

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the research, research questions, significant of the research and delimitation of the research and definition of the key term.

1.1 Background of the Research

The increasing number of elementary school which implements TEYL in Indonesia is not followed by the improvement of the teaching quality in TEYL. This issue actually already recognised by some experts. Zein (2012 p.16) explained that in Indonesia where most English teachers at primary level hold no relevant qualification. Classroom teachers with limited English proficiency are appointed by primary school principals to teach English, despite having no appropriate English qualifications. On the other hand, those with a non-English undergraduate degree are allowed to teach English in primary schools. They are employed to teach English even though they have inadequate pedagogical experience and may only have some English proficiency. Here Zein clearly said that there is a problem in our education system especially in TEYL. Therefore the researcher was interested in conducting the research focusing on good practice in TEYL. This research is aimed at finding out the design teaching English to young learners at SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut and MI Al Azhaar Bandung and the teachers good practice of teaching English to young learners. The teaching of

English to young learners (TEYL) has gained a lot of attention, the increasing numbers of children learning English in their early age is not followed by the increase of the quality on the implementation of TEYL.

The problem of TEYL in Indonesia context found that there are no special training for English teachers who teach young learners, most English teachers in elementary schools do not seem to know well how to fulfill the young learners needs. It occurred because of some reasons, besides the lack of teachers' competences, there are few English teachers get training to upgrade their competences. Zein (2012, p.16) said the phenomenon of appointing teachers without relevant background to teach English at primary level is ubiquitous. It is present everywhere in which investment on early instruction of English is made. Next, Zein (2012 p.19) also mentioned as said by Suyanto (2010) that in Indonesia, there has been no program developed within English departments at pre-service level that is specific to TEYL. Preparation for teachers wishing to embark on a career in primary school English teaching takes place in a unit called EYL (English for Young Learners), but the unit is not offered by all teaching colleges because not all are concerned with primary school education or have the necessary resources to offer the unit.

One of problems is, there are many English teachers teaching English in elementary school without English education background. The other problem are the standard criteria of English teachers for TEYL and the skills and personalities of English teachers. Zein (2012 p.17) as cited in Hu (2005) who argued that assigning teachers with no English background provides an immediate solution,

but the extent to which the solution is applicable on a long-term basis is arguable. He stated that the policy is a reflection of a “naïve conception of the professional qualities of primary foreign language teachers” (Hu, 2005, p. 20). Even now, the efficacy of such impetus has not been empirically proven to be positive to young learners’ language development. It is unlikely that instruction resulting from the employment of teachers with no qualifications in English is ever effective. The reason is because young learners are typically characterized by their age with regards to aspects such as cognitive development, learning style, and attention span (Brown, 2001).

In spite of many problems in TEYL there is a glimmer of hope coming from many scholars who put their heed on investigating the good practices of TEYL which may contribute to the development of TEYL such as Musthafa (2010) investigated the essential requirement of TEYL in order to create effective English teaching. He stated that the English for young learners should know well who young learners are, how they learn language, especially English as a foreign language and how the teachers’ facilities young learners learn English. Hence, Saddia (2010) focused on the implementation of TEYL and found that the background knowledge of the English teachers affected the quality of their teaching process instead of various media, instructional materials, assessments and sufficient facilities. Putra (2012) focused on language learning environment and revealed the awareness of the English teacher about the importance of providing positive language teaching and learning environment lead the success of English teaching practices.

Although there are many studies contributed to TEYL, however there is not enough information related to the good practices of TEYL. The important information we found from Zein (2012, p. 12) as said by Agustina (1997) that the issue with teachers' proficiency is deteriorated by the fact that while teachers are required to achieve a certain level of proficiency, an environment in which such level can be achieved is not provided. Specific training programs to assist teachers in achieving the desired level of proficiency have not been formulated. The case is even worse in Indonesia as the country has not created a policy that stipulates the minimum proficiency level for teachers of English at primary level. Various studies reported that most English teachers at primary level are those who have no background in pre-service English education and are limited users of English. Therefore it is still needed to find out the real experience of good practices from a successful English teacher in TEYL field from a different scope of the study. For that reason, this research is investigating good practices on teaching English to the young learners. The researcher takes two main points to investigate; the implementation of teaching English to young learners and the language learning environment. The information of good practices of teaching English to young learners hopefully helps the English teachers by providing information on the effective English teaching practices to lead the students' success in learning English. The purposes of implementing English for elementary students are to make them able to respond the oral instruction, to speak, to comprehend written texts, to write words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs in simple English.

