

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the relevant theoretical foundations concerning the implementation of task in teaching grammar for young learners which covers some theories of grammar and the implementation of task for young learners.

2.1. The Essential of Grammar

Grammar is the basic element which cannot be ignore in learning English language. According to cambridge dictionary, grammar is defined as the rules of how words change their form and combine with other words to make sentences. According to Ur (1999), in the case of the learners, grammatical rules enable them to know and apply how such sentence patterns should be put together.

Grammar is thought to furnish the basics skill of language : listening, reading, speaking and writing. In listening and speaking grammar has important role in understanding and expressing spoken language . Corde 1998 in widodo 2006 In reading, grammar enables the learners to comprehend sentences in a paragraph or a text. In writing, grammar allows the learners to put their ideas into sentences so that they can communicate in written form. Lastly, in vocabulary, grammar has important role also to provide the learners knowledge about how to combine some words become a good sentence and has communicative meaning.

2.2. Teaching Grammar to Young Learners

Although, some people stated that grammar is too difficult for children and learning grammar is not relevant to their learning. Actually, it could be argued

that grammar has a place for young learners and learning grammar for young learners will be useful because it is not focus on grammar with abstract rules, but fun grammar which works through examples, games, and activities that let learners make sense of it. It should be underlined that teaching grammar to young learners is different from teaching grammar to adult. It is because young learners with adult have different characteristics. The following will describe more about the reason for teaching grammar to young learners and the characteristic of young learners.

2.2.1. The Reason for Teaching Grammar to Young Learners

There is an example which is explained by Cameron (2001: 98) related with the importance of grammar for young learners. The example is about describing a T - Rex. The child try to describes how big T-Rex is, but he only knows the word *big*, so he finds difficulty in the way to describe and express how big it is. He needs to put *very* before the word *big* to make the word *big* has meaning precisely. Without using that grammatical structure, the child will not be able to express his argument more detail. Besides that, another example is about telling number of animal. The child need to know about the grammatical structure when he wants to tell the number of animal. For example : ‘*one deer*’ becomes ‘*two deer*’, ‘*one mouse*’ becomes ‘*four mice*’, ‘*one fish*’ becomes ‘*two fishes*’, etc.

Cameron (2001: 98) explains the importance of grammar for young learners :

“Grammar is necessary to express precise meanings in discourse; grammar ties closely into vocabulary in learning and using the foreign language; grammar learning can evolve from the learning of chunks of language; talking about

something meaningful with the child can be a useful way to introduce new grammar; grammar can be taught without technical labels.”

Based on the elaboration above, it is clearly show that grammar is important to be learned.

2.2.2. Characteristics of Young Learners

The definition of Young Learners is children between the ages of about 5 years old to 12 years old Rixon 1999 in Yuliana (2003), while according to Lynne Cameron; young learners are those under 14 years old. Moreover, the definition of young learners is mainly based on the years spent in the primary or elementary stages of formal education before the transition to secondary school.

Teaching young learners is different from teaching adult. The most important thing which should be identified by the teacher in teaching young learners is the characteristics of young learners. There are several ways how young learners learn : children learn from direct experiences; children learn from hands-on physical activities; children’s thinking is embedded in here-and-now context of situation; children learn holistically from whole to parts; and children have a short attention span.

2.3. Definition of Task

Prabhu (1987) defines a task as "an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process". Besides Prabhu, Nunan (1989) uses the word ‘task’ instead of ‘activity’. He defines a task as “a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending,

manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form". Willis (1996) is another figure who contributes to the use of tasks in language classroom. According to Willis (1996) "tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome".

A task has several features as follows (Ellis, 2003:9) in Paul :

1. A task is a work plan (a plan for learner activity).
2. A task involves a primary focus on meaning.
3. A task involves real-world processes of language use.
4. A task can involve any of the four language skills.
5. A task engages cognitive processes such as selecting, classifying, ordering, and evaluating information in order to carry out the task.
6. A task has a clear defined communicative outcome.

Skehan (1998), drawing on a number of other writers, puts forward five key characteristics of a task.

