

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an introductory part which consists of several sub-headings. They are background of study, research questions, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, research methodology, clarification of the key terms, and paper organization.

1.1. Background of the Study

Learning a language means learning the four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking, added grammar, vocabulary and phonology (Cameron, 2001, p. 17). Vocabulary is assumed to be one of the language skills linking to other skills (Nation, 1993). The learners need to have sufficient vocabulary to produce language, both in spoken and written form. In reading, having stocks of vocabulary, it affects the reading comprehension of the text, and in writing, it contributes to the writing composition (Nuttal, Hartfiel, et al., as cited in Cahyadi & Widiati, 2008).

According to Pinter (2006, p. 2), young learners have a holistic approach to language, lower awareness of meta-language, limited language skills, great inhibitions, love fantasy and movement. Thus, Brown (2001, p. 87) claims that teachers as the educators need to have specific skills and intuitions in teaching young learners the language skills, especially in vocabulary. Linse (2005) believes that vocabulary is crucial for learners' skill and knowledge in their language development.

However, in Indonesian context that English as Foreign Language (EFL), Nurweni (as cited in Cahyono & Widiati, 2008) found that young learners acquire less vocabulary from the target words. Additionally, Priyono (2004) mentions that one of the problem in learning English for EFL students is the limited vocabulary. Rosmayanti (2008) reasons that the lack of vocabulary of young learners in

Indonesia is due to the conventional method of teaching that has lack of exposure in the words and of experience in meaning of the words. It is in line with Musthafa (2008) that the less of experiencing the words and its meaning make the language learning less effective.

Regarding this, according to Allen (2006), teachers need to look for best method in teaching young learners. Moreover, in the implementation of the conventional method, the teachers hold more power and authority in the schoolroom. So, the learners do not have more opportunities in experiencing the word and its meaning. In the other hand, students will enjoy experiencing the learning process if their voices and choices are respected and appreciated by the instructor (Nakulla & Toshalis, 2012, p. 25).

One of the approaches that emphasizes natural, engaging, contextual, and communicative teaching is storyline approach. The storyline is basically a topic based method of teaching using story created by student and teacher cooperatively. It is first developed in Scotland as a response to the integration in educational curriculum to enhance pupil engagement (Bell & Harkness, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore, the interesting point of using the storyline approach is that it involves students as the characters of the story.

By high participation of students in the story and teachers' developed materials would improve students creativity and involvement in class. With its contextual and experiential learning, the learners would engage with the functional words taught in every storyline episodes. Mitchell (2013, p. 104) thinks that this approach gives meaningful context to the learning that takes place and allows reflective learning. Since this approach seems to be effective in class learning, especially for young learners, some researcher or primary teachers try this approach to teach foreign language to their young students. They found that storyline approach is recommended for teachers who want to create meaningful and pleasant learning atmosphere for their young students (Eiriksdottir, 1995: 3; Brezinova, 2007: 7; Ahlquist, 2013: 76).

In Indonesia, the Storyline approach is rarely used as an approach to teach vocabulary to young learners. Based on the background above, this study used the Storyline approach to give elaboration how it is implemented in teaching vocabulary to young learners and discover the aspects of students' engagement displayed during the activities of the Storyline approach.

1.2. Research Questions

Related to the background of the problem above, this research is intended to seek the answer to the following research problems:

- 1) How is storyline implemented in teaching vocabulary to young learners?
- 2) What are the aspect of engagements displayed during the activities of storyline approach ?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are formulated based on the problem to be investigated. Therefore, the purposes of this study highlight two objectives. First, the study aims to investigate how the storyline approach is implemented in teaching vocabulary. Second, the proposed research is intended to discover the aspect of engagements displayed by the students during storyline approach activity.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The research is quite various in the area of storyline approach (Alhquist, 2013; Brezinova, 2007; Eiriksdottir, 1995; Mitchell, 2013; Syafri & Wulandari, 2013). Among issues of major interest are implementations of storyline approach in teaching and learning process either to older or younger learners and influence of storyline in students' intrinsic motivation and participation. In this literature, the storyline implementation in language skill, especially in teaching vocabulary is not clearly drawn. Hence, this study intends to fill the gaps of how the storyline is implemented in vocabulary teaching to young learners.

Moreover, the result of this study will contribute to several aspects. Firstly, it can enrich literature and existing research toward the use of the storyline approach in English language teaching, especially in vocabulary teaching for teachers and English department. Secondly, it is expected that this study gives descriptions of how the storyline approach can be used in teaching and learning English to young learners for teachers to implement it in the class. Besides, it also can be used as reference for the next researcher related to learning, especially in storyline approach.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The research aims to investigate the use of the Storyline approach in teaching vocabulary. Furthermore, to provide additional support towards the findings, the research analyzes students' aspect of engagement displayed during the Storyline approach. As a case study, the findings of this research are only true to be respondents participating in it.

1.6 Research Methodology

This study aims at describing how the storyline approach is implemented in teaching vocabulary and also finding out students' aspects of engagement displayed during activity in the implementation of the method. Therefore, case study was used as a research design in analyzing the data of this study. The participants involved in this study were 31 of fourth grade students in a private elementary school in Bandung. It was conducted in three meetings with each spent 70 minutes in three weeks due to the available time given.

The data collected in this study were obtained from classroom observation that includes documentary data and teacher's field note. In order to answer the first research question about the steps of storyline approach applied by the teacher, the data gathered from classroom observation were transcribed, analyzed, then classified into selected categories based on the stages in implementing the storyline approach. Next, data from interview and survey questionnaires were

transcribed and interpreted to answer the research question and also to confirm and complete the results gained from the classroom observation and documents.

1.7 Clarification of the Key Terms

Several key terms need to be defined clearly and correctly in order to avoid misinterpretation and ambiguity. The definitions of the key terms are as follows:

- 1) Vocabulary is knowledge of words and its meaning (Kamil & Hiebert, 1992).
- 2) The storyline is originally a teaching approach for elementary school students mainly developed by Jordan Hill College of Education teachers in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1967. It emphasizes the use of story to deliver the materials in different lesson subject and puts the learners in the same situations that occur in the storyline (Brezinová, 2007);
- 3) The approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is axiomatic. It describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught (Anthony, as cited in Richard, 1999);
- 4) Young Learners in this study are defined as children at the age ranging from 7 to 14 years old. Children in this age have started to think more about abstract terms (Pinter, 2006).
- 5) Students' engagement refers to high and active participation of students in academic heightening concentration, enjoyment, and interest (Shernoff, 2013).

1.8 Paper Organization

This paper is organized into five chapters.

Chapter I is introduced. It includes the background of the study which relates to the storyline approach in teaching vocabulary to young learners, research question, the objectives of the study, the scope of the study, significances of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II provides the theoretical foundation of the topic related to teaching English to young learners, teaching vocabulary to young learners, storyline approach, and students' engagement.

Chapter III is the methodology of the research, includes the research questions, research design, site and respondents, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV reports the result of the study and analyzes those findings in the discussion clearly. It will portray how the storyline approach is applied to vocabulary teaching and the student's aspect of engagement displayed during the storyline approach activity.

Chapter V presents the conclusion and several recommendations of the study based on the analysis in chapter four. The conclusion states the answer to the research question about the implementation of the storyline approach and students' engagement aspects displayed under study employed. Several suggestions to improve teachers' reference concerning vocabulary teaching in the young learner classroom will be delivered to the teachers and to the next researcher.

The paper ends with a bibliography.