In addition deals with the unique of the study, the researcher found that in Tulungagung based on the reasercher investigation there are only three elementary schools which use Cambridge curriculum include in their schools curriculum. This phenomenon of course interesting to be searched to find the answer and prejudice of some expert that there is a problem in our education system especially in TEYL and the teachers qualification in teaching English.

The researcher has a huge assumption that the schools which had implemented the Cambridge curriculum also have a good English teachers, a well preparation of teaching, and good environment of education. This is because the materials of Cambridge curriculum are more complicated than the national curriculum both from the department of education (handles the state elementary schools) or department of religion (handles the Islamic elementary schools).

The researcher also supposed that the schools which used Cambridge curriculum have more attention in English teaching learning process, more program to upgrade the students' English skills, have more participation in English's competition and of course win many competitions deal with English.

As the researcher says before that in Tulungagung there are only three schools which implemented Cambridge curriculum those are: SDI Al Azhaar Bandung, MI Qurrota A'yun Ngunut and MI Zumrotus Salamah Kedungwaru, however, two last years the last institution already quite from the program of Cambridge curriculum. Instead of high cost problem, the books and other materials also quite difficult to find here. Therefore the researcher just uses SDI Al Azhaar Bandung and MI Qurrota A'yun Ngunut as the object of the research.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, this study endeavors to uncover the questions;

1. How do the teachers design teaching English to young learners at SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut and MI Al Azhaar Bandung Tulungagung?
2. What are the teachers practice of teaching English to young learners?

Elaborating further on that aim, the study seeks to:

1. Report how teachers design teaching English to young learners at SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut and MI Al Azhaar Bandung Tulungagung
2. Identify the teachers' practice of teaching English to young learners deal with classroom techniques that are used in TEYL classrooms, media of teaching and other material supporting the classroom activities.

1.3 Significance of the Research

The finding of the research aimed at providing beneficial contributions for the theoretical needs and current practical challenges dealing with good practices of teaching English to young learners. Theoretically it expected to broaden and provide new point of view into existing theories about the teaching English to the young learners. It is also aimed at providing a better understanding of teaching English to the young learners and other researchers who are interesting in conducting research on teaching English to young learners.

For the English teachers to young learners, the result of the study are expected to be an enlightening notion in their teaching practices in order to

provide effective English teaching practices. For other researchers, the findings can be valuable resources for a broader understanding for the issues in conducting research related to the teaching to the young learners.

1.4 Delimitation of the Research

This study focuses on English teaching and learning to young learners at SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut and MI Al Azhaar Bandung Tulungagung. These schools are chosen because of several reasons; first, there are three schools that implemented Cambridge curriculum in Tulungagung. SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut and MI Al Azhaar Bandung Tulungagung are the two of them. They taught in fifth grade for eight sessions per week (35 minutes for each session).

Second, the implementation of TEYL in this school has special treatment compared with other elementary schools. Those schools provide some special programs to get a better achievement for the students (such as : Olympic Club and Bright Skill Day program). There are also some morning activities such as: reading, listening, writing, shopping paper, memorizing and Speaking class. And the holiday activities such as: Holiday camp, Joyfull competition and Native speaker. Moreover SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut makes English as a habit in greeting and other daily conversation (for example for permission and simple conversation).

Third, it deals with the environment of study, SDI Qurrotaa'yun Ngunut and MI Al Azhaar Bandung Tulungagung have a new condusively building. An appropriate place is an important thing to make students study more comfortable.

Here the writer investigated the implementation of TEYL and the language learning environment. The implementation of TEYL includes teaching preparation, teaching process in the classroom and students' assessments. For the language learning environment, the researcher investigated how English teachers create positive language learning environment.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

From this study, the following are the key terms which are necessary to define in order to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding.

- a. *Young learners* is children especially those up to the ages of nine or ten, who learn in the primary school and have their own learning characteristics that are differs from older children, adolescence and adult.
- b. *Teaching English to young learners (TEYL)* is the implementation of teaching English to primary school children.
- c. *Practices of TEYL* deals with the activities of the English teacher to provide effective teaching and learning process for young learners.
- d. *Cambridge Curriculum:* is founded on the value of the university of Cambridge and best practice in confident, responsible, innovative and engaged. The curriculum aims to enable learners to communicate confidently and effectively and to develop critical skills in order to respond to a range of information, media, and texts with enjoyable and understanding.

