

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

In Indonesia, teaching English to young learners is a part of curriculum. It is based on Ministerial Decree No.22 Year 2006, dated May 23rd 2006, which states that English subject can be given to elementary students as a local content. This decree results in the existence of English in elementary schools which is taught starting from the fourth grade for two credit hours every week.

In teaching English to elementary school students, teachers deal with young learners whose characteristics are different from adult learners'. One of children characteristics regarding their cognitive development is stated by Piaget (1972) as cited in Pinter (2011, p.9) who believes that in each stages children have quality of thinking which "is relatively consistent across different tasks". For elementary schools students, their cognitive developments lay on concrete operational stage. In this stage, children begin to think logically and use their experience to solve problem. Nevertheless, they are only able to solve problem which "are applied to concrete examples and objects in real life" (Pinter, 2011, p. 12). It is different from the adults which can solve abstract or hypothetical problem and also think several possible factors affecting something.

Another characteristic that young learners possess is short attention span. Attention span is defined as the amount of time in seconds the child remains on task without distraction (Mustafa, 2008). In learning, attention span can be seen

when children pay attention to the teacher or focus on the learning. Musthafa (2010) argues that unlike adults who have long attention span, children only have attention span less than 15 minutes.

Knowing those characteristics of children is an essential requirement for the teacher in creating effective instruction (Musthafa, 2010). Effective instruction is “an instruction that enables students to acquire specified skills, knowledge, and attitudes.” (Reiser & Dick, 1996, p.3). In relation to this, Curtain and Dahlberg (2000) as cited in Musthafa (2010) argue that the instruction should be built “on topics and contexts that are relevant to the young learners.” Besides, students’ experience should also be considered in choosing teaching method, media and assessment (Barratt-Pugh and Rohl, 2000, cited in Musthafa, 2010) in order to conduct effective instruction.

On the other hand, Glover and Bruning (1987) believe that effective instruction can be achieved when students receive information which is made meaningful, such as information that is related to students’ daily life. In this case, Brown (2001) defines meaningful learning as a learning which integrates existing knowledge of the student with the new one. He believes that by meaningful learning, English lesson can be comprehended and applied by young learners for longer period than un-meaningful learning.

Besides knowing children characteristics and making a meaningful learning, using appropriate instructional media is one of the key principles in creating effective instruction (Reiser& Dick, 1996). Instructional media itself is defined by Scanlan as all materials that can be used by the teachers to conduct

teaching learning activities and support students in reaching instructional objectives. Utilizing the appropriate instructional media is required because of several benefits. One of the benefits is to enhance students' motivation. By using instructional media e.g. showing pictures and having the students heard music, the students give more attention to the teachers, moreover, their curiosity is increasing towards the subject (Reiser& Dick, 1996). Other benefits are stated by Ruis, et al (2009) comprise (1) solving lack of experiences problem for the students, (2) reaching everything out of the class, (3) creating direct interaction between the students and environment, also (4) integrating experience from the concrete to the abstract information.

Unfortunately, the practice of TEYL, especially in creating effective instruction by English teachers in Indonesia, is disharmony with how it is supposed to be. For instance is regarding the use of instructional media. As mentioned in previous paragraph, using instructional media have several benefits including creating meaningful learning which needed by young learners in learning. Therefore, it is assumed that English teachers need appropriate instructional media in the instruction. However, according to Mutohhar (2009), in real practices, English teachers only use traditional instructional media to transfer material to the students. They seldom utilize the appropriate instructional media which benefit for students' comprehension. Furthermore, Mutohhar (2009) reveals that the reason of lack instructional media utilization by the teacher is difficulty in getting good instructional media. Moreover, those high quality instructional media – as the teachers admit – are not cost-friendly.

On the other hand, research studies about the use of instructional media by the elementary school teachers have been conducted. One of them is carried out by Abdo and Semela (2010). The former is a researcher from Hawassa University, Ethiopia, while the latter is from University of Tübingen, Germany. They conducted the study in Gedeo Zone in Sourthen Ethiopia. The study shows that the teachers in elementary schools are infrequent using instructional media in teaching learning process. Some factors influencing the use of instructional media by the teachers comprise availability of instructional media, manageability of classroom tasks and administrative supports.

Another research regarding the use of instructional media was conducted by The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) in 2003 (as cited by Březinová, 2009). The research is regarding the use of Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) in teaching English and some benefits of using it. The result of the research shows that there are some benefits using IWB as instructional media: (1) encourage the use of teaching materials which is more varied and creative; (2) increase students' motivation in teaching learning process; and (3) help the students to participate in class.

In Indonesian context, research regarding the use of interactive media in teaching speaking to young learners was conducted by Hakim (2011). This research reveals that by using the media, the students are more motivated to try showing their ability in speaking and giving contribution in front of the class.

Considering benefits in using media in teaching learning process and reality of the use of instructional media in elementary school – especially in

Indonesia – based on the research, the researcher intends to conduct a study regarding the implementation of media in teaching English to young learners. The research is conducted in three elementary schools in Kuningan, West Java. This study will find out media which is used by the teachers in teaching English to young learners. Besides, it will also depict a portrayal of problems that the teachers encounter and how they solve the problem in using the media. And last, it investigates students' response towards the media used.

1.2 Formulation of Problems

Based on the background mentioned, research questions in this study are formulated as follow:

- 1) How do the teachers use instructional media in teaching English to YoungLearners?
- 2) What problems do the teachers encounter in using instructional media to teach English to Young Learners?
- 3) What strategies do the teachers employ to overcome the problem in using instructional media in teaching English to Young Learners?