1. Meaning is primary
2. Learners are not given other people's meaning to regurgitate
3. There is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities
4. Task completion has some priority
5. The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome

When attempting to define the word "task" related to young learners, L. Cameron (2001: 29-31) says "I am not interested in an abstract concept of task but in a unit of activity that can be used for lesson planning and evaluation". She

follows by stating that language for young learners raises more problems with the notion of “real” or “authentic” language use than for older learners. For the child, a classroom task should have a clear purpose and meaning; for the teacher, the task should have clear language learning goals. Cameron summarises the features of classroom tasks as having: Coherence and unity for learners (from topic, activity and outcome); Meaning and purpose for learners; Clear language goals; A beginning and end; Active involvement on the part of learners.

Cameron proposes that any task, for example, saying something about the daily life of a character, must be divided in three stages: preparation, core activity and follow up, which more or less correspond with the pre-, while and post- stages which have been used for many years with the different language skills. Every stage has clear language learning goals and different steps divided in one or various activities that have to be planned carefully.

2.4. Task Component

Based on Nunan 1989, p. 47 cited in Bahtiar 2009, there are four components of language learning task, those are: the goals, the input (linguistic or otherwise), the activities derived from this input, and finally the roles implied for teacher and learners.

Based on Candlin 1987 cited in bahtiar 2009, he suggests that tasks should contain input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring, outcomes and feedback. Input refers to the data presented for learners to work on. Roles specify the relationship between participants in a task. Setting refers to the classroom and out-of-class arrangements entailed in the task. Actions are the procedures and sub-tasks to be

performed by the learners. Outcomes are the goal of the task, and feedback refers to evaluation of the task.

In other hand, according to Wright 1987 in bahtiar 2009, he suggests that tasks need minimally contain just two elements. These are input data which may be provided by materials, teachers or learners and initiating question which instructs learners on what to do with the data.

2.5. Types of Task

The classification will help to generate a variety of tasks on whatever topic is selected. The following are the six types of task based on Willis (1996) :

1. *Listing* : listing may seem unimaginative, but in practice, listing tasks tend to generate a lot of talk as learners explain their ideas. The processes involved are brainstorming and fact-finding. The outcome would be the completed list, or possibly a draft mind map.
2. *Ordering and Sorting* : these tasks require four kinds of processes: sequencing items, ranking items, categorizing items and classifying items.
3. *Comparing* : commonly, these tasks involve comparing information of a similar nature but from different sources or versions in order to identify common points or differences. The processes involved are matching to identify specific points and relate them to each other, finding similarities and things in common, and finding differences.
4. *Problem Solving* : problem-solving tasks make demands upon learners' intellectual and reasoning powers, and, although challenging, they are engaging and often satisfying to solve. The processes and time scale will vary enormously depending on the type and complexity of the problem.

5. *Sharing Personal Experiences*: these tasks encourage learners to talk more freely about themselves and share their experiences with others. The resulting interaction is closer to casual social conversation in that it is not so directly goal-oriented as in other tasks.
6. *Creative Tasks* : these are often called projects and involve pairs or groups of learners in some kind of freer creative work. They also tend to have more stages than other tasks, and can involve combinations of task types: listing, ordering and sorting, comparing and problem solving. Organization skills and team-work are important in getting the task done.

Based on Prabhu (1982), he distinguishes three general types, such :

1. *Informational gap Activity* : involves a transfer of given information from one person to another or from one place to another – generally calling for the encoding or decoding of information from or into language.
2. *Reasoning gap Activity* : involves deriving some new information from given information through process of inference, reduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationship or patterns.
3. *Opening gap activity* : identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling or attitude in response to a given situation.

Another classify of task in based on Pica, Kagany, and Falodru (1993). He classify the task according to the type of interaction that occurs in task accomplishment. The classification are :

1. *Jigsaw task*, these involve learners combining different pieces of interaction to form a whole.

2. *Information gap task*, one student or group of students has one set of information and another students or group has a complementary set of information. They must negotiate and find out what the other information is in order to complete an activity.
3. *Problem solving task*, students are given a problem and a set of information. They must arrive at a solution to the problem. There is generally a single resolution of the outcome.
4. *Decision making task*, student are given a problem for which there are a number of possible outcomes and they must choose one through negotiation and discussion.
5. *Opinion exchange task*, learners are engage in discussion and exchange of ideas. They do not need to reach agreement.

