

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A. Literature Review

1. Teaching and Learning Process

Many experts have proposed definitions of learning. Brown (2000:7) says that learning is acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction. He classifies learning into some components as follow:

- a. Learning is acquisition or “getting”
- b. Learning is retention of information or skill.
- c. Retention implies storage systems, memory, and cognitive organization.
- d. Learning involves active, conscious focus on acting upon events outside or
inside the organism.
- e. Learning is relatively permanent, but subject to forgetting.
- f. Learning involves some form of practice, perhaps reinforced practice.
- g. Learning is a change in behaviour.

Furthermore, the most important element in learning to use language is to use it. Loban in Cox (2001: 19) states that the development of efficiency

with language derives from using language for genuine purposes and not studying about it. The path to power over language is to use it in genuinely meaningful situations. It means that we must conduct the learning process in the situations which language is used.

Language learning is a long and complex way, where the learners explore all their competence to think, feel, and act. Brown (2000:1) also says that, *“language learning is not a set of easy steps that can be programmed in a quick do-it-yourself kit. So much is at stake that courses in foreign languages are often inadequate training grounds, in and of themselves, for the successful learning of the second language.”*

Teaching cannot be defined apart of learning. To learn is to know something while to teach is to let learners know something. In relation to learning, Brown (2000:7) states that “teaching is guiding and facilitating learning, enabling the learners to learn and setting the condition for learning.” The teachers’ understanding about learning will determine his or her understanding in teaching. The approach, the methods, and the techniques that used in the classroom depend on the teacher’s understanding in learning. In other words, the concept of teaching is interpreted in line with the concept of learning.

Effective teaching, according to Brown, is systematic, stimulating, and caring whereas bad teaching reduce motivation, increase negative attitudes to learning, and yields lower achievements. Thus, it is important for the teachers to know the objectives of their teaching. Rivers (1981:8) proposes the

objective of teaching as follows:

- a. To develop the student's intellectual power through the study of another language.
- b. To increase the student's personal culture through the study of the great literature and philosophy to which the new language is the key.
- c. To increase the student understanding of how language functions and to bring them, through the study of another language, to a greater awareness of the functioning of their own language.
- d. To teach students to read another language with comprehension so that they may keep abreast of modern writing, research, and information.
- e. To give students the experience of expressing themselves within another framework, linguistically, kinetically, and culturally.
- f. To bring students to a greater understanding of people across national barriers, by giving them sympathetic insight into the ways of life and way of thinking of the people who speak the language they are learning.
- g. To provide students with the skills that will enable them to communicate orally, and to some degree in writing, in personal or career contexts, with the speakers of another language and with people of other nationalities who have also learned this language.

From the definitions above, the researcher can conclude that in teaching and learning process, the teacher should be the guide and facilitator in helping the learners to learn. The teacher also has to be able to create the

classroom atmosphere that enables the learners to use the language as if they were in the real situation. Further, the teacher should be able to create the appropriate tasks and activities, and use them based on the purpose of the teaching.

2. Teaching English to Young Learners

a. Definition of Young Learners

There is a general agreement in the literature about the definition of young language learners. Slatterly and Willis (2003) define the young learners as those between 7–12 years old while very young learners are defined as under 7 years of age. Scott and Ytreberg (2001) distinguish between two groups of young learners, one between 5-7 and another 8-11, considering mainly their ability to perceive the abstract and concrete.

What underlies these age thresholds is mainly the question “When is it too late for a child to acquire a foreign/second language?” Some researchers answer this question within the framework of a broader issue called *critical period* (Gordon, 2007). He defines critical period as a biologically or a neurologically based period which ends around age 12 (the onset of puberty), beyond which a conscious and labored effort replaces natural and effortless language acquisition process. Critical period ends around puberty (Singleton & Ryan, 2004), with the specialization of the dominant hemisphere of the brain for language functions (the lateralization process). Some psycholinguists advocate that with the completion of brain lateralization and loss of the

plasticity of the brain after critical period, one's language aptitude declines (Gordon, 2007: 56).

b. The Importance of Teaching English to Young Learners

Teaching English to young learners is an important part of education. Brewster (2004) says that one reason for starting to learn English earlier was simply to increase total number of years spends learning the language. Furthermore, Cameron (2001:16) states that children who start to learn a foreign language in early ages will develop and maintain advantages in same, but not all areas of language skill. Therefore, it can be said that English is better introduced in early ages. However, teaching children is not the same as teaching English to adults. Some characteristics of children make the differences (Cameron 2001). In line with Cameron, Brewster and Ellis (2004: 27) show that young children are different from older learners because they:

