

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Rationale

English is one of the most essential languages in the world. Every student must know English. To ease learning, it is therefore, very important for a child to learn speaking, writing, listening, and reading in English starting as early as possible.

The teaching of English in the elementary school so far is mostly by memorizing and drilling where students are expected to be able to do worksheets and finish them in time without knowing how to implement nor comprehending the material. Reading, speaking, writing and listening are hardly taught in the class and few teaching techniques are applied. Most of the classroom activities are done individually. The teacher acts as the sole source of knowledge. At the end, students' ability to speak, read, listen, and write does not show sufficient progress for their daily use of English. They are able to achieve good scores for their tests, which focus more on grammar, but they do not know how to implement nor understand the grammar in functional situations. Hence, the writer of this thesis is interested to review the teaching techniques of English.

For young learners in the Elementary school, learning should be fun and comprehensive. They need to learn from concrete experiences using realistic materials or activities. Experiences in inter-relationship works are a necessity for them.

SD Kr. Cita Hati is a Christian National Plus Elementary School that has a belief that every student is special and unique, not as one to be forced into a mould, nor does s/he has to blindly follow system, but as an individual with unique promises, distinctive

needs and great potentials. The vision of SD Kr. Cita Hati is to provide an education that will enable students to acquire Godly Characters, to grow in Faith, and to expand their Knowledge to meet the changes and challenges of this century. The missions are:

- We see a school that encourages each student to reach his/her full potential where the teachers recognize their individual needs, diverse learning styles and pace.
- We see a school where a strong emphasis in Language arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology are emphasized.
- We see a school where the instructional programs and process are based on how and what children learn.
- We see a school where students can be nurtured in a supportive and loving environment, where kind encouraging words are spoken, where students are disciplined in positive ways.
- We see a school where students are respected, respect others and respect themselves.
- We see a school that is committed not only to teaching subjects but training, empowering a Godly generation.
- We see a school where teachers and students take time to learn and to teach Godly character.
- We see a school where teachers and students not only know God but experience His love through the school programs.
- We see a school that stimulates growth and promotes the love of learning for students and faculty.

- We see a school that becomes a blessing to the parents, the teachers and the community.

In this elementary school, there are around 725 students, and 70 teachers with a total of 29 classes: six classes of grade one, five classes of grades two to five, and four classes of grade six. The implementation of thematic teaching in SD Kr. Cita Hati has started since 2003/2004 school year for all subjects including English. Before it was implemented, the teachers were trained to apply the integrated thematic teaching curriculum in their teaching.

The teaching method of integrated thematic curriculum is thematic teaching of which the technique is supposed to build students' life skills, such as: problem solving, critical thinking, inquiry, team work, cooperative, tolerance and so on, besides the English competence to speak, write, listen and read. The most important point, the students learn is experiencing most of the activities so they can use the language they learn in context. The main purpose is so the students can immediately implement the learning in their daily life.

The teachers choose a theme that is suitable for the elementary students' level. Then, sometimes teachers and students plan and prepare the lesson together. The teachers will start with the concrete materials and let the students experience the learning process. The activities are usually fun and challenging. In the class room, students create projects or do research for the tasks the teacher sets for them. They can do it in pairs, groups or individually. Teacher just act as a facilitator who guides the students to achieve the learning goals. Sometimes, students are taken out of the school (field trip) to enrich their knowledge of the theme they are discussing. Both, teacher and students learn many new

things and they enjoy this process. The improvement of the English skills in speaking, writing, listening, and reading is progressing because the enthusiasm for learning is so high, so thematic teaching is a language teaching methods that suitable for elementary students. When implementing this teaching method, the students can also share their feelings with the teacher. This will help the teacher to improve his/her teaching skills and improve the students learning motivation. Therefore, all schools are encouraged to implement thematic teaching for language learning to achieve the best result for their students.

1.2 Problem Statement

1.2.1 Major Problem

How is the integrated thematic curriculum for English teaching implemented in SD Kr. Cita Hati?