2.6. The Implementation of Task in Teaching Grammar

According to Willis (1996), task are categorized into these groups : listing, ordering, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks. The Implementation of each task involves some different process.

Listing task

The types involved brainstorming, in which learners draw on their own knowledge and experience related either as a class or in pairs / groups, learners analyse examples and think about, for instance, what certain grammatical words are called or what parts grammatical structures consist of; act-finding, in which learners find things out by asking each other or other people and referring to books, etc.

Outcome : complete list or draft mind map.

Starting points : words (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun) :

personal characteristics, e.g. a TV celebrity, an astronaut.

Ordering and sorting

It requires four kinds of processes: ranking items or events in a logical or chronological order, sequencing them based on personal or given criteria, grouping given items and classifying items under appropriate categories not previously specified.

Process : sequencing, ranking, categorising, classifying

Starting points :

Sequencing : jumbled lists / set of instruction / texts / news report

Sample task : order the instruction for making an international phone call.

Comparing

Learners are involved in three processes, matching to define specific points and relating them, finding similarities and differences.

Outcome : vary according to the individual task goal, but could be the items appropriately matched or assembled or the identification of similarities and / or differences.

Processes : matching, finding similarities, finding differences.

Starting point :

Matching : information from two different types of source (e.g. visual or text) that can be matched in order to identify someone or something.

Sample task :

Description : listen to or read the descriptions of different people or places and identify which person or place is which.

Following instruction : match the text or sentence into the picture.

Problem solving

It encourages learners' intellectual and reasoning capacities to arrive at a solution to a given problem.

Outcome : solutions to the problems, which can then be evaluated.

Process : analysing real or hypothetical situations, reasoning and decision making

Starting point : incomplete stories

Sample of task : make up students own version of the ending of story, fill the gaps in the texts with appropriate phrases.

Sharing personal experience

In this type of task , learners are engaged in talking about themselves and sharing their own experiences with applying their knowledge of grammar by producing.

Process : narating, describing, exploring and explaining attitudes, opinion, reaction.

Starting point : about past experiences

Sample of task : students select the most memorable experience they have heard, tell the class about their experience and they should give the reasons for their choice, e.g. the use of tenses.

Creative task

It is often viewed as those projects in which learners, in pairs or groups, are able to create their own imaginative products by using grammatical features which had been studied.

Outcome : end product which can be appreciate by a wider audience.

Creative tasks tend to have more stages than the usual classroom task. They can involve out of class research and are often referred to as 'project'.

Process : brainstorming, fact finding, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving and many others.

Starting points : real life rehearsals

Sample of task : students predict, script and perform an action that might occur in specific real life situation, e.g. asking for direction.

2.7. Research on Implementation of Task in Teaching Grammar

In this thesis, there are two reviews of related studies. Firstly, the writer took an analysis from Juliana Shark and Gardner Sheena (2008) who was conduct a research which has aim to investigates children's attitudes towards four focus on form task-types in three Primary 5 English classes in Brunei Darussalam. The four task-types selected are consciousness-raising, dictogloss, grammar interpretation and grammaring. Findings show that while there was a general trend of positive attitudes among children towards tasks, variations in task preference existed, particularly with respect to three main sources of influence: cognitive demands, production demands, and pair or group-work opportunities. This research has implications for both the implementation of Focus on Form instruction at primary school level, and the manipulation of task features to suit learners at this level.

Secondly, the writer took an analysis from Sadia Arifin, a student of Department of English and Humanities, August 2007, BRAC University of Dhaka Bangladesh. Arifin studied on teaching grammar creatively at Elementary school. The problems which he deals with in his thesis is he analyzes the teacher teaching strategies for young learners. In the end of his thesis is document the significant ways of teaching grammar creatively suitable for elementary school level students and discuss the practical implementation of the ways.

Based on the previous research, the first previous study has purpose to investigate the attitudes of the students related with the implementation of focus on form types of task in learning grammar and the second previous study has purpose to investigate the teachers nature and level grammatical awareness but the purpose of my study is to investigate the kinds of task which implemented by the teacher in teaching grammar for young learners, the problems and the solution.

The finding of the research is about the implementation of task in teaching grammar for young learners, the problems which are experienced by teacher in implementing task in teaching grammar for young learners and the solutions which are given by the teacher to overcome the problems in implementing task in teaching grammar for young learners.