- 1) have a lot of physical energy and often need to be physically active.
- 2) have a wide range of emotional needs
- 3) are emotionally excitable
- 4) are developing conceptually and are at an early stage of their schooling
- 5) are still developing literacy in their first language
- 6) learn more slowly and forget things quickly
- 7) tend to be self oriented and preoccupied their own world
- 8) get bored easily
- 9) are excellent mimics
- 10) can concentrate for a surprisingly long time if they are interested

11) can be easily distracted but also very enthusiastic.

To create activities in English teaching and learning, the teacher should consider the characteristics above. Both individual and group activities are appropriate for children who are ready to work and cooperate with other. Cameron (2001) shows the basic assumption in teaching English to children, such as the child is an active learner, the child is a sense maker, the child is a keen learner, and the child is an orderly thinker. It can be implemented in the activities, like role-playing, storytelling, games, singing songs, etc.

Based on the explanation above, the writer can conclude that teaching English to children needs the interesting tasks and activities and supported by an effective classroom management and interesting media so that children are motivated to learn.

c. How to Teach English to Young Learners

This question might be a consideration for every teacher. This question requires the deepest and widest consideration, which needs long volumes. It is best to mention about the most general and widely accepted points. While teaching English, children's needs, emotions, ideas about learning process as well as their physical, cognitive, and affective abilities should be taken into consideration. While their levels of proficiency seem to be dependent on many factors including type of program and curriculum, number of hours spent in English class, and techniques and activities used (Shin, 2006), there is an agreement in the literature about the priority of affective objectives.

Schindler (2006) highlights that the main aim of early language education should be to hook students when they are young and keep them interested in learning English for the rest of their lives. This pedagogical hook can be achieved by providing children with a safe, entertaining, and educational environment, thus making them feel competent and confident while learning English sustainably (Scott & Ytreberg, 2001).

Children are born with a natural appetite and interest for learning, and their desire to learn should be fueled when they begin school (Cameron, 2001). Teachers have the most important roles in creating an encouraging emotional atmosphere in the classroom. Thus, a cooperative rather than competitive atmosphere (especially including a winner and some physical reward) works better with young learners (Scott and Ytreberg, 2001). The students should feel that they are winning and having fun altogether. Yet this should not be understood as enjoying with little learning. The motto should be learning by enjoying. Children especially have fun with movement and physical participation, and the more fun the students have the better they will remember the language learned (Scott and Ytreberg, 2001) emphasize children's understanding comes through hands and eyes and ears, and the physical world is dominant at all times.

In this respect Total Physical Response (TPR) method by James Asher is a very popular method among teachers of young learners, because it requires the children to listen and physically respond to a series of instructions from the teacher (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Involving students in making

visuals and realia, called craft activities, (such as painting, making puppets, origami, play doughs etc.) can be physically satisfying for the young learners, as well (Shin, 2006). When possible other activities can also be embedded with physical movements. A singing activity, for example, can be coupled with dancing easily, or a story can be transformed into role-play activity. The teachers should be careful not to keep the tempo of the lessons at a stable pace. That is, activities should not always be physical and fast or vice versa. A variety of activities with different paces and tempos are necessary since children have a short attention span (Scott & Ytreberg, 2001).

A sound pre-existing knowledge and recycled language can be provided to the students by establishing routines (Scott & Ytreberg, 2001). Routine classroom language such as “Good morning!”, “Sit down!”, “Stand up!” “Who wants to play...”, “I want a volunteer!” etc. and routine classroom activities such as “Painting time”, “Singing time”, “Story time” can build up a core language at the beginning of the year, which the students can handle and use themselves. Preferably, these routines should be thematically consistent, that is, activities, songs, and stories should be built on recycling the curricular language content in time lapses. Also these routines make students feel secure and maintain motivation as these activities take children’s attention and ensure the learners to know what is going on, what will come next (Scott & Ytreberg, 2001).

Gradually the students can build on this core language by receiving even richer comprehensible input through listening to/watching teacher while

reading or telling a story loudly (Mixon & Temu, 2006). Or especially videos and television can be useful tools in language classes on the condition that they are graded according to the students' level, short enough (5-10 minutes), and in the suitable genre such as cartoon, animation etc. (Phillips, 1994).

