

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Due to the advancement of technology and as a result of rapid globalization, English has secured as the most utilized international language. It is used as a primary tool for communication and giving information to exchange thoughts and culture of people who live in different countries all over the world. It is used not only for business and entertainment but also for education in the vast number of countries which pursue learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

In the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language, student must master all of the English skills. They consist of speaking, reading, writing and listening. Mastering English in the global era is very important. English is the most widely used language in international events. Many countries use English in their affairs, such as business, politic, education, science and technology, that is why English becomes a very important language (Biemiller. 1999). It takes a big role in many affairs.

Due to the important role of English in all affairs, English is taught and learnt in non-English speaking countries, including Thailand. In Thailand, English is the first foreign language. It is taught and learnt merely as one of study subjects in school. It may also be learnt for instrumental purpose that is gaining science and technology, which are mostly written in English.

Five to seven years old are the most vital years in a child development.

All education, including learning a foreign language should contribute positively to that development. In teaching vocabulary to the kindergarten's students, the teacher must use effective and appropriate methods. Effective methods mean that the method can build student's motivation in learning English. Appropriate method means that the method should be appropriate with kindergarten student's characteristics (Wiriyaichitra. 1986).

It will be very difficult to point out all of young children characteristic which the teacher should be aware of and take into account in the teaching process, so teacher can only draw his/her attention to the characteristics of young children which are relevant for language teaching. Teacher should be imaginative and creative to build the enjoyable teaching-learning condition based on young learners characteristic. There are several methods to create enjoyable condition for children to learn English such as games, songs, pictures, stories, dance, model making.

To teach vocabulary in kindergarten or elementary school, especially for children, is not easy. Teaching children is different from teaching adults. We must have extra power to teach them, because the children have certain characteristics and need a certain treatment (Alavi & Kaivanpanah. 2006). So, we must give the basic vocabulary to them to make them understand English. Before continuing to the next step teacher must have preparations to teach the children.

Teacher will face too many problems when they introduce English to their students. However, for the students, they will be given something new and are different from their mother tongue. Teachers have been attempting for years to improve children's learning, trying out new ways of teaching that they hope it will be

more effective. According to Brumfit (1995: 7), teacher needs the language. Basic competence is essential. However, this may pose problems in some educational traditions, especially where foreign rather than second languages are being learnt. The teacher also needs competence in primary teaching methodology.

As a result, the achievements of Prathomsuksa 5 students at Khetkarthangsongkroh 5 School in Buriram Province have achieved at low level in their English competency skills. They have got mean rating scores of English achievements at 63.71% in academic year 2008. The result showed that there were only 9 students who have got grade 3 or upper (34.61%) and the rest of them were lower. In academic year 2009 their mean achievement scores were at 64.50 % and the students who have got grade 3 or upper were 10 persons (32.25%) (Academic Department of Khetkarthangsongkroh 5 School). Anyhow there are several reasons such as lack of knowledge about vocabulary, their basic language skills and motivation in learning. From the researcher's experience in teaching for a number of years completely agrees with Lieberstein (1996) who has suggested that songs can promote participation in group work because students like lyric, melodies, singers them and use of songs can be highly motivating in the language as it is a pleasant experience and a welcome break from the regular syllabus which is enjoyed by both students and teachers.

To teach vocabulary in elementary school, especially for children, is not an easy way. Teaching children is different from teaching adults. We must have extra power to teach them, because the children have certain characteristics and need certain treatment (Murphy. 1990; Davanellos. 1999). So, we must give basic vocabulary to make them understand English. Before continuing the next step the

teacher must have preparation to teach children. Sometimes the teacher uses a media as the teaching tools. Importantly, songs can provide a good source of material to promote the students in language learning. English songs are not only useful to the students to understand the meaning of words from songs in class but also promote atmosphere of positive confidence for communication and for those who grasp its benefits.

1.2 Research Objectives

The general objective of this research is to improve the student vocabulary. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1.2.1 To construct and test the efficiency of the CD song for teaching English vocabulary achievement for Prathomsuksa 5 students at Khetkarnthangsongkroh 5 School under Buriram Educational Service Area Office 1 to meet the standard criteria set at 75/75.

1.2.2 To compare the students' scores of English vocabulary achievement learning test before and after teaching by using English songs.

1.3 Research Questions

The research focus has been operationalized by means of the following questions:

1.3.1 Do CD English songs improve Prathomsuksa 5 students' English vocabulary learning?

1.3.2 Are there any significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The two questions were formulated as two research hypotheses:

1.4.1 The efficiency of CD English songs to meet the standard criteria set at 75/75.

1.4.2 The posttest mean scores of Prathomsuksa 5 students by using English songs are higher than that of the pretest.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The researcher really hopes that this study has some significance to the researcher herself and the readers as general. The significance of the study are as follows:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

1.5.1.1 The researcher hopes that the results of the experiment are useful for teachers, so that they understand that English teaching in elementary schools is good. Up to now, there are some people who believe that it is impossible to give children foreign language teaching. Moreover, they see no advantages of teaching them the language because they do not feel the need for it yet.

