CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problems, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and definition of key terms.

Background of the study

English is a very important subject in the elementary school where the writer is working. It can be seen from the syllabus that the students have to study the subject six hours in a week. The learners study the materials from the teacher, sit in the class nicely and take notes. Teachers tend to dominate the teaching and learning process. Such a learning activity makes the learners passive and do not think creatively (Ning, 2011). Considering that learners should be encouraged to be more active in learning and find the knowledge by themselves, teachers should change their learning roles as a facilitator and motivator. This is in line with the idea that teaching is making the students learn by triggering, motivating, encouraging, guiding and facilitating the students to learn. Teachers help them to develop their knowledge and skills (Joni, 1993; Brown, 2007; and Bowden and Ference, 1998).

English consists of four skills reading, writing, listening and speaking. As far as the writer's concern, some teachers at school only focused on reading, writing and listening. They mostly drill and ask the learners to memorize. As a result, it makes the learners weak in speaking skill because they never use it in communicating and interacting with others. The writer also finds other weaknesses in learning speaking skill that cover: a) the learners do not have enough motivation

to practice in the class: b) the learners have nothing to say: c) the learners do not like the materials: d) the learners are too shy and afraid to share their opinions in front of the class.

Beside that most of passive students have some weaknesses like; they can't understand the grammar, they have lack of vocabularies and they can't pronounce in English well. All of their weaknesses make them only listen in the class. Based on these weaknesses the writer is trying to find a solution to make the leaners brave to share their opinions in a small group by using cooperative learning. The writer hopes by using Cooperative Learning the learners work together to maximize their own and each other's learning and principles and techniques for helping students work together more effectively (Jacob, 2004:1). By working in a small group, it can help the learners to have social interaction and it can build their confidence to improve their speaking skill.

Teaching young learners is different from teaching adult because young learners have their own characteristics. Young   learners learn through interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). They are more energy, eager and lively. If they are given interesting learning experience such as fun activities, roleplay, games and singing, they will be more interesting. It should be better to give familiar topics such as; families, friends or their school life are very helpful to make them speak in English fluently. Therefore, teachers have to make deep exploration about their children's needs and characteristics. They should know all things that affect the teaching learning process.

3

Concerning the objective of the English teaching at the elementary school, one of the techniques in Cooperative Learning that the writer will use in this research is Role-Play. It is suitable with the character of young learners that they enjoy fantasy, imagination and movement (Pinter, A. 2006). The writer wants to encourage the students to communicate in English during the lesson especially students are not confident to speak in front of the class. They can communicate and help each other using English in a group work. In Role-play uses a student-student interactional pattern and help the EFL learners to understand the importance of cooperation and to have an interest in learning. Role play can be used as a method for teaching insight and empathy competence (Blatner, 2005). According to Killen (1998) role play can give students practice in thinking real-life roles and dealing with real-world problem.

Statement of the problems

The problem that was investigated in the research can be focused on the following research question: Is there any significant difference of the young learners' speaking achievement before and after being taught using Role Play technique?

Objectives of the Study

In line with the statement of the problem above, this study is intended to find out whether there is any significant difference in the young learners' speaking achievement before and after being taught using Role Play technique.

Theoretical Framework

In completing this study, the writer uses some major theories. They are theories of speaking, role play and young learners.

Speaking is process of uttering words, phrases, and sentences meaningfully using oral language in order to give information and ideas (Clark and Clark, 1997: 223); to say things, express thought aloud, and use the voice (Brown, 2001: 257); a productive skill, which consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning (Bailey, 2005: 2); and an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing speech sound (Brown, 2007: 4). Based on some expert opinions speaking is an interactive process (between speaker and listener) for constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing speech sound/information as the main instrument in order to give information and ideas or communicate.

Role play is a method of acting out particular ways of interacting with others in imaginary situations (Byrne, 1986) and it promotes interaction in the classroom and increase motivation (Ladousse, 1995). Budden (2006) says that role-play is any speaking activity when you either put yourself into somebody else's or put yourself into an imaginary situation. Role play is approved to be a communicative language

learning since students are actively get involved in conversations (Nunan, 2001). Students are not passive but as active learners. Students become the center of learning not the teachers as found in common ways of teaching. Students are step by step led into the independent phase of learning. Based on the explanation above role play is a technique that can stimulate the students into a real situation.

Young learners are unique, have smart brain which is fresh, clean, and fast. According to Scott and Lisbeth (1992) young learners are they who have age under 11 years old with some characteristics such as they are curious of asking questions, they believe of what is said and the "real" word to express and comprehend meaning/message, they have distinct option about what they like and what they dislike, they are open to what happens in the classroom and begin asking the teacher decision and they can cooperate with other people and learn from another.

Hypotheses

The alternative hypotheses (Ha). Students show significant progress on their speaking achievement after being taught using Role Play technique.

The null hypotheses (Ho). There's no significant progress on their speaking achievement after being taught using Role Play technique.

The Significance of the Study

The result of this research may help the teachers vary their techniques in teaching speaking to their students so the students will not feel bored but develop fluency in speaking English. Besides, this research is also intended to give information to those who are interested in doing similar research on this topic.

After the study has been completed, it is expected that the result will be beneficial for the students in learning and improving their speaking ability in fun ways. Use this technique, the writer also expect that students can actually learn English and help each other to speak English fluently through Role Play. Moreover, students are given the chance to use their imagination and creativity in learning.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study will involve grade five students of private elementary school in Surabaya. This group is chosen because they relatively know more vocabulary than the lower levels but they are not preparing for the examination. Those are forty students from two classes. The students are of similar age, ranging from ten to eleven years at the time of conducting the study. They are studying English as a foreign language.

Definition of Key Terms

The following terms are needed to be explained in order to avoid misunderstanding.

1. Young learners   : According to Nunan (2010) young learners' age is around three years of age to fifteen. However, young learners in this study refer to students ranging from ten to eleven years old or fifth grades.

2. Speaking   : the verbal use of language to express meaning that human use to communicate with each other.

3. Speaking achievement   : students' speaking score taken from speaking test, representing their speaking skill.

4. Role play   : refers to a technique of teaching speaking which can make the students work in pairs support one another and to make the class more interesting and to reduce passive students during the speaking class.

Organization of Thesis

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter presents Introduction of the study. The second chapter presents the underlying theories of the study, while the third chapter discusses the research methodology. The fourth chapter presents the findings and discussions of the findings. The fifth chapter presents the conclusion and suggestions.