

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

Learning a foreign language that is different from the native language is quite difficult. It is because of the difference of the foreign language and those of the native language. That may discourage them from learning the foreign language. This problem also happens to young learners of foreign language.

→ Children in elementary school as young learners of English sometimes meet that problem, too. Unlike other levels of schools—secondary and tertiary, elementary school has its own different characteristics—one of which is getting bored easily. The elementary school has uniqueness in its curriculum, method and organization because it deals with children in particular group of age (Jespersen, 1944:28). Wadsworth says as quoted by Shrum and Glisan, that there are two important stages in the elementary school child's life. During those two stages, a child gets concrete things rather than the abstract ones such as theories (Wadsworth in Shrum and Glisan: 1994:58). Children need more concrete experiences, and based on that, the writer thinks that therefore, children in the elementary school should be taught practical things than the theoretical ones, For example, in mathematics children are shown how to do subtraction or addition by using concrete objects such as balls, matches, and etc. In the natural science subject, children are usually taught basic skills and knowledge such as why and how days and nights happen.

→ This means that the method of the teaching of the elementary school children should be interesting enough for them so they will not get bored more easily. According to Jarolimek, children education should be designed to create high level of interest in learning that will become personalized and individualized for the learners. ↓ A teacher's role is very important. S/he should be able to set the warm and stress-free atmosphere and provide the learning environment with interest and motivation (Jarolimek, 1981:129). A teacher who teaches children in the elementary school should be very creative in developing his/her material and teaching method. He/she should be able to create different interesting variations in teaching so that the children will not get bored easily. When the children often get bored easily, their learning spirit is usually reduced and this may not result well in their learning, because they will easily forget the lesson.

So far, English teachers who teach in elementary school usually use textbooks. The vocabulary that should be taught to children is usually presented by pictures in the books. The exercises on the vocabulary lesson contains matching between pictures and words, filling in the blanks and so on which according to the writer are boring if it is always done like that. Sometimes teachers bring real objects to teach nouns or use the TPR method in teaching verbs. However, their teaching time is usually very limited so that they cannot vary their material in teaching English. They usually come to the classroom, tell the students to open their books, explain the material, give exercises or homework, etc. on and on everyday they do the same things. What the teachers do is only finishing the material in the textbook without any creativity to adjust to the

nature of children. The children will easily become bored and forget what they learn. The teachers should use methods, which meet the characteristics of children, such as using media, playing games, singing or telling stories.

→ In this thesis, the writer brings on storytelling as a technique of teaching vocabulary to the first grade of the elementary school children because she believes that children naturally love listening to, reading, and even retelling the stories. They usually enjoy stories very much. As we know that nowadays, there are many storybooks, which are enjoyed by the children. They love to read them and retell the stories to their friends or parents. They sometimes ask their parents to tell classical stories such as “Cinderella”, “Snow White and Seven Dwarfs”, “Beauty and the Beast” and so on, even when they have already listened to such stories for many times. Recently, there are even series of “Harry Potter”, an imaginative story written by J.K. Rowlings, which the children love very much. The books are thick, but the children read them very fast, and they can remember the details of the story very easily. In stories, there are many vocabularies that the children can remember easily. Therefore, the writer suggests English teachers to use the storytelling method to teach English vocabulary to elementary school students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the topic concerning storytelling as a method of teaching English vocabulary to elementary school children, a research question is raised in this study: How can storytelling be applied as a technique of teaching English vocabulary to the first grade of elementary school children?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In line with the research question, this study aims at finding out how storytelling can be applied as a technique of teaching English vocabulary to the first grade of elementary school children.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the results of this study can be useful for further studies on the relevant field and topic. The writer also hopes that this study can be useful for teachers who teach English as a foreign language in the elementary school in order for them to be able to develop and vary their teaching material.

1.5 Definition of the Key Terms

There are several key terms that should be defined, they are:

1. Story:

Story is something to be taught, learned, told, and enjoyed. Something that can give inspiration and entertainment, about stuff of life. Story is one of humans' chief means of communication (Tooze, 1959:xv).

2. Storytelling:

Storytelling is a simple presentation of a story that can be done at home, in the classroom, in a library, or by the campfire (Tooze, 1959:v).

3. Teaching:

Showing or helping someone to learn how to do something providing with knowledge causing to know and understand (Kimble and Garmezy as quoted by Brown, 1987:6)

4. Vocabulary:

Total number of words that make up a language (Hornby, 1987:959).

5. Elementary:

Of or in the beginning stage of a study (Hornby, 1990:390)

6. Method:

Way of doing something (Hornby, 1990:617)

7. Technique:

Method of doing something expertly (Hornby, 1990:1036)

8. Suggestopedia:

The application of the study of suggestion to pedagogy (Freeman, 1985:72)

9. TPR:

The method in which students listen and responds to the spoken target language commands of the teacher (Freeman, 1985:110)

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The writer only talks about the relationship between storytelling and the teaching of English vocabulary—the receptive domain towards the first grade of elementary school children and how the storytelling is applied.

1.7 Methodology of the Study

This thesis is a library research. The writer quotes and reviews statements from different experts' opinions in her effort to find the answer to the research question that is how storytelling can be applied as a technique of teaching English vocabulary to the first grade of elementary school children.

1. 8 Organization of the Study

Chapter one contains the background of the study, definition of key terms, scope and limitation of the study, methodology of the study, and also the organization of the thesis. In chapter two and three, the teaching of vocabulary and storytelling are discussed, while in chapter four, the writer talks about how to apply storytelling as a technique of teaching English vocabulary to the first grade of elementary school children. The writer concludes her study and gives her suggestion in chapter five.