No matter which activity the teacher uses, young learners should be supported by contextualizing the language with visuals, realia, and mime and gestures (Gordon, 2007). Such contextualization should match the meanings in the stories that the teacher tells or songs that she sings to provide comprehensible input (Shin, 2006). In addition, teachers shouldn't forget the importance of peripheral learning: enriching classroom with printed objects such as posters and flashcards. These may help children acquire the print awareness subconsciously (Brewster et al., 2004). Course books, which are considered as the main material of a lesson by many, should be selected and used very carefully. If course books dominate the lesson and control the teaching, the communicative continuum is at stake (Harmer, 2007). Then it is better to use the course book as a framework in which you paint your own picture depending on your students' needs and interests.

As it can be understood, teacher's role in this process is highly demanding. They should adapt their language, teaching techniques and methods, and the emotional, cognitive and physical atmosphere in the classroom according to the children's needs and readiness; otherwise, a successful learning cannot be achieved. As more knowledgeable and skillful persons, teachers are responsible for scaffolding the children as suggested by

(Brewster et al., 2004). What is more, teachers should expose the children with target language as much as possible throughout the process (Harmer, 2007).

As for the evaluation of the young learners' performances in the very early stages of learning, formal evaluation including written/oral tests or quizzes should be avoided as they threaten the students (Harmer, 2007). Instead, a process-oriented formative evaluation including observing, detecting, and reporting the weaknesses and strengths of children should be preferred (Scott & Ytreberg, 2001). Moreover, students should be encouraged to make self-evaluation to become aware of their own weak and strong sides (Brewster, 2004). Self-evaluation may be done with a rather general judgment using such items as "I found this activity boring"; "I didn't concentrate well today"; "I have made good progress this term."

Young learners may mark such judgments with symbols, perhaps a happy face to indicate agreement and a sad face to indicate the contrary, or a sun and a cloud (Little & Perclová, 2001). More constructivist ways of assessment such as diary writing, learning logs, self assessment and portfolio evaluation can also be useful with the young learners, since giving formal exams and grades shall spoil the positive emotional atmosphere we want to create.

3. The Syllabus of Elementary School

Indonesian government uses School Based Curriculum or KTSP

(*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*) as the guide for the teaching and learning implementation in all levels of educational institution including the elementary school. The focus of the curriculum of elementary school is different from that of the high school curriculum. The elementary students are expected to have abilities to communicate and to improve their enthusiasm in learning a language. The article 6 subsection 6 of government laws no. 19, 2005 states that *kurikulum dan silabus SD/MI/SDLB/Paket A, atau bentuk lain yang sederajat menekankan pentingnya kemampuan dan kegemaran membaca dan menulis, kecakapan berhitung, serta kemampuan berkomunikasi*. This means that primary school/Islamic elementary school/Primary school for the students with special needs/Package A or the same level institutions emphasizes the importance of reading and writing, counting, and communication abilities).

The English instruction in Indonesia aims to develop four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing so that the graduates will be able to communicate each other in the certain literacy. Those four levels of literacy are *performative, functional, informational, and epistemic*. At the *performative* level, learners are able to read, to write, to listen, and to speak within various symbols used. At the *functional* level, learners are able to practice the language in their daily life, such as reading the newspaper. At the level of *informational*, learners are able to access knowledge through their language ability, meanwhile at *epistemic* level learners are able to express knowledge to the target language (Wells,1987) cited in (Depdiknas, 2006:

402). In conclusion, the teaching learning process of the elementary school students has to be at the *performative* level.

According to Depdiknas (2006), establishing English as a local content subject in Elementary school aims at supporting the readiness of the elementary school graduates in facing the learning English process at the higher level (secondary school). In addition, English instruction in Elementary school is intended to develop language ability used to accompany the action or in other words called *language accompanying action*. In this case, English is used for interaction and it is characterized by “*here and now*”. The topics are all about things in a situational context. The young learners are required to interact in English to support their classroom activities. Meanwhile, the objectives of English subject in Primary School are: the students should: 1) have the competence to develop the ability of communicating in the school context, 2) Have the awareness of the importance of English in global.

4. Teaching Speaking to Children

It is important for a teacher to know the characteristics of the learners especially children in the learning process because teaching children is different from teaching adults. According to Cameron (2001:19-20), there are some principles in thinking about young learners learning a foreign language:

- a. Children actively try to construct meaning.
- b. Children need space for language growth.
- c. Language in use carries cues to meaning that may not be noticed.