1.5.1.1 By committing this research, the researcher can know whether or not the technique of teaching English vocabulary by using English song is suitable to the students of elementary school.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

1.5.2.1 The readers will get large knowledge about teaching vocabulary using English songs and hand puppets.

1.5.2.2 The finding of this research will be useful to the readers who are interested in analyzing teaching vocabulary of elementary school.

1.5.2.3 This study can be used by the teachers to provide the better technique for teaching vocabulary in elementary class.

1.5.2.4 The results can be used by the research to evaluate the students' vocabulary mastery.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Research

To make the problem is easy to be discussed deeply; this research focuses the problem as follows:

1.6.1 Population and Samples

1.6.1.1 The population of this study is 52 Prathomsuksa 5 students who enrolled in the first semester of academic year 2010 of Khetkarntangsongkroh 5 School in Muang District, Buriram Province.

1.6.1.2 The samples of the study are 26 Prathomsuksa 5 students who enrolled in the first semester of academic year 2010 of Khetkarntangsongkroh 5 School, Muang District under Buriram Educational Service Area Office 1, selected by using the simple random sampling technique from 2 classes that consist of a mix of low, moderate and high proficiency students. The samples are grouped based on the odd numbers of Prathomsuksa 5 students in the first semester of academic year 2010.

1.6.2 Variables of the Study

1.6.2.1 The independent variable is teaching English vocabulary by using song activities.

1.6.2.2 The dependent variable is the achievement of English vocabulary test by using song activities.

1.6.3 Contents

English vocabulary for Prathomsuksa 5 students, is based on the 2008 National Fundamental Curriculum, Foreign Language Subject Area, Ministry of Education. The contents are comprised of 10 word groups; parts of body, things in classroom, sports, months, animals, numbers, flowers, colors, fruits and vegetables, and days of a week and birthday party.

1.6.4 Duration

The samples were taught for ten weeks, for a total of 22 periods of instruction, this including the Pre-test and Post-test. Each period takes 60 minutes. The duration of the study is the first semester of the academic year 2010.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

The following terms are defined within the context of this study:

1.7.1 Songs refer to a short piece of music with normal lyrics for listening or singing which are replaced a familiar melody by the researcher.

1.7.2 Song Lyrics refers to the words of songs which the researcher created for studying (chose from the lists of the Fundamental English syllabus, the General Education Department, Ministry of Education.)

1.7.3 Vocabulary refers to those English words, which were listed in the Fundamental English syllabus, the General Education Department, Ministry of

Education. The vocabulary were stated in 10 songs and categorized. The total vocabulary utilized are 125 words as bellows:

1.7.3.1 The body part group has 14 words: eye, neck, leg, knee, ear, face, head, hand, body, shoulder, feet, stamp, jump and wriggle.

1.7.3.2 The things found in classroom group have 9 words: class, blackboard, chair, desk, pencil, pen, book, picture and teacher.

1.7.3.3 The sport group has 12 words: tennis, football, baseball, volleyball, basketball, judo, cycling, gymnastic, swimming, racing and boxing.

1.7.3.4 The months of the year group includes 12 words: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November and December.

1.7.3.5 The animal group consists of 15 words: lion, cheetah, monkey, zebra, pet, cow, farm, house, animal, wild animals, sea animals, fish, dolphin, whale and shark.

1.7.3.6 The number group includes 20 words following: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen and twenty.

1.7.3.7 The fruit and vegetable groups include these 10 words: mango, tomato, papaya, banana, grape, guava, mangosteens, fruits, vegetable, and vitamin.

1.7.3.8 The flower group consists of 10 words: flower, jasmine, rose, lotus, sunflower, garden, special, beautiful, charm and happy.

1.7.3.9 The color group includes 11 words: red, white, blue, brown, green, yellow, violet, black, orange, grey and color.

1.7.3.10 The days of a week group consists of 10 words: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, day, birthday and gift.

1.7.3.11 The months of the year group includes 12 words: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, and December.

1.7.4 Vocabulary Achievement Tests refer to the ability to understand the meaning or spelling of vocabulary, which can be measured by the vocabulary test constructed by the researcher.

1.7.5 Students refer to 26 Prathomsuksa 5 students at Khetkarntangsongkroh 5 School under Buriram Educational Service Area Office 1, in academic year of 2010 selected by simple random sampling.

1.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter mainly indicates the background of the study, followed by purposes and questions of the research. The present study also provides the hypotheses, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study. The last outline is about definition of terms. The next chapter, Chapter Two, will focus on the review of the related literature.