

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a general description of the research. It comprises background of the study, statement of the problems, purposes of the study, significances of the study, scope of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teaching English to young learners (TEYL) is a dynamic field in Indonesia because many researchers studying this field, although English in the curriculum of primary schools is a local content due to the fact that the Ministry of Education does not provide an English syllabus for primary schools. However, the primary objective of teaching English in primary school is the same as that in other levels of the English language teaching. In this context, the objective is to provide a good basis for communicative competence as a foundation to the next level of study (Kurniasih, 2011, p.70).

Hymes was among the first to use the term communicative competence (1972). For Hymes, as cited in Scarcella, Andersen, and Krashen (1990), the ability to speak competently not only entails knowing the grammatical rules of a language, but also knowing what to say to whom in what circumstances and how to say it. Furthermore, Canale and Swain (1980) define communicative competence as “a synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse.” In other words, it can be said that the communicative competence is not only knowing rules for the composition

of sentences and being able to employ such rules but also being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments are necessary according to contextual circumstance.

With regard to the way communicative competence is defined, it is clear that the intention is to emphasize the communicative competence as the perspective in English language teaching (ELT). Communicative competence refers to the capacity to use language appropriately in communication based on the setting, the roles of the participants, and the nature of the transaction. Important common points are to be found in the general perspective on literature, understood as a domain of knowledge enhancing the development of communicative, literary and cultural competences that can contribute to the formation of the student's personality. The competences developed within the field of literature involve values and attitudes as well. The domain of literature becomes diverse, dynamic and open. In this circumstance, the approaches in teaching literature are focused on the process of reading and on the reader who participates in the construction of meaning (Pieper, Aase, Fleming, and Sâmihăian, 2007).

In a relation to these approaches, this study will focus on the approaches in teaching literature adapted from Carter and Long (1992). The approaches are: Language-Based Approach (LBA), Reader-Response Approach (RRA), and Information-Based Approach (IBA). Each of the approaches has unique characteristics. For example, the characteristic of LBA focuses on language. This means that when the teacher uses the approach, she seeks a closer integration between language and literature. Such as, teaching language through literary texts. Students can improve their language proficiency by using literature as a resource in language learning.

The RRA focuses on the reader's response to the texts. In this approach, the teacher is looking for a transactional relationship between the reader's personal experiences, opinions and feelings on the one hand and the text, on the other. In this circumstance, reading is seen as a dialog with the text and, through

it, with the 'other' or with oneself. Plural interpretations are encouraged and the text can be approached from a variety of perspectives. It provides for a student-centered and process-oriented classroom.

The IBA is focused on information of the texts. This is a way of teaching knowledge about literature whereby literature is seen to offer a source of information to students. Reading is prominent, but its development is seen in close connection with other communicative skills such as: writing, speaking and listening, or appropriate use of language. The teacher plays important role in this approach. The approach provides teacher-centered classroom activities. This implies a greater responsibility for the teacher who has to make dialogue possible, imagining active stimulating contexts of reading and reflecting upon texts.

Using literature for teaching language skills is quite common in foreign language learning and teaching nowadays (Khatib & Mellati, 2012, p. 18). Furthermore, literature is one of the resources for language teaching which covers the language skills (Reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (Vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) (Hismanoglu, 2005). Writing skills can be taught to some extent but one way to become a better writer is to read often. When students read they are being immersed in language, in the way it sounds and feels when put together in the right ways. Students who are encouraged to read have a more intimate knowledge of the ways in which language works, and so have an advantage when it comes time for them to write. A literary text might also provide the stimulus for oral work and encourage students to be aware of the language which is incorporated in a particular text. In reading literature students also meet a language different from everyday language. This is important; because reading literature has the function of extending students' linguistic skills.

There are some genres in literature including poetry, short fiction, drama and novel. This study will focus on poetry as the learning material due to its benefit. Sarac (2003) argues that the educational benefits of poetry are: a) providing readers with a different viewpoint toward language use by going

beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary; b) triggering unmotivated readers to be open to explorations and different interpretations; c) evoking feelings and thoughts in heart and mind. The use of poetry as the learning material helps learners to make connection in the field of their own experiences. Teaching language through poetry shows how literature may be used in language classes to develop students' knowledge of English (Llach, 2007, p.7 & Khansir 2012, p.241).

Poetry exposes young learners to meaningful contexts. It introduces a range of vocabulary and dialogues that can be used to prepare student-centered and interesting activities in the language classroom. That is why poetry is considered as a tool for language learning purposes. In order to reach the merits, the acknowledgement to provide a good basis for communicative competence is important for English teachers. It helps teachers in arranging learning devices (syllabus, lesson plan, etc.), implementing learning materials, and evaluating the process of learning and learning outcomes.

Knowing the benefits of poetry as teaching materials to teaching English, thus the study is conducted. Therefore, the focus of this study is the approaches employed by a teacher to teaching English through poetry. Moreover, the study is also directed to find out the impacts of approaches on students' literary experience.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

This study mainly explores approaches employed to the teaching of English through poetry and the impact of the approaches on students' literary experience. Accordingly, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. What are the approaches employed by the teacher to teaching English through poetry?
2. How are the approaches impacts on students' literary experience?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

This study aims at finding answers to the aforementioned research questions:

1. To find out the approaches employed by the teacher to teaching English through poetry.
2. To find out how the approaches impact on students' literary experience.

1.4 Significances of the Study

The result of the research is expected to contribute to the critical thinking, language skills, and personal development of young learners. Therefore, the research significances are listed as follows:

- a. The finding of the study may be utilized as reference for the next researchers who are interested in further development on learning and teaching literature, and the resources for language teaching.
- b. The finding of the study are expected to provide English teacher with valuable information for the improvement of teaching literature regarding teachers' approach, activities in the classroom, and learners' literary experience.
- c. The finding also may be valuable information that is expected to lead to a better condition of literature teaching and learning process in the classroom.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This research investigates approaches employed to the teaching of English through poetry. It also investigates the impact of the approaches on students' literary experience.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

These terms lead readers to easier understanding of this research report. The clarification and terms are as follows:

- a. **Impact** --- a powerful effect that something, especially something new, has on a situation or person.
- b. **Approach** --- theoretically well-informed positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings (Brown, 2001).
- c. **Method** --- is the practical realization of an approach. The originators of a method have arrived at decisions about types of activities, role of teachers and learners, the kinds of material which will be helpful and some model of syllabus organization (Harmer, 2007).
- d. **Learning** --- is “acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience, or instruction.” (Brown, 1987). Learning is a conscious process where separate items from the language are studied and practiced in turn (Harmer, 2007).
- e. **Teaching** --- is showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand (Brown, 1987).

- f. **Literature** --- is defined as a work of art that “seeks to please the person who made it and the person who attends to it” (Purves et al. 1990, as cited in Musthafa, 1994).
- g. **Literary experience** --- is the way in which the stimuli present in the literary work interact with the mind and emotions of a particular reader (Rossenblatt, 1938, p. 35).
- h. **Communicative approach** --- is referred to as the identification of behaviors of people considered successful at what they do, specifically, the identification of the characteristics of good communicators (Savignon, 1997). The communicative approach is a continuous process of expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning (Mustadi, 2012, p. 19).