

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Young learners are students in primary school who are between the ages of 6 and 12. This is the initial step in learning the fundamentals of the subject. Young learners can take an active role in making sense of their surroundings at this time. They are also capable of copy what the teachers say or do as quickly as possible. Furthermore, young or almost Learners are enthusiastic about what they have learned as a result of their experiences. They might take up a new pastime or meet someone new. Nowadays, English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Lessons from the primary school curriculum have been taught. It is why EYL teachers should know the strategies that can used to teaching young learners.

All of the skills in English, such as listening, writing, reading and speaking, are taught in different ways. In speaking, teachers should be aware of and comprehend about young learners behavior and characteristics of young learners in teaching-learning process. Linse (2005) said that speaking is a important skill that anyone learn other language or a foreign language and should develop. For young learners it is critical to develop their speaking skills in part of language development. Linse also stated that it is preferable for teachers to teach students speaking skills first, rather than other skills, because it serves as a foundation for developing other language skills. Similarly, Brown (2001) said that speaking skills assist students in communicating their ideas and opinions. It is expected that if young learner

have mastered the skill of speaking, it will be easier for them to master other skills. As a result, it is obvious that speaking, among other skills, plays a critical role.

Many strategies have been discovered by researchers to improve the way they teach speaking. These strategies are thought to help students improve their public speaking skills. Studies such as those conducted by Brown (2001), Linse (2005), Geoffrey (2006), and Szpotowicz (2012) reveal a variety of interesting strategies for teaching speaking to young learners. The other issue, however, is related to the assessment performed by EYL teachers. As we know, as an essential component of teaching and learning, Assessments must include Performance-based assessments, students self-assessment, portfolios. Teachers can also assess and measure how far the planned study's purpose has been achieved or applied. It can also track the development of young learners in their learning.

Georgiou and Pavlou (2003) mention that the majority of teachers have been unable to conduct appropriate assessments using the strategies that they employ during the teaching process. When evaluating their students, teachers' must use an appropriate assessment. Assessments, according to Pibilová (2008), leads to students development. It is a critical component of teaching learning process. It is concerned with both the quality of teaching and the quality of learning. As a result, teachers must have an assessment system in place that does not interfere with young learners' language development.

Speaking is one of the four essential skills in language learning. The speaking activity allows people to communicate with others, which is

difficult for young learners. Fauziati (2010) states that “ the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language is mastering the art of speaking, and success is measured in terms of ability to communicate in the target language”. The student requires accuracy and effectiveness in an oral production test, which is the validity and reliability of an oral production test. For the majority of students, speaking is a difficult activity for young students. Young learners must pay close attention and pronunciation, fluency, and diction are important concepts for young learners to grasp. When it comes to young learners, assessing speaking ability is a difficult task in language teaching (Weir, O’Sullivan & Horai cited in Boxer & Cohen, 2004).

McCauley (2004) states that conducting an assessment for young learners is a difficult task due to their high activity levels and ability to be easily distracted by others. Young learners also have a shorter attention span, are suspicious of strangers, and perform inconsistently in unfamiliar environment. Similarly, Grieve (1992) states that assessing young learners is more difficult than assessing adult learners because young learners have a volatile temperament that may impair their cognitive ability. Furthermore, Katz (1997) asserts that teachers must be extremely sensitive when deciding on the best assessment strategies. It is because young learners have distinct characteristics. Likewise Ovalles and Mata (2011) advises teachers to conduct an informal assessment of speaking ability because organizing oral testing can be difficult for teachers.

It will be difficult to assess young learners who are prone to making mistakes. As we know that speaking activity is not easy for young learners it is since young learners have distinct characteristics. In addition speaking

assessment for young learners should be meticulously planned and carried out. It shows that the result of preliminary data which conducted by the researcher's doing interview with one of English teachers at SDN 124399 Pematangsiantar on preliminary observation, the most of teachers concentrated solely on teaching speaking strategies. They did not discuss about strategies in conducting speaking assessment. The researcher point out some the problem as below .

- Teachers is frequently discovered that young learners are uninterested in English-speaking activities and it is hard to make significant feedback
- Teachers only focused on Teaching Speaking Strategies, and teachers should know about strategies in conducting speaking assessment to promote advantages
- Some EYL teachers may find out the difficulties in conducting the speaking assessment to young learners

Based on the problem pointed above, the researcher is interested in investigating teachers' strategies in conducting speaking assessments for young learners. This study wants to explore more about how speaking assessment conducted for young learners. It is also expected that this study will give useful information about how to assess young learners in teaching learning process.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of study above, the research questions of this research are formulated as follows :

1. What strategies do teachers' use in assessing young learners' speaking skill?
2. What are the problems faced by teachers' in assessing young learners' speaking skill?

C. The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem of the research question above, the objective of this study are :

1. To analyze teachers' strategies in conducting speaking skill assessments.
2. To reveal the problems faced by teachers' in assessing young learners' speaking skill.

D. The Scope of the Study

This study mainly will be focus on the speaking assessment strategies that used by teachers in assessing young learners' speaking ability. There are many types of how teachers assessing their students ability especially in speaking. In this research, the researchers only concern on how teachers' strategies in conducting assessment in speaking skill to young learners' for 4th grade of elementary school.

E. The Significance of the Study

The researcher expects that this research will get some significance to some parties such as English teachers and to other researchers.

1. Theoretical Significance

The finding is expected to EYL teachers in contribute to assessing young learners' speaking skills, and students' skill can be measured effectively

2. Practical Significance

1. To the English Teachers

The provided result of this research can contribute to EYL teachers in assessing their students so that students' abilities can be effectively measured. And inform EYL teachers about strategy that can be used to assess young learners speaking ability. This study is also expected to shed light on how young learners should be evaluated.

2. To Further Researchers

The result can be used as a reference for other researchers in the EYL teachers strategies in conducting assessment in Speaking skill.