

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, site and respondent, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of paper.

1.1 Background

Teacher, as one of the most important elements in education, determines the success of students' English learning. A teacher plays an important role in teaching-learning process. The importance of teaching English vocabulary, especially in the age of 2 and 3 depends on teacher's strategy. Teacher's strategies can also help almost all of student to get involved in education. Teacher needs to learn about new strategies especially in teaching English vocabulary for two to three years-old child. Many strategies are used in teaching vocabulary, but teacher may not know yet which one is the most effective to make students faster in learning and easy to understand the vocabulary. Thus, one of the strategies in teaching English vocabulary to very young learners is that teacher should introduce only limited vocabulary in one meeting and then revisit them in the following meeting to help them remember the words that have been learnt.

In addition, it is believed that nowadays teaching a foreign language to very young learners is very necessary and advantageous. According to Pinter (2006:32),

introducing children to a new language will make their horizon getting wide and originate their early enthusiasm and curiosity about the language. Therefore, teacher has to be more creative in developing strategies in teaching, because those ages are believed to be good periods to start learning language. This is in line with Vos (1991) as cited in Nagy, who says,

There are people who have argued convincingly that the younger you start studying foreign language, the more likely it is that you will achieve native-speaker proficiency. This may be because it is believed that younger minds are more open to learning or simply because learners have longer to acquire the language (1991:68)

Pinter (2006:1), adds that in some contexts, children start learning English at the age of five or even earlier. But it must be kept in mind that the beginner students require a total different approach and strategy for teaching English. However, it should be considered that children have limitation, as it is supported by Nagy (2007) who says that at the age of five or even earlier, children may not be able to read and write; children may be new to learning in a group and in school environment, and children may not even be aware of the concept of a foreign language. It then implies that teaching English to very young learners in preschool constitutes a big challenge to do.

Teacher need to know that characteristics very young learners are different with adult. One of children is very young learner have short concentration. It is big challenge to teacher, how to make children interested in learning process. Therefore, teacher has to have many strategies to teaching them.

On the other hand, in teaching vocabulary especially to very young learners is not an easy job to do, since teacher may find some difficulties when teaching English vocabulary to children. One of the problems that teacher encountered in teaching vocabulary was when the children were not interested in the learning vocabulary process itself, they were not focused and did not pay much attention during the learning process.

A study conducted by Pikulski and Templeton (2004) shows that some children enter school with many more language skills than others. Hence, it seems reasonable to suggest that they also come with varying degrees of interest in words. This issue is also supported by Pinter (2006:86) that gives the statement on how interested children in learning vocabulary. She mentions that before understanding the concept of grammar, very young children can understand the concept of words. Apparently, they can get the meaning of the words without using the first language

Vocabulary is one of the important aspects of foreign language learning (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:32). The importance of vocabulary in common is also supported by Pinter (2006:83) who highlights as follows.

Fluent speakers and writers put together the components part of the language system quickly and efficiently. To be able to do this, they need to know a large pool of vocabulary items and a long list of grammatical structure. (2006:83)

Moreover, a study conducted by Lehr et. Al entitled *A Focus on Vocabulary* which can be retrieved at http://www.prel.org/products/re_/ES0419.htm strengthens how teaching vocabulary is highly necessary at an earlier age. Thus it is clear that vocabulary is an important element in learning language.

For those reasons above, strategies are needed by teachers to help teachers in teaching English vocabulary especially to very young learners. This assumption is also supported by Vos (1991) as cited in Nagy who believes that, vocabulary is better taught when children are still very young.

Considering the facts of the necessity of teacher's strategy in teaching vocabulary to very young learners by employing some strategies, and the existing difficulties during the process of the teaching, the present study, tries to investigate *Teaches strategy in Teaching English Vocabulary to Very Young Learners*.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

There are several reasons for the researcher to choose this topic. The first reason is that the researcher attempts to find out what strategies are applied by teacher in teaching English vocabulary to very young learners. The second is that the researcher wants to know what the difficulties faced by teacher.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study will be limited to observe what strategy the teachers use in teaching English vocabulary to very young learners and to find out the obstacles that are found in the class.