- d. Development can be seen as internalizing from social interaction.
- e. Children's foreign language learning depends on what they experience.

We want our learners to gain fluency and accuracy in the oral presentation. Being accurate does not mean using structures and vocabulary correctly, but saying the right things in the right place, at the right time. Young speakers lack awareness of how to cater other participants in discourse, and are not very skillful in planning their talk (Cameron: 2001). Learner training in communication on early years may help the children to be able to say when they do not understand what they hear and to formulate helpful questions to understand more.

Speaking skills build a foundation for developing friendships, cooperating with other people, and communicating effectively with people in every aspect of life, although the art of conversation is difficult to address. We must make sure children always have a valid reason for speaking. The more realistic the need for communication, the more effective an activity will be.

In learning to speak, children mostly need more time to practice. It is not effective to make them speak communicatively and spontaneously if teacher just give them a lot of choral drilling and mechanical patten practice. The children need not only repeat pattern many times but also do this in meaningful ways and genuine emotions.

In line with teaching speaking to children, Paul (2003: 77) suggested some ways related in preparing children to communicate:

- a. Introducing and practicing patterns in ways that feel meaningful to do children.
- b. Practicing new patterns in combination with the other patterns the children have learned.
- c. Giving the children many opportunities to guess how to use patterns flexibly
- d. Giving the children confidence to speak out in front of others by talking independently with others.
- e. Building the children's inner strength to deal with confusing words and situations.
- f. Focusing on the question form of new pattern, so the children can ask about the things they do not know.

The aims of teaching speaking to children are to think about what you say in class and to make your language more accessible to your young learners to think about how you can make listening fun and easy, not hard and boring.

5. Role-Play

Role-play is a versatile strategy in teaching and learning English. It is used in drama, simulation, play, and games. Essentially, role-play is projective technique where in the role player either becomes someone else or pretends to be performing a task that is different from what he or she usually does, Ellis (1994:143). Role-play comes naturally to children, who use it intuitively as a

means of learning.

A role-play is a highly flexible learning activity, which has a wide scope for variation and imagination. According to Ladousse (1987), role-play uses different communicative techniques and develops fluency in the language, promotes interaction in the classroom and increases motivation. Here peer learning is encouraged and sharing of responsibility between teacher and the learner in the learning process takes place. Harmer (2001) advocates the use of role-play for the following reasons:

- a. It is fun and motivating.
- b. Quieter students get the chance to express themselves in a more forthright way.
- c. The world of the classroom is broadened to include the outside world, thus offering a much wider range of language opportunities.

Role-play can improve learners' speaking ability in any situation, and helps learners to interact. Role-play helps by providing a mask, such as in shy students, where learners with difficulty in conversation are liberated. In addition, it is fun and most learners will agree that enjoyment leads to better learning. In Rogers (2005) said that organized role-play in the early years can encourage children to explore unfamiliar language from different true-to-life scenarios. As children love to play, role-play has the potential to provide the ultimate reason for children to learn to listen and speak new words and phrases. With each new role-play scenario comes a wealth of vocabulary and terminology not otherwise heard in early years settings.

Based on the explanation above, the writer can conclude that teaching speaking to children needs an interesting task and activities based on their need to speak so that children are motivated to learn. One of the interesting activities for children is role-play that is suitable to improve the children's speaking ability.

Role-playing exercises can be hard work for the instructor, both in preparation and in execution, but the work tends to pay off in terms of student motivation and accomplishment. As with any big project, it is best to take it one step at a time:

- a. Define Objectives
- b. Choose Context & Roles
- c. Introducing the Exercise
- d. Student Preparation/Research
- e. The Role-Play
- f. Concluding Discussion
- g. Assessment

a. Define Objectives

The details of what we need to do depend entirely on why we want to include role-playing exercises in our course.

- 1) What topics do we want the exercise to cover?
- 2) How much time do we and our class have to work on it?