1.2.2 Minor Problems

Since curriculum contains of these following items: (1) teaching strategies, (2) teaching materials development, and (3) evaluation. So, the minor questions of the study are formulated as following:

1. How are the English teaching materials developed in SD Kr. Cita Hati?
2. What are the English teaching strategies used in SD Kr. Cita Hati?
3. How is the English evaluation implemented in SD Kr. Cita Hati?
4. What are the students' language learning attitudes in SD Kr. Cita Hati?
5. What are the teachers teaching attitudes in SD Kr. Cita Hati?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study was intended to investigate how the integrated thematic English curriculum was implemented in SD Cita Hati. It was done through the observation of the developing of the teaching materials, the teaching strategies used, evaluation, and students' learning attitudes and teachers' teaching attitudes.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study will give practical contribution about the implementation of the integrated thematic curriculum, especially for English language teaching.

- To give contribution to the Department of Education and Culture of the implementation of the integrated English teaching curriculum in language. The information about the implementation will be useful for the government as a companion to the Competency Based Curriculum in Indonesia.
- To give information to school principals whose schools also implement the integrated thematic English teaching curriculum. Hopefully, the information can assist the schools to improve the integrated thematic teaching in their schools.
- To give information to schools those intend to implement the integrated thematic English teaching curriculum. The result will give beneficial information for the schools to design their curriculum.
- To further researchers who are interested in integrated thematic English teaching curriculum, the results will provide useful information.
- To give information the parents about how beneficial the integrated English teaching curriculum is.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of Study

The scope of this study is the implementation of integrated thematic curriculum for English teaching in speaking, reading, listening, writing in: (1) the teaching material development, (2) the English teaching strategies, (3) the evaluation, (4) the students learning attitudes and (5) the teacher's teaching attitudes from the start until the end of the theme for Grade Six, SD Kr. Cita Hati.

1.6 Assumptions

For the research purpose, the writer needed to make these assumptions:

1. Observation is regular activities done in SD Kr. Cita Hati. Therefore, she could assume that her position as the Principal of the elementary school would not disturb the teaching-learning processes, nor cause biases to her research.
2. Her decision to choose Grade Six class B did not cause any bias since the characteristics of the subjects in other classes of the same level were approximately the same.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1. SD Kr. Cita Hati is a National-Plus Christian Elementary School located in Jalan: Kejawan Putih Barat 26 Surabaya.
2. Integrated thematic teaching is a way of teaching that integrates the entire subjects, taught in a certain grade, into one theme (www.webmaster.todayteacher.com).

3. Integrated thematic English teaching: a way of teaching English that integrates all English skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) with the theme of the content subjects.
4. Implementation in this study refers to the development of a program, the process of putting all program functions and activities into place (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/evaluation/glossary). In this thesis it refers to the process from the English thematic material development up to the teaching and learning and evaluation.
5. Assessment means any systematic method of obtaining evidence from tests, examinations, questionnaires, surveys and collateral sources used to draw inferences about characteristics of people, objects, or programs for a specific purpose (www.questionmark.co.uk). In this thesis it refers to the ways of measuring students' learning process through ongoing system of observations, student's projects and assignments, and written test.
6. Lesson plan: A plan for helping students learn a particular set of skills, knowledge, or habits of mind. Often includes student activities as well as teaching ideas, instructional materials, and other resources. Is shorter (in duration) than, and often part of, a unit of instruction. Goals and outcomes are focused (www.thegateway.org)
7. Curriculum: Academic standards—the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind students are expected to acquire in particular grade levels (or clusters of grade levels)—and the units of instruction, often with sample lesson plans, illustrative student activities, and essential and supplementary resources that can help students reach those standards. It

is often designed at the state or school district level by a team of teachers, curriculum specialists, and other experts (www.geminfo.org).

8. Attitude is a way of acting or behaving that shows what one is feeling or thinking (Webster's New World Children's Dictionary, 2006.).
9. Teaching strategy is a teaching approach that aims to raise learner awareness of learning and provide learners with systematic practice, reinforcement and self-monitoring while they attending to language learning activities. (<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kinoshita-Strategy.html>.)