CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The chapter introduces the background of the study, the statement of the problems, the aims of the research, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the research method applied in the study, and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of Study

Children start to learn a language through their surroundings. They listen to the adult's conversation and try to imitate the language spoken by adult. Amazingly, once children listen to you; they can repeat what you say, and try to find out the meaning of the words of adult's sayings. This is how children learn a language naturally through the environment. In relation to children's characteristics above, Nation (2001) asserted that in language learning, vocabulary is the first aspect to be taught before teaching the other aspects of language for every language learners, especially children. Child language learning experts, such as Cameron (2001) and Lehrn, et al. (2007), also believe that vocabulary learning plays significant roles in children's language development. Therefore, vocabulary learning for children has become the central learning in children's classroom.

According to Department of Education and Culture of Indonesia number 060/U/1993, English is not compulsory learned for kindergarten and elementary school grade one to three. However, parents believe that the earlier children learn English, the better children will achieve in English learning. The increasing demand of English for children has made a change to many schools' curriculum. Many schools are adding English as their intra-curricular lesson to fulfill the English language learning for children.

On the other side, the process of teaching vocabulary to young learners in the classroom still uses techniques that cannot yet maximize the children hidden potentials, such as drilling and flashcard memorizing, without context, to teach English vocabulary to children. These teaching techniques are commonly used in many schools that have English as intra-curricular learning (http://moramodules.com/ALMMethods.htm). Additionally, teachers' qualification in teaching English is also one of the problems in providing a meaningful and contextual English learning. Based on an interview with a lecturer from Pendidikan Guru Taman Kanak-kanak (PGTK), kindergarten teachers that teach English for children need more guidance in English teaching as they become the role model for children's language development. Teachers are aware of children's characteristics, as well as the how to teach vocabulary according to their developmental needs. But, teaching English vocabulary cannot stand alone without context whereas children can learn more through their surroundings naturally. Children are taught how to say the words, make sense of the words' meaning, and remember the words. As the result, they cannot use the words they have learned to communicate. Teachers have to be a model in using simple English to present the language to children and convey meaning.

Related research reported by Millington (2011) finds that songs are really helpful for teaching English vocabulary to young learners contextually. Songs can be valuable learning tools to improve listening skills, pronunciation, and learn vocabulary in a joyful situation. Lo & Li (1998) also finds out that songs can be a non-threatening way to teach children vocabulary. Songs are learning tools to learn vocabulary. Additionally, Mushtaffa (2008) proposes that teaching English vocabulary to children should motivate them to learn language as children learn a language naturally, contextually, and meaningfully. As children learn through playing, teaching English vocabulary should provide a learning that is interesting and indirectly makes children be comfortable to use the language. An alternative to provide a contextual learning is by using the songs as the technique of teaching English vocabulary (Sorcioban & Metin, 2009; Shahen, 2009; Ara, 2009; Tavil &

Isisag, 2009). There are several elements of songs that can be used to teach vocabulary to children such as simple wordings to practice the pronunciation, learn vocabulary meaning through the actions, learn rhythmical patterns, and pace (Gordon, 2007; Phillips, 2008). Therefore, present study focuses on portraying teaching English vocabulary through songs for young learners and proposing how English is taught in kindergarten.

1.2 Statement of Problem

As stated in the background of the research in the previous sections, there is a general statement of problem as follows:

How does the teacher use songs to teach vocabulary?

In order to find out the answer of this question, two specific statements of problems are formulated as following:

1. What kind of songs-based activities are implemented to teach vocabulary?
2. What are teacher's considerations taken when implementing those songs-based activities?

1.3 Aims of Study

Specifically, the aims of this study are to find out:

1. The implementation of song-based activities in the classroom to help children learn English vocabulary.
2. The teacher's considerations on their implementation of songs-based activities.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The present study is conducted to portray the song-based activities in young learners' classroom and the teacher's considerations on the song-based activities implementation in the classroom. The study was conducted in a class of kindergarten level. The class consists of twenty children, age of 4-5 years old. The study focuses on how the teacher uses songs as the classroom activities for teaching vocabulary for young learners.

1.5. The Significance of Study

The study is expected to provide theoretical, practical, and professional benefits. Theoretically, the study can be used to enrich the example of teaching English through songs as the techniques, particularly to Very Young Learners and Young Learners.

Practically, the research finding will be useful for the teacher who interested in teaching English through songs for young learners. Specifically, from the study, the students can enjoy the learning and become more motivated to learn English. Children can improve their vocabulary mastery as the basic language skills in English language learning, especially using songs as the technique. Hopefully, the students will be motivated to speak as they learn the vocabulary through songs.

The study will be useful to present the implication of using songs-based learning in teaching vocabulary to young learners and become the sample of ideal English teaching to young learners. Moreover, it can be useful to provide sufficient evidence of the benefits of teaching vocabulary through songs-based learning in young learners' classroom.

Last, hopefully the findings of the study will give professional benefits for the teachers to improve the use of the songs as technique on teaching English vocabulary to young learners. Moreover, the research findings can be used as a consideration to improve the teaching language to young learners, in schools and other institutions of English for young learners, especially for teaching vocabulary.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

In order to provide clear understanding of the study, there are several key terms in the study clarified:

1. *Songs-based learning* in this study refers to the language learning classroom which the elements of songs are made available as learning resource.

2. *Vocabulary* in this study refers to the certain words learned through songs context in the classroom.

3. *Teaching vocabulary* in this study refers to the vocabulary items taught using songs in the classroom.

4. *Teaching techniques* in this study refers to the techniques teacher used to present, use, and recycle the vocabulary learned during the session.

5. *Young Learners* in this study refers to children of age four to five years old learning in the kindergarten.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

The paper is organized into five chapters. Chapter one presents the background of the study, the statement of problems of the study, the aims and scopes of the study, the research methods used in the study and paper organizations of the study.

Chapter two composes the theoretical frameworks of the study which cover the teaching vocabulary, the techniques for teaching vocabulary, the songs as the techniques of teaching vocabulary; songs as the teaching techniques and how songs and vocabulary learning related to each other, and other theories that are related to the study.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology. Specifically, the chapter presents how the study is conducted, the research site, data collection, and how the data is analyzed in the study.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study and the discussions of all components related to the study.

And finally, chapter five presents the conclusions and suggestions for teachers and further research; so that the English vocabulary learning for young learners can be more contextual and meaningful for children.