- 3) What do we expect of our students: research, report, or presentations?
- 4) Do we want the students role-playing separately or together?
- 5) Do we want to include a challenge or conflict element?

b. Choose Context & Roles

In order to prepare for the exercise:

- 1) Decide on a problem related to the chosen topics of study and a setting for the characters. It is a good idea to make the setting realistic, but not necessarily real. Consider choosing and adapting material that other instructors have prepared.
- 2) If the characters used in the exercise are people, define his or her goals and what happens if the character does not achieve them.
- 3) We should work out each character's background information on the problem or directions on how to collect it through research. If possible, prepare maps and data for our students to interpret as part of their background information rather than the conclusions upon which they would ordinarily base their decisions.

c. Introducing the Exercise

Engage the students in the scenario by describing the setting and the problem.

- 1) Provide them with the information we have already prepared about their character: the goals and background information. It needs to be clear to the student how committed a character is to his/her goals and why.
- 2) Determine how many of our students have done role-playing before and explain how it will work for this exercise.
- 3) Outline our expectations of them as we would for any assignment and stress what we expect them to learn in this lesson.
- 4) If there is an inquiry element, suggest a general strategy for research/problem solving.

d. Student Preparation/Research

Even if there is no advance research assigned, students will need a few moments to look over their characters and get into their roles for the exercise.

There may also be additional questions:

- 1) Why they are doing this in character? Why did we decide to make this a role-playing exercise?
- 2) Students may have reservations about the character that they have been assigned or about their motives. It is good for the instructor to find out about these before the actual role-play. It can be very difficult for a student to begin researching an issue from a perspective very

different from their own because even apparently objective data tends to be reinterpreted as support for pre-existing world-views.

- 3) If there is an inquiry component (*i.e.* student-led research), the students may need help coming up with a research plan and finding resources.

e. The Role-Play

Depending on the assignment, students could be writing papers or participating in a Model-UN-style summit. For a presentation or interaction, props can liven up the event, but are not worth a lot of effort as they are usually not important to the educational goals of the project.

f. Concluding Discussion

Like any inquiry-based exercise, role-playing needs to be followed by a debriefing for the students to define what they have learned and to reinforce it. This can be handled in reflective essays, or a concluding paragraph at the end of an individual written assignment, or in a class discussion. The instructor can take this opportunity to ask the students if they learned the lessons defined before the role-play began.

g. Assessment

Generally, grades are given for written projects associated with the role-play, but presentations and even involvement in interactive exercises can be

graded. Special considerations for grading in role-playing exercises include:

- 1) Playing in-character
 - a. Working to further the character's goals
 - b. Making statements that reflect the character's perspective
- 2) In an interactive exercise, being constructive and courteous
- 3) For many assignments, being able to step back and look at the character's situation and statements from the student's own perspective or from another character's perspective.

B. Conceptual Framework

Teaching English to children is the important part of education. There are some advantages of teaching English in the early ages, such as: it will develop and support the language skills. It seems easier to children to understand and imitate what they hear. Teaching English in early ages also based on expectation that people will get more if they spend more time in learning English. However, teaching children is quite different from adults. They have unique characteristics such as more enthusiastic and lively as learners. Children also have short attention span. They want to please the teacher than their peer group. It means that the teacher must create the activities that are suitable with them, like role-playing, storytelling, singing songs, games, etc.

Nowadays, in Elementary schools, the language teaching emphasizes attention to the speaking skills. It is stated in curriculum 2006 that in primary

English teaching, the skills of writing and reading are aimed at supporting the teaching-learning of oral communication. In conclusion, we can infer that the oral competency is most emphasized among other skills. The goal of teaching speaking is to make students able to communicate efficiently. Therefore, learners are expected to be able to speak fluently and to make them understood the message sent by other speakers.

However, based on observations in the class and interviews with the English teacher, the researcher found some problems related in teaching and learning process in SD N Jogomangsan II, especially related to the lack of speaking ability. The teacher showed that she seldom asked the students to practice their speaking for communication. She said that she had not encouraged the students to practice their speaking because she only developed their vocabulary. She said that she had difficulties in finding ideas to create interesting activities.

In learning speaking skill, the students often find some problems. The problem frequently found is that their native language causes them difficult to use the foreign language. Other reason is because of lack of motivation to practice the foreign language in daily conversation. They are also too shy and afraid to take part in the conversation. Many factors can cause the students' speaking skill. There are interest, the material, the media and the technique used in teaching speaking. That is why teaching speaking through role play might be the solution.

The reason to use role-plays in teaching and learning process is

because role-playing is a fun activity. It can increase students' motivation, like reducing embarrassment, and putting students in situations in their real life. Besides, role-playing can build up the social skills from a very low level and the most important thing is that through role-playing we can train the student's speaking ability in any situation.