CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Indonesia government always concerns the national education. As we know that well educated people will create a better nation. Indonesia as a developing country needs to focus more on education side in order to enrich the human resources.

There is a policy in the blueprint of 2013/2014 curriculum to eliminate English subject for elementary school students. This policy is quoted from the news.

“JAKARTA (Pos Kota) - Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Kemendikbud) belum dapat memastikan apakah akan menghapus mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris dari kurikulum Sekolah Dasar (SD). Mendikbud Mohammad Nuh bahwa penghapusan mata pelajaran untuk SD itu masih belum final. ‘Masih belum final. Tapi kemungkinan untuk itu ada dan terbuka. Sebelum diputuskan mata pelajaran dan kurikulumnya, kami uji publik dulu. Karena hasil diskusi kan belum bisa dijadikan pegangan,’ kata Mohammad Nuh di kantornya, Kamis (11/10).”

The Ministry of Education said that the policy is not final yet. There are still some things to be tested for this policy. The reason for this policy said that the children did not focus in other lesson when they study English. Kunjana Rahardi a socio-linguist (2012) in an interview with a local radio said that

“Menurutnya sudah selayaknya anak di usia kelas 1 sampai kelas 3 SD memang tidak dikenalkan dengan bahasa asing lebih dahulu. Sebaliknya harus difokuskan pada bahasa ibu baik Bahasa Indonesia ataupun bahasa daerah terlebih dahulu.”
The other reason is stated by the vice ministry of Education Ministry of Indonesia Government Mr. Musliar Kasim.

“Bahasa Inggris mungkin dihapuskan dari kurikulum wajib siswa SD yang akan diberlakukan pemerintah pada tahun ajaran 2013-2014. Alasannya, keberadaan mata pelajaran tersebut membuat siswa tidak fokus mendalami kemampuan belajar Bahasa Indonesia.”

The government policy is not coherence with the need of English language for Indonesia future. In 2014-2015 Indonesia will face AFTA (Asean Free Trade Association) and AEC (Asean Economic Community). The need of English is an important issue. It is stated in newspaper of Wall Street English Thailand “For people over 30, there’s a danger of being “outdated” compared to those who are AEC ready. Unfortunately, it may be harder to find a new job. The only solution is to learn something new – such as English”

The news also mentions other opinion about English “English will be the language for business in AEC 2015. In the near future, China, Japan, and South Korea, will join the AEC as well. This means learning English will become even more crucial”

Meanwhile, parents have some arguments too about the government policy to eliminate English subject in the elementary school. Most of them disagree with this policy. This is stated in the news of VOA.


Pendapat serupa disuarakan seorang pegawai bank bernama Inggrid yang mengatakan, “Bahasa Inggris sebenarnya dasar ya. Ke depan nanti Bahasa Inggris banyak dipakai, jadi menurut saya lebih baik dikenalkan sejak dini.”

Most of them strongly disagree with the government policy to eliminate English in elementary school.

Parents’ ideas and responses about the government policy to eliminate English from elementary school are in compliance with some linguists and scholars ideas about studying second languages. The writer agrees with the idea that ‘children are more effective to achieve second language in a long term study’. These ideas came from people who disagree with this policy and some linguists statements which stated below.

Krashen (1995:43) says “It has been popularly assumed that age itself is a predictor of second language proficiency, that younger acquirers are better at second language acquisition than older.” Krashen (1995:43) also says “Acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults.”
Ellis (1997:68) states that “Studies of immigrants in the United States show that if they arrive before puberty (+ 12 years old) they go on to achieve much higher levels of grammar proficiency than if they arrive after.” Ellis (1997:68) also argues that age is an important matter in language acquisition and learning, “Interestingly, age of arrival is as much better predictor of ultimate achievement than the number of years of exposure to the target language. In the case of pronunciation, the crucial age appears to be much earlier, possibly as early as six.”

Bialystok & Miller (1999; 143) say “There is no doubt that learners who arrived in Canada at a younger age and began learning English earlier had a better chance of doing well than learners who arrived later. This general trend was found in our data for the Spanish learners and replicates numerous studies that offer empirical support for the widely held view that children are more successful at learning a second language than adults are.”


Based on the claim above linguists and scholars strongly argue that children are able to learn language better in younger ages.

The policy to eliminate English in the elementary school provokes many politicians, scholars and teachers. Some agree while others oppose this policy. English is very important to Indonesian students. English is one of the subjects in National Examination from junior to senior high school. In the higher level of education, some university requires TOEFL score to enter the faculty.
English is very important to graduates too. Some job vacancies require applicants who can speak English. Therefore English is very important to Indonesian students. The government policy to eliminate English subject from elementary school is not wise. Based on the arguments, ideas and opinions stated above, the writer believes that learning English from childhood will achieve a better result in acquiring them. That’s why the writer is interested in observing and analyzing children who learn English language in early childhood. The research attempts to prove that children can learn English, as a second or foreign language. This research is aimed at finding out a better language teaching method for children.

This paper has a focus on Language Acquisition and Language Learning. Language acquisition is a study on how people acquire language and use the language. Language acquisition combines many aspects of linguistic in the study. As the fundamental aspects of human being, language is very important.

Language will be useless if no one uses it and like what Chomsky (1968) says that language is unique to human. Chomsky (1968) in Jendra (2010: 2) says that “when we study language, we are approaching what some might call ‘human essence’, the distinctive qualities of mind that are so far we know, unique to man.”

Halliday (1973) also says that “all uses of language, however abstract and however complex the social structure with which they associated, were to be explained in terms of certain elementary functions. Language acquisition or language development needs to be seen as the mastery of linguistic functions.”
In Indonesia if the L1 is their native language like Javanese so the L2 is probably Bahasa, but if their L1 is Bahasa there is a change that their L2 is their tribe language or any other foreign languages. English, Arabic and Mandarin are commonly learned by Indonesian people.

Based on the explanations above it can be argued that second language acquisition is a systemic study of how people acquire a second language (L2). Ellis (1997:3) says “L2 acquisition; then can be defined as the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of classroom”.

The writer uses Applied Linguistics Research in this paper by comparing two Language Teaching Methods. Those teaching methods are Audio-lingual Method and Total Physical Response Method. In order to be able to get a better teaching method, the writer compares these two teaching methods.

Krashen (1995) also agrees by comparing two teaching methods, an experiment of language acquisition is likely to occur. Krashen (1995:3) says “An example that will be important to us in our discussion of language teaching consists of experiments that compare teaching methods.” These experiments are not going to attack one method or another but to find a better teaching method for language learners.

1.2. Problems of the Study

Based on the background above, here are the problems in this research:

a) Which Learning / Teaching Methods are more suitable for kindergarten students who learn English?
b) How children response to both methods?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Related to the problems above, the writer state some objectives to answer it:

a) To find out what Learning / Teaching Methods are more suitable for kindergarten students who learn English.

b) To find out the response of children in learning English language using TPR and Audio-lingual methods.

1.4. Scope of the Study

There are many studies in language acquisition and language learning but the writer makes a limitation in order to make the analysis more specific.

The writer makes a scope of analysis which focuses on English as the second/foreign language being learned by children attending kindergarten or pre–school (around 4 – 6 years of age). The writer compares Audio-lingual Method with Total Physical Response Method. The data of the observation are the results of learning process taken from those two methods.

1.5. Significances of the Study

The writer hopes the findings of this study will help teachers, especially kindergarten teachers who teach English in the class. This study hopefully can provide some necessary information about a better Language Teaching Method for young language learners. It is also hoped that the finding of this research can give valuable knowledge about children capability in learning English.