

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Nowadays, English occupies the most important position as an international language in the world. English is essential for communication in many fields. Kitao (1996) cited, “English is the most widespread language in the world that is used for the major language of international news and information, international trade and also as an official language of international organizations in the world.” So that is why, English is now taught in almost in every country in the world. It also happens in Indonesia, in which English is now given to the students from the Kindergarten to the University.

In dealing with the importance of English, however, the teaching of English now becomes one of the value approaches to the education program since English is one aspect to attain a good career. Kitao (1996) stated that:

...English is often used in India, because it is neutral. It is the language of government. People who speak English have a certain status in society. It is used for books, music and dance. In Singapore, English is a second language, but it is necessary for daily life. Many companies there use English. In addition, sixteen countries in Africa have retained English as the language of government. Now Standard English is taught in schools in those countries, because it is necessary for careers.

English is also studied as a foreign language in countries where it is not generally used as a medium of communication. In China, English language lessons are popular TV programs. Two hundred fifty million Chinese--more than the population of the US--are learning English on TV. English is usually the first or most commonly taught foreign language in many countries, and people understand it a little at least.

The teaching of English itself has four language skills that must be achieved by the students. Those skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are also four

language competences that consist of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar/structure, and fluency. As said by Cahyono (1997:1), “English covers four skills and four language competences.” Although the teaching of English contains four skills in application to educational practice, the teaching of English Grammar is still considered as the main part of the teaching of English. In this case, English Grammar influences the four skills in English teaching. English Grammar gives a great effect in mastering those four skills. On the other hand, the important part in English is grammar. As stated by Hsing (1980:30) in Sutedjo (1998:2), “Grammar is a device for mastering English.” Crystal (1995) supports that, “Grammar is the business of taking a language to pieces, to see how it works.” Keatley and Kennedy (2004) add that, “Grammar is central to the teaching and learning of languages.” It means that grammar is the great foundation for learning and interpreting a language. For this reason, the teaching of grammar is still focused on the English proficiency. Moreover, grammar can give impact on representing the language. Essberger (2004) cited that, “Grammar is simply a reflection of a language at a particular time.” In addition grammar can help the English learner to learn and understand a language more quickly and more efficiently in which language is encoded to convey message.

The teacher should focus on the improvement of the teaching of English Grammar. So far, its improvement is neglected as an important part of language teaching. The teacher is reluctant to create creative activities in the teaching-learning process of English Grammar. Gunn (1997) cited that, “Teachers of English seem to have a variety of reactions to the subject matter traditionally referred to as English Grammar. Some have an aversion to it and whenever possible avoid either studying it or teaching it.” Sutedjo (1998:2) in her thesis adds,

I found the fact that the teachers still emphasized their teaching material with the traditional method (teacher-students interaction) in which the English teachers explained grammar (Degrees of Comparison) only verbally along with some words or sentences written on the blackboard.

It seems clear that the teachers teach only the English Grammar vaguely without giving clear explanation and examples with the fun situation in a monotonous teaching-learning process. So the weak students do not understand more or even tend to forget the English Grammar easily. Larsen-Freeman (1997) cited that, “Learners approach language learning differently since students have different strengths and weakness.” In response to the problem above, the students are forced to join the class that presents so many explanations to be memorized along. As a result, they become bored of the lesson and are not interested in the English Grammar.

While the writer had her teaching practice at SMAK St. Stanislaus Surabaya, she found out that the students still did not pay attention well to their teacher explaining the grammar lesson. Considering that grammar contains the rules in constructing sentences well, the teacher gave the explanation about the grammar verbally. This verbal explanation, of course, made the students bored and tired easily in learning the English Grammar. Sidharta (2000:2) in her thesis stated that:

The students might find that English Grammar is the most difficult component to master compared to vocabulary, or listening, or the other skills and elements of the language. Therefore, many students, who at first have good intention in learning, they lose their interest after they find out that learning English Grammar is quite difficult. If this happens, it is the teachers’ duty to find ways to reinforce the students in learning, for no matter how difficult English Grammar is...

Irwanto (2001:3) in her thesis adds:

It is true that obviously the Senior High School students can learn structure successfully, but most of the time they are trapped in boring and monotonous activities. As a result, they get bored easily during the teaching learning process. Such a condition could happen since the teaching technique does not give the

students opportunities to use the structural patterns in a realistic and meaningful context.

The students often felt confused to understand the long explanation that actually needed a clear example. They even could not remember easily the lesson, Adjective Degrees of Comparison. Therefore, the students still had a lot of mistakes in Adjective Degrees of Comparison although they had got this lesson at Junior High School. Adjective Degrees of Comparison is one part of English Grammar that contains many rules and needs explicit examples. The implication of this problem was obvious that Adjective Degrees of Comparison was quite difficult to understand. The students were still reluctant to enjoy this lesson since the teacher did not give any impressive activity during the teaching-learning process. As the result, the students enjoyed doing their own activity such as having a chat with their friends more instead of concentrating on their teacher's explanation.

