted is different from that in other schools.

The way the teaching learning process conducted there affects the students' learning progress very much. As a result, the fifth grade students have relatively good English skills even though they are in the elementary level. Knowing the fact, the writer is motivated to do further observation. The observation is done when the English teacher, Mr. Roach, is teaching so that the observation will not disturb the teaching learning process. The data of this thesis are collected in natural setting.

Since there is a lot of factors that influence the success of a teaching learning process, the writer limits this study to discuss about the way the teacher presents the material to the students that involve them actively and the roles of the teacher during the teaching learning process.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Before going on to the main part of the thesis and to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it is necessary for the writer to give a brief definition of the following key terms.

1. Language:

A set of social conventions designed to facilitate communication with other persons who have acquired the same linguistic conventions, whenever and wherever they may have done so (Mercer and Swann, 1996: 39).

2. Teaching:

Showing or helping someone to learn how to do something; providing with knowledge causing to know or understand (Kimble and Garnezy as quoted by Brown, 1987: 6).

3. Students:

People who are studying to gaining knowledge and to get education in a school (Oxford, 1989: 1277).

4. Elementary school:

A school in which basic subjects are taught to the children from about six to twelve years of age (Webster, 1986:735).

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction. It presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

While Chapter II concerns with the Review of Related Literature, which includes the language teaching learning theory, some principles of young learners' language learning, teaching English as a foreign language to young learners includes the use of media in teaching English and kinds of media, the roles of a teacher, and classroom interaction.

Chapter III is the Research Method. It discusses the research design, subjects of the study, instruments, the data, procedures of data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV deals with the finding and the discussions of the implementation of the English language teaching of the fifth grade at Ciputra elementary school.

Chapter V, the last chapter, contains the writer's conclusion and suggestions.