

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief description of the research that will be conducted. The chapter consists of background, reasons for choosing the topic, the scope of the research, research questions, the aims of the research, significance of the research, site and respondents, and methodology of the research will be explored below.

1.1. Background

Nowadays, English in Indonesia has become one of local contents in elementary schools. Many schools compete to offer varied interesting techniques in teaching English for young learners such as TPR method and game. Unfortunately, these varieties of teaching English to young learners are not followed by the appropriate assessment (Georgiou and Pavlou, 2003). Teachers often find themselves driven back on testing materials which are more appropriate for older learners. In fact, assessing young learners is different from assessing older learners. It is because they have their own stage of development. Even worse, in most cases, people think that assessing young learners who learn English is an easy job without considering every single aspect. Hence, it is a big challenge for English primary teachers especially who have not been trained to teach English in conducting assessment for young learners.

Furthermore, assessment which is not appropriate conducted by English primary teachers to the young learners can cause them to lose their motivation in learning English. Inappropriate assessment can impact on individual learners and even can give a negative energy for young learners in learning English (Damayanti, 2008).

Therefore, teachers should consider everything such as age, content of language learning, method of teaching, aims, and learning theories before assessing young learner (Cameron, 2001). Furthermore, Rea-Dickins (1999) suggests that assessment conducted by teacher is far-away from carefully considering the factors above. It is also supported with a survey done by Rea-Dickins and Rixon (1999) related to young learners assessment that a mismatch was found between curricular aims, pedagogy, and test content.

Some researches have been conducted related to assessment for young learners. One of the researchers is Rixon and Rea-Dickins (1999), in their paper entitled *Assessment of Young Learners' English: Reasons and Means* showed that a great majority of primary English teachers in many parts of the world used paper and pencil tests as major tools of assessment. Another research conducted by Maulina (2007) related to *Effective Assessment for Young Learners' Progress and Achievement in Learning English*. It focused on how English kindergarten teachers in Cirebon conduct assessment for young learners and the criteria used by English kindergarten teachers. The research found that the proposed effective methods in assessing English language young learners mainly applied in most kindergartens in Cirebon were observation and portfolio assessment.

While the research cited above is still on the surface, this research will try to investigate the assessment administered in English language classroom especially in primary schools which will be conducted in Bandung Kulon. It conducts to investigate assessment techniques used, aspects assessed, and reasons for choosing assessment techniques.

1.2. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The idea of choosing this research sparked out of the writer's concern about assessment administered in English language classroom. Then, it is because there is still few research related to assessment techniques for young learners discussed. In terms of research area, Bandung Kulon was chosen because of the access to the subjects of this research. Therefore, the research has been decided to conduct with issue, entitled *Assessment Techniques Administered in English Language Classroom for Young Learners*.

1.3. The Scope of the Research

This research will focus only on identifying assessment of teaching English in two selected primary schools in Bandung Kulon. The scope will be concerned with aspects assessed, assessment techniques, and reasons for choosing those assessment techniques.

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed in employing this research.

1. What aspects are assessed by English primary teachers?
2. What techniques are used by the teachers to conduct assessment of young learners?
3. Why did the teachers choose those assessment techniques?

1.5. The Aims of the Research

The aims of conducting this research consider the following research questions.

1. Finding out what aspects are assessed.
2. Finding out what assessment techniques are conducted by English primary teachers in assessing young learners.
3. Finding out the reasons for choosing those assessment techniques.

1.6. Significance of the Research

Hopefully, this research can provide a portrait of assessment in English for young learners, what aspects are assessed, and the reasons beyond those assessment techniques. Practically, this research can provide valuable information for the teachers about assessment for young learners. This research expects that some of assessment techniques used by the teachers might be an alternative in assessing young learners. Therefore, it can give a significant contribution to English primary language teachers in assessing young learners.

1.7. Site and Respondents

Respondents of this research are English primary teachers from two-selected schools in Bandung Kulon. The primary classes taught by them are fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. Three respondents will be studied from two selected schools. The selected schools are based on:

1. The location of the school. SDN X is the nearest to the city center and SDN Y is the farthest to the city center.
2. The perception of KKG, *Kelompok Kerja Guru*. The most favorite school belongs to SDN X in Bandung Kulon.
3. The school qualification in accreditation. According to accreditation from Department Education of Bandung, SDN X grades A and SDN Y grades B

The detail information about site and respondents can be read in chapter three.

1.8. Methodology of the Research

A brief description about methodology which consists of research design, data collection techniques, procedures of the research, and data analysis is explored below.

1.8.1. Research Design

Descriptive method used for this research is to describe the phenomenon in natural condition without manipulation from the researcher. In this research, three English primary teachers will be respondents from two-selected primary schools in Bandung Kulon.

1.8.2. Data Collection Techniques of the Research

Two data collection techniques will be used: document analysis and interview. Document analysis will be conducted to find aspects assessed. Documents that will be gained are included in written tests or documents related to the topic of the research. Interviews also will be used for finding what assessment techniques used by English primary teachers, the reasons for choosing those assessment techniques and the deep information about aspects assessed.

Instruments that will be used for the research are checklist for document analysis and an interview guideline. Checklist is used for giving a sign of aspects assessed in document while an interview guideline consists of open-ended questions. The interviews also will be audiotaped.

1.8.3. Procedure of the Research

Several steps will be conducted in this research.

- Defining categories for analyzing the documents.
- Collecting the documents from all respondents.
- Identifying the categories for analyzing each document.
- Analyzing the documents.
- Conducting interviews with all respondents.
- Transcribing the interviews.
- Analyzing the result of interviews.
- Making categories for presenting the findings based on assessment techniques found.

- Presenting the findings through combining data, both documents and interviews.
- Discussing findings and making conclusions.

1.8.4. Data Analysis

In this research, two data collections; document analysis and interviews will be analyzed using the following tools.

Theories from Heaton (1995) and Georgiou and Pavlou (2003) were adapted and combined in order to analyze documents. They are language areas and language skills. The categories of aspects assessed both language areas and language skills can be seen in chapter three for detail.

For analyzing interviews, categories were made. The categories were adapted from Maulina (2007). Those categories can be seen in chapter three for detail.

1.9. Clarification of Terms

Some terms used in this research will be clarified in order to avoid unnecessary understanding.

1.9.1. Assessment in English

Assessment in this research refers to collecting information and making judgements about a learners' knowledge of English.

1.9.2. Young learners

Young learners in this research refer to children from fourth to sixth grades.

1.9.3. Primary Schools

Primary schools in this research refer to the elementary schools which use native language rather than English in their daily activities.

1.10. Organization of the Paper

The paper will be presented into five chapters. And each chapter has subtopics elaborate the issue given.

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of background of the research, reason for choosing the topic, the scope of the study, research questions, the aim of the study, the significance of the study, site and respondents, the methodology of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II is theoretical foundation. It deals with the theoretical frameworks which are relevant with the research.

Chapter III is methodology of the research. It elaborates the methodology used for this research including the research design, data collection and data analysis, and the procedure of the research.

Chapter IV is findings and discussions. It presents the findings of the research and then they will be discussed. The result will answer the research questions.

Chapter V is the conclusions and suggestions of the research.