Therefore, the writer wants to find out whether the teaching of Adjective Degrees of Comparison by using pictures to the Junior High School students is more effective than that without using pictures since teaching Adjective Degrees of Comparison at the Junior High School is the foundation of mastering one of part of English Grammar. The writer considers that the most important way to succeed in teaching is that the teachers change their old teaching method and techniques by presenting their materials more creatively and attractively so that the change can motivate the students to enjoy the subject given. The solution is that the teacher has to use a stimulus because it can attract the students to be more interested and active in their learning. It might be noted that Visual Aids, pictures as a stimulus, cannot be neglected in the teacher-learning process. Finochiaro stated (1974: 99) that, "Teaching aid is the most important single factor for

the teacher to stimulate and maintain interest through varied practice activities.” Steinberg, et al (2001:171) support, that a stimulus and response is such a relevant paradigm of understanding and production of the language. The teaching by using a stimulus, for instance pictures, can illustrate the topic more detail and effectively than only giving the explanation thoroughly. That is why the writer is interested in this topic since the teaching through pictures can help the students to understand clearly and also relieve the boredom of the teaching-learning process. In addition, the activity of teaching learning Adjective Degrees of comparison becomes alive.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

According to the background of the study, the problem is formulated as follows:

“Is the teaching of Adjective Degrees of Comparison to the Second Year Junior High School students of SMP 15 Surabaya by using pictures more effective than that without using pictures?”

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyze the data to determine whether the teaching of Adjective Degrees of Comparison to the Second Year Junior High School students of SMP 15 Surabaya by using pictures is more effective than that without using pictures.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give contribution to the teacher to improve the way of teaching Adjective Degrees of Comparison. Hopefully, the use of pictures in teaching Adjective Degrees of Comparison can add the variety of techniques used in teaching Adjective Degrees of Comparison in order to create a fun in the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, it can be option for the teacher to create the effective way to attract the students in the teaching learning of Adjective Degrees of Comparison.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

According to the background of the study that the students need a technique, which can attract them in teaching-learning process and also make them understand the material given, there must be a stimulus. The stimulus given that is visual aids make the students understand more since visual aids can contribute the examples and explanations more clearly. As stated by Cross and Chyper (1961:5), “Visual aids are primarily those selected, controlled visual experience which are presented to the learners for the purpose of providing them with a true and accurate visual picture or impression which, in turn, will be recalled at appropriate later times by the learner.”

This reason is based on the theory of behaviorist proposed by B.F. Skinner as stated by Allen and Campbell (1972:50) that, “The learner is led through a series of stimulus-response situations which take him closer and closer to the desired goal.” The stimulus and the response are bound relevant that can give impact to the achieving of the learning. The outcome of the learning that comes into view of the response of the learner

depends on the stimulus given. Huitt and Hummel (1998) that association of stimuli with the operant conditioning in which innate emotional or physiological response comes from the previous stimulus and another stimulus will construct the orienting response. The frame of this principle needs the operant stimulus, pictures, as visual aids become the stimulus to arouse the learners' interest in learning process. By giving the visual aids in teaching-learning process, the students can give good feedback in learning activities so the input of learning improve the quality of study.

1.6. The Hypothesis

Based on the theory mentioned above, there are two kinds of hypotheses to prove:

a. The Alternate hypothesis (HA)

There is a significant difference in the achievement of SMP 15 Surabaya students in the learning of Adjective Degrees of Comparison by using pictures compared to that without using pictures.

b. The Null Hypothesis (HO)

There is no significant difference in the achievement of SMP 15 Surabaya students in the learning of Adjective Degrees of Comparison by using pictures compared to that without using pictures.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

The writer finds it necessary to limit the scope of this study as follows:

- a. The subjects of this study are the Second Year Junior High School students of SMP 15 Surabaya because from the English teacher's explanation, this school does not use pictures in teaching Adjective Degrees of Comparison. That is

why the writer wants to present that technique as the alternative technique in class. In addition, the Junior High School level is the primary step to acquire the proficiency of Adjective Degrees of Comparison.

- b. The writer focuses on visual aids that are situational pictures since the situational pictures give more illustration for the examples of Adjective Degrees of Comparison.
- c. The material discussed is only Adjective Degrees of Comparison namely positive, comparative, and superlative because the lesson is included in the English Curriculum of Junior High School.

1.8. Definition of the Key Term

To give information more clearly, the writer presents the definition of the key terms used in this study, namely adjective comparison, visual aids, and pictures.

Adjective Comparison is the change in the forms of adjective to compare and contrast different objects in English in order to show a difference degree of quality they indicate. There are three degrees of comparison namely positive, comparative, and superlative (Beare, 2005).

Visual aids are primarily those selected, controlled visual experience which are presented to the learners for the purpose of providing them with a true and accurate visual picture or impression which, in turn, will be recalled at appropriate later times by the learner (Cross and Cypher, 1961:5).

Pictures are representations of persons, places, and things that convey learning experience and replace the reality recognizing details, shapes, forms, size, and color (Cross and Cypher, 1961:98).

To know more about the elements of this study involving the definition of key terms, the three key terms above will be discussed further in the next chapter.

1.9. The Organization the Study

This study covers five chapters that have several explanation involved in this study. In chapter one, the writer discusses the introduction of the study, while chapter two deals with the review of related literature. The research design is presented in chapter three. The analysis and findings will be explained in chapter four. The writer summarizes her study in chapter five including the suggestion and recommendation for further research.