

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In recent years, the need for a solid understanding of the English language has increased. Schools, starting from kindergarten until higher levels of education, insert English in their curriculum. Some universities even require their student candidates to take TOEFL tests before they are accepted. In the world of adults, almost all of job vacancies, especially when you read them in the newspaper, require English skills.

The need of English for young learners has also shown the similar enthusiasm. This can be seen especially from the fact that most of parents nowadays start to train their children to talk in English when they are still very young. In other words, young children are forced to have as much training and activities in English as possible. Parents' expectation is that as they are adult, the ability to converse in English, both written and spoken, becomes second nature.

There are many methods currently in use for the purposes of teaching English in regards to younger learners. The most common is without doubt the traditional method of classroom-based instruction as part of the regular curriculum. This usually covers the basics of introducing grammar, daily vocabulary, and rudimentary conversation skills. Although it gives one a solid foundation to begin with, it falls terribly short in providing actual usage skills. It almost seems that teachers are

neglecting the meaningful activities that enable learners to apply their knowledge and skills in the actual communication.

Some educational institutions in this country, having both the understanding and the means to acquire additional funding, might expand classroom lessons with actual training sessions with audio equipment that is known in some schools as language-laboratories. While it does have an advantage over the previous method, it usually limits creativity and actual language skills by focusing on requiring students to simply memorize and recite non-interactive material.

The problem therefore lies in insufficient or sometimes incorrect, teaching methodologies and material. As English is a language, and a foreign language at that, instruction in its use, especially for young learners, cannot be performed using standard teaching methods and material used in other cognitive-based skills such as science and mathematics. Interactivity is a must, since one learns a language by using it, until it becomes second nature. Another helpful aid would be audio-visual material. Foremost, its use would significantly ease the process of engaging and maintaining the interest of young minds. It is also invaluable in teaching conversational and descriptive language skills, since both rely heavily on visual clues that are often lost in textbooks and audio-only teaching aids. Put simply, learning from a conversation example is much easier when one can see the speakers, in what situation one can use the expressions, show body language is used for emphasis and how a speaker would refer to a nearby object or describe an item.

For most young learners to be able to actually learn the use of the English language, the answer lies outside formal schools. This includes, among others; private tutoring and small-group conversation courses. While highly effective, and sometimes equipped with both audio and audio-visual teaching aids, these means are severely limited to those with the necessary funding and time. The teaching aids themselves are available for sale, in varying qualities. But unaccompanied by a competent teacher, its use might not be effective.

In light of this situation, it is highly regrettable that there are currently limited teaching media, especially in the form of audio-visual material, designed as part of the current school curriculum. The common practice of teaching English in formal school heavily relies on a text book provided by the school. One of the text books widely used in formal schools is “Go with English” published by Yudhistira. Despite of its popularity, it shows major weakness which is very commonly appeared in the text book market in Indonesia; that it only provides written material without accompanying teaching aids. The ideal one should be like “The New Interchange” by Jack C. Richards (1998) which provides teaching aids in the forms of Interactive Audio-video CDROM, CD, cassette and teacher’s manuals. Inspired by that effort, the writer was willing to develop “Go with English” textbook to contribute to the teachers of young learners in formal schools. The writer believes that the availability of such material, when used in concern with the teaching of English as part of the formal education system, would be valuable in preparing young learners in developing their proficiency in the English language.

1.2. The Purpose of the Project

Listening skill is often neglected in the teaching-learning activities; therefore the writer would like to introduce the skill to Elementary six students. One of the ways to make the students feel eager to learn the skill is to create interesting materials.

The objective of this study is to develop interesting listening supplementary materials based on Dra. Rita Kurniawan's "Go With English" for Elementary students grade six. The materials are made based on each lesson in the book and are developed into an audio-visual form. Hopefully, the materials can make the teaching-learning activity in the classroom more enjoying.

1.3. Significance of the Project

Since there are no listening materials in "Go With English" text book, this study is conducted to give contributions to the teaching of listening to students in elementary school grade six. The audio-visual supplementary material is designed with interesting pictures and animation. Hopefully, the use of this audio-visual supplement material in the classroom will be able to make the teaching-learning activity more interesting and enjoyable for both the teachers and the learners.

1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Project

The writer finds it necessary to give limitations to her project. They are:

1. The result of this project is in the forms of short stories and dialogues that are audio visualized.
2. This audio-visual project is to be used for students in elementary school grade six.
3. This audio visual project focused on developing interesting supplementary materials for “Go With English” text book for Grade six.
4. This audio-visual project is focusing on listening skill.
5. This audio-visual project is only a prototype that has not been tested to the students.
6. Some feedbacks about this audio-visual project are only from expert observers.

1.5. Research Methodology

This research is emphasizing on material development. The writer developed a listening material in the form of audio visual. She picked a textbook used in one of elementary schools in Surabaya. The title of the book is “Go With English” by Dra. Rita Kurniawan published by Yudhistira.

Some steps done by the writer to make the audio visual listening material were:

- Observing the lessons in “Go With English” textbook and the objectives of each lesson
- Finding some friends who could help the writer performing some short stories in the DVD later on.
- Making a script after the writer knew how many players would be in the short stories
- Making an appointment with the production house for shooting schedules
- Starting to shoot some scenes
- Dubbing the video to produce clearer sound and voice
- Selecting some animations to make the DVD more interesting

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding, there are some definitions of key terms used in this study. They are:

- Listening

An activity that discriminates between sounds, recognizes words, identifies grammatical grouping of words. (Rost 1991:3)

- Story

A story is a form of writing/acting in which character and events influence each other. (Kennedy 1991:526)

- Audio Visual

Audio visual may refer to works with both a sound and a visual component, the production or use of such works, or the equipment involved in presenting such works.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audio-visual>)

- Material

Information, either written or mediated, that a student will use to achieve the objectives (Dick and Carey 1985:70)

- Development

Arranging several subjects into a complete unity for teaching (Richards 1991:19)

1.7. The Organization of the thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter presents the Introduction which consists of the background of the study, the purpose of the project, significance of the project, scope and limitation of the project, research methodology, definition of key terms, and the organization of the thesis. The second chapter discusses some theories related and used in this study. The third chapter presents the developing of listening material. The fourth chapter discusses about the result of the development.