

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

English is considered as a foreign language in Indonesia. Indonesian learners have studied English formally since elementary school until college. Nowadays, English courses have been widespread in Indonesia to fulfil the need of English language learning informally. Some courses offer to teach English in a rigid way, but some others offer to teach English in a fun way. These courses usually have different teaching objectives and teaching procedures that affect the way of language teaching.

The age of learners is a major factor in making a decision about the way of teaching. Harmer (2007) claimed that people of different ages have different needs, competencies, and cognitive skills. We expect children to enjoy the learning process through play. As stated by Paul (2003), a child who encounters a new English word, expression, or pattern through games is far motivated to learn and to internalize the new English word, expression and pattern than a child who receives the new knowledge before the game.

Children, as young language learners, must make efforts to understand the new language, while teachers have to teach the language without making learners get stressful. As stated by Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2006), language is a hard work. An effort is required to understand, to adapt, and to use the new language in conversation and in writing composition. The effort should be maintained at every moment and over a long period of time. In line with this condition, games are needed to help and encourage learners to sustain their interest and work. Games also help teachers to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. It is also supported by Paul's (2003) statement that games are not simply for practicing language targets. He also added that the most effective learning can be achieved through games.

According to Paul (2003), games are one of the best ways to make children feel deeply involved in the lesson. It is also suitable with one of the characteristics of young learners provided by Scott and Ytreberg (2004), that young children love to play and learn best when they are having fun through the play. Children will be engaged in doing something that makes them enjoyed.

The use of games in teaching process is important to achieve an effective learning. The teaching process usually consists of several phases. Sheils (1988, as cited in Errey's articles (2012) in TEFL Boot camp articles 2011) mentions phases in communicative teaching called three-phase

framework. In the three-phase framework, the teaching process is divided into three phases named pre-activity, whilst activity, and post activity.

Sheils (1988) explains that the pre-activity is the first phase of teaching in which the teacher can build a learning environment to raise up the interest of learners in the lesson, to activate the prior knowledge of learners and to prepare learners for the language that can be necessary to perform the main task. The next phase is whilst activity which is the main phase of delivering teaching materials. In this phase the teacher can engage learners in the main tasks including oral or written tasks. The last phase is post-activity. This phase includes the reflection of the ideas and language produced during the main activity and language drill.

Learners usually try to judge the first impression of the lesson in the pre-activity phase. They will be engaged in the lesson when the teacher can raise up their interest. The teacher can use games to engage learners to the lesson. It is related to the characteristics of games itself as proposed by Evans (1979), that games are entertaining and exciting for learners by the competition and suspense of the outcome and the winner of the game. Games may be designed to activate prior knowledge and to prepare language needed in the main task.

According to Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2006), games have several advantages in language teaching. Games help teachers to build a

context in which learners should take part to understand what others say or write and also force learners to express their point of view or give information. In this case, games give a chance for learners to experience the language rather than to study the language. The other advantage of using games is that they provide repeated occurrence and use of particular language form. In other words, games provide meaningful drills that allow learners to have better absorbency in receiving the lesson. It is because meaningful drills give opportunity to the learners to involve the emotion and the meaning of the language. In line with the importance of learners' comfortable feeling to each other and also to improve their self-confidence which can make them focus on the language lesson, Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2006) claim that games are considered as a way of warming people and help them to focus their minds to the lesson.

The issue above gives a stimulus to the researcher to do a study related to games usage as warming-up activities in young learners' classroom and the advantages of using games as warming-up activities.

1.2. Research Questions

The research is focused on the following questions.

1. What types of games are used by the teacher as warming-up activities in young learners' classrooms?
2. What are the advantages of implementing those games as warming up activities in young learners' classroom?
3. What are the difficulties of implementing those games as warming up activities in young learners' classrooms?

1.3. Purposes of the Research

The purposes of the research are to investigate the types of games used by teacher as warming-up activities in young learners' classroom. In addition, the research is conducted to find out the advantages of and difficulties in implementing the games as warming-up activities in young learners' classrooms.

1.4. Significance of the Research

Educational practitioner such as teachers, students, and other researcher hopefully can get some good impacts of the research. For the teachers, this research may give them more information about the use of games in learning process and the advantages of the games. Meanwhile, students may have a better way to understand the material through games. In addition, for other researcher, this research may support better research in the future.

1.5. Research Method

1.5.1. Research Design

Qualitative case-study method was used in this research. It is because the research was conducted to interpret a phenomenon in natural setting. In line with this, Denzel and Lincoln (2005) as cited in Creswell (2007) define qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. The qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to making sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

The case study method was chosen because the research explored an issue through one case in a bounded system. According to Creswell (2007), case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (cases) over time, through detailed in-depth data

collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description.



1.5.2. Participants

The participant involved in the research was a teacher of an English Course in Bandung. The selection of the participant was based on the claim of a teacher that uses some types of games in her teaching as warming up activities.

1.5.3. Data Collection

Classroom observation and interview are the research instruments employed to collect the data. Classroom observation was used to get a brief description of the kinds of games occurred in warming-up activities stage of language learning. Observation was recorded in a form of video and observational notes. Observation video was transcript and coded according to the kind of games occurred. Observational notes were compiled to support the data gained from observation video. The instruments were used to answer the first research question.

The second instrument is interview. Interview was used to get information from the teacher to find out advantages and difficulties that were faced by the teacher. This instrument was done to complete the information gap during observation.



1.5.4. Data Analysis

After collecting the data from observation and interview, those data were analyzed in three steps. The data were analyzed in some analytic cycles consist of (1) identification, (2) categorization, and (3) interpretation.

1.6. Clarification of Terms

To avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, there are some terms in this paper which are clarified as follows:

- a. Game is an entertaining and competitive activity involving skill, chance and endurance governed by a set of rules.
- b. Warming-up activities are opening activities in pre-activity phase to warm up classroom situation
- c. Teaching procedure is a set of teaching phases.
- d. Young Learners refers to learners at age 6 – 12 (first to six graders of elementary school).