1.3 The Scope of the Study

This study highlights the description of instructional media used by elementary schools' teachers in teaching English to young learners. It also

underlines the problems of the teachers in using the media and how they solve them.

1.4 Aims of the Research

In line with the research questions stated, the study is aimed:

- 1) To explore the use of media by the teachers in teaching English to young learners
- 2) To discover problems that the teachers encounter in using media to teach English to young learners
- 3) To depict strategies used by the teachers to overcome the problem in using media in teaching English to young learners.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be significant for several parties. Firstly, it is expected to give portrayal for the teacher regarding the use of instructional media and its problems in its implementation. Also it can give a description concerning what strategies can be used to solve the problems in using instructional media. Later on, this description can be useful for the teacher in their own class to make a better English teaching activity.

Secondly, this study can contribute to TEFL especially in Kuningan, where the study is conducted. The result of this study will give local government some information regarding the use of instructional media in teaching English to young learners. Hopefully, by knowing the result of the study, TEFL in elementary

school can get more attention from them, for example by providing more instructional media for teaching learning activities.

Last but not least, the result of the study is meaningful for young learners. By getting information from the result of the study, it will lead to the improvement in terms of media in TEYL. So, when the use of instructional media has improved, the teaching learning activities will be more effective, and young learners are more motivated to learn English.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Research Design

To discover how the teachers use instructional media, problems faced by them, and how they solved the problems, this research uses case study method. In this study, the researcher investigates phenomenon in real situation of elementary schools regarding the use of media. Yin (2002, p. 1) argues that case study method is “preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.”

To be more specific, this research is a descriptive case study. Descriptive case study is a type of case study which is used to develop data that describe the complexity of an experience clearly (Stake, 1995). In addition, the qualitative method is employed to describe data which is obtained by means of two different

data collection techniques. The data are then analyzed to answer the research questions stated.

1.6.2 Research Site and Participant

The study is conducted in three elementary schools in Kuningan, West Java. The elementary schools selected in this study have different levels based on qualification from National Institution of Accreditation. Meanwhile, participants of the study are three English teachers of each elementary school.

1.6.3 Data Collection

To obtain the data, the study uses two kinds of instrument: classroom observation and interview. The first instrument is classroom observation. It is employed to attain information about teaching learning activities specifically about the teachers and the students' behavior. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2006), observation is conducted to get more detailed and accurate information of what students and teacher doing in the class than interview does. So, by using this instrument, all of the aspects and details in the lesson can be captured. It also gives complete information for the researcher regarding how the teachers use the media. The observation used is non-participant observation. This particular kind of observation is conducted where the researcher acts as a complete observer, who doesn't participate in classroom activities (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Another instrument is interview. The interview is used by the researcher to get information from the teachers about the problems in using media, and the way

to solve them. It is also a tool for researcher to check the information gained from observation, whether or not it is appropriate. The type of interview that is used is in-depth interview, which is “a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation” (Boyce & Neale, 2006, p.3).

1.6.4 Data Analysis

Both of classroom observation and interview produce different kinds of data. Field note is the result of classroom observation, while interview script is the result of in-depth interview.

Those data are analyzed in several steps. Creswell (2008) divides the steps into: (1) collecting data, (2) preparing data for analysis, (3) reading through the data, (4) coding the data, and (5) coding the text for themes and description to be used in the research paper.

In collecting the data, the researcher gathers the data from classroom observation and in-depth interview. After that, it is prepared to be analyzed by organizing them into certain classification, comprising group of interview data and group of field note. Later on, these data are transcribed. The interview recording will be transcribed into interview script.

The next step after organizing the data, the researcher reads through the data to get general sense of the data (Creswell, 2008). Then, the data are coded until the researcher finds the theme of the data. Finally, after getting the theme, it

is interrelated with another theme which will be used to answer the research question.

After the data have been collected, they are analyzed by researcher. All of the data from observation and interview are organized in certain way to answer the research questions.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

In this study, there are some terms which need to be clarified in order to evade some kind of misinterpretation. The terms are:

1. Young Learners

According to McKay (2006), in terms of school level, young learners refer to students in primary or elementary schools. In terms of age, they refer to children whose ages are about five to 12 years old.

2. Instructional Media

Instructional media is defined by Scanlan as all of materials that can be used by the teachers to conduct teaching learning activities and support student in reaching instructional objectives. While Reiser and Dick (1996) argue that instructional media is “the physical means by which instruction is delivered to students”. Several examples of instructional media are flashcard, OHP, whiteboard, etc. But, songs and games are not included, because they belong to techniques.

1.8 Organization of Paper

This paper consists of five chapters comprising introduction, theoretical foundation, research methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion and suggestion.

Chapter I – Introduction – consists of the background of study, the formulation of problems, the scope of the study, the aims of the study, the significance of study, the research methodology, and the clarification of terms. Then, in Chapter II – Theoretical Foundation – there are some reviews of theory in relation to the research. It discusses characteristics of young learners, theories of children developments, definition of media, and media in teaching English to young learners. The next chapter is Chapter III – Research Methodology. It discusses how the research conducted. To begin with, this chapter gives portrayal regarding research design, research site and participant. Besides, it is also about how the are data collectedand analyzed. Another chapter contained in this paper is Chapter IV – Findings and Discussion. In this chapter, what the researcher get from the research in line with the research problems is presented. Here, the result is shown and discussed to answer mentioned research problem. The last chapter is Chapter V – Conclusions and Suggestions. This chapter concludes the result of the research. Besides, it also provides some suggestions for some parties who are related to the research.