1.4 Research Questions

There are two major questions that are addressed in this study. They are:

1. What strategies are used to teach English vocabulary to very young learners?
2. What are the difficulties experienced by the teacher which usually appear in the process of teaching English vocabulary to a very young learners?

1.5 Aims of the Study

This study aims:

1. to find out what strategies are used by teacher in teaching English vocabulary to very young learners.
2. to find out the difficulties experienced by the teacher during the process of teaching English vocabulary to very young learners.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The research is important to conduct since it is expected to contribute professional source in the teaching profession in Indonesia in particular, and to add more references in general. Having new information in professional source related to teacher strategy in teaching English vocabulary to very young learners, teacher in preschool will find better ways to encourage their students to apply new strategies as well as to strengthen the ones that already have. Furthermore, the research gives beneficial information about the present condition that appears in the teaching-learning activities in teaching vocabulary to very young learner in preschool.

1.7 Site and Respondents

In this research, the site was the activity of teaching vocabulary to very young learners employed by a teacher in one children class of preschool in Bandung. The participant of the research was one teacher of preschool which is located in Bandung, West Java. Since this was a descriptive study and described the phenomena happened to the participant, the participant were purposively chosen according to several considerations: (a) intensively involved in the field, (b) involved in whole activities around the field, (c) have a willing and enough time as the subject of the research to give information needed. (Basrowi and Suwandi, 2008: 18).

1.8 Research Methodology

Research methodology includes research design, data collection, and data analysis.

1.8.1 Research Design

This study employs descriptive methods since it provides the information as the result of observing the phenomena that happen naturally related to the way of the teacher's strategy in teaching English vocabulary to the students of playgroup in Bandung.

1.8.2 Data Collection

To support the study, three techniques were used in collecting the data. The techniques were classroom observation, interview and document analysis.

The data in this study were collected by using the following instruments:

1. Observation

Observation is one of the instruments that is used to identify the teacher's strategy in teaching English vocabulary for very young learners in the classroom. The video-recording and field notes in observing the respondents are used in gathering data.

2. Interview

Interview was also used to find out the reasons of why the teacher chooses kind of strategies.

3. Document analysis

Documents were used to identify the goal of the classroom activities, such as lesson plan and syllabus.

1.8.3 Data Analysis

After collecting the data from the observation, interview and document analysis, the analysis of the study involves several steps. This analysis is conducted based on the Interactive Model of analysis by Miles and Huberman (1984) (Sugiyono, 2007; Basrowi and Suwandi, 2008). According to the model, there are

three steps of analyzing the data: Data Reduction, Data Display and Conclusion Drawing.

1.9 Clarification of the terms

Below some terms of the paper which are clarified in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding.

1. Teacher's strategy refers to the teaching strategies that usually used by teacher to teach the lesson to the students at the classroom.
2. Vocabulary in this study refers to the total number of words in a language; words known to a person; list of words with their meanings, especially at the back of the book used for teaching a foreign language (*Oxford learner's pocket Dictionary*).
3. Teaching English Vocabulary refers to teaching simple words in English to the very young learners especially in the age of two to three.
4. A very young learner refers to a child between infancy and school age, usually zero to four years of age.

1.10 Organization of the paper

The paper is presented into five chapters. The chapters are subdivided into subtopics that elaborated the given issue.

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the paper will elaborate the background of the study. It will discuss what strategies are used to teach English vocabulary to very young learner and the obstacles that are appeared in the class.

CHAPTER 11 : THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter will discuss some theories of teaching English vocabulary to very young learner and also theories of obstacles that are appeared in the class.

CHAPTER 111: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will give clear discussion about how study will be conducted and analyzed. It clarifies why study needs to use classroom observation, interview and document analysis. The data also will briefly be explained.

CHAPTER 1V: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the findings of the study and will analyze those finding in discussion clearly.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter will present the conclusion and several suggestion of the study based on analysis in chapter four. The conclusion states the answer to the research question about teacher's strategy and difficulties in teaching English vocabulary to very young learner. It also elaborates several suggestions to improve teaching English vocabulary to very young learner and existing difficulties during the process of teaching.