

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language serving as a medium of communication is applied in both oral and written communication. Therefore, people can communicate their ideas through speaking and writing. Moreover, speaking is more dominant in terms of verbal communication. People tend to speak more than write. Thus speaking is essential to convey meaning in daily communication.

Without the proper ability to speak, human beings may face misunderstanding or misconception. This concept applies in English as well because English as an international language is learned by people worldwide. Therefore, English speaking ability must be learned from early stage to make sure people have good English speaking skill.

More companies and organizations need staff who can speak English well in order to communicate within the international marketplace. Thus, students who are good English speakers may have better chance of finding employment, gaining promotion and getting further education (Baker and Westrup, 2003).

Baker and Westrup add that by learning to speak English well, students develop valuable skills essential for daily use and contribute to their community, even country (p.5). Considering how important students learn English is, it is essential for English teachers to incorporate teaching speaking skill in their daily syllabus. Moreover, there are several reasons to practice speaking during English

lesson. First, speaking activities can reinforce the learning of new vocabulary, grammar or functional language. Second, they provide students the chance to use the language that they are learning. Third, they give more advanced students the opportunity to experiment with the language they already know in different contexts and topics (Baker and Westrup, 2003).

Learning strategy and method are some of components in a learning system. These components cannot be separated from other components influenced by other factors, including aims of the lesson, learning materials, students/learners, facilities, time and teachers. Hence teachers are one of the factors having crucial roles. Teacher's creativity plays an important role. The dedication and the ability of the teachers are more important to succeed teaching-learning process (Danasasmita, 2009). The effective learning process is also influenced by teachers teaching techniques. Teachers need to be creative to find teaching techniques to convey lessons in the teaching-learning process. In the classroom, the role of the teacher is needed during the learning teaching progress, because the teacher is the center of the teaching-learning process. Harmer said the teacher is no longer the giver of knowledge, the controller, and the authority, but rather a facilitator and resource for the students to draw on (Harmer, 2002). Students will feel bored if they are to do the same activities continuously. Therefore, better teachers use different methods for the effectiveness in the classroom. If students feel bored, they lack of concentration in the classroom so they will not grasp the material well.

One way to promote speaking ability is by storytelling (Kayi, 2012). Telling a story means that a speaker is a storyteller. After reading passages, looking at pictures, watching movies, or even listening to songs, somebody can retell the details of the story in those media. Here the storyteller is expected to understand the whole story and retell the story by using her own words with her own style without changing the meaning of the original story. In this sense, storytelling becomes a means of negotiating meaning as what is expected from a conversation. Fredericks (1997) adds that storytelling needs to be included as a part of daily literacy program for students because it develops imagination, improves speaking skill and strengthens critical thinking.

In retelling a story there are many aids as a guidance to help someone reproduce the story. These aids include single picture, comic books, comic strips, movie scenes and flash cards. Recently known comics or to some people known as comic strips gain more popularity. The comic is a part of graphic narrative (Petersen, 2011). This kind of narrative combines verbal and visual literacies. Petersen (2011: 21) adds that the pictures in comics and the speech bubbles or written verbal sentences provide concrete meaning context for readers to understand.

There are various kinds of comic books from different genres, authors, languages, and publishers. Most of the comics are entertainment comics although nowadays there are some education comics. According to Varnum & Gibbons (2001), the comic is one of the most popular and pervasive media forms of our increasing visual age. This explanation applies to comic strips as well since comic

strips are parts of comic books. The format of the comic book presents a montage of both word and image, and the reader is thus required to exercise both visual and verbal interpretive skills.

One purpose in the teaching - learning process of speaking skill by using comics is increasing students' motivation to be interested in speaking English. By using comics, students probably choose stories they like. It makes students practice reading more often and improve their speaking. Reading comics can make students read story independently. It can foster reading, speaking, and writing creativity of students to develop their imagination.

Many children are very interested in comics. But comics are rarely used as a tool to help teaching-learning process in classroom. Sutjiadi (in Wright, 2001), comic books have always been the domain of the young; children, adolescents, as well as younger adults. Even comic books are proven to be powerful media in communicating ideas and effecting, forming the reader's belief, or values, even lifestyle, as it was considered as a menace to the society.

Clear differences between the terms comics, comic strips and comic books need to be known. McCloud (1993) stated that comics are juxtaposed pictorial and other images in a deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer. By this definition, single panel illustrations are not comics, but are instead cartoons.

Meanwhile Petersen (2011) defines comic strips as a sequenced set of drawings or pictures completed with speech bubbles or bubblelike emanata telling a series of stories. The two most common forms of comics are comic strips (as

appear in newspaper) and comic books (also popularly called “*manga*” when referring to Japanese comic books). Petersen’s definition of comic strips matches the definition of key terms in this study.

Duncan and Smith (2009) refers to comic book as a volume in which all aspects of the narrative are represented by pictorial and linguistic images encapsulated in a sequence of juxtaposed panels and pages. This last term is best representing the term comic book used in this study. To be more specific, this study makes use of comic strips taken from an English education comic book. It is a comic book intended for educational purposes. This kind comic book serves as a medium in teaching speaking in English, especially in storytelling.

Comic can give positive and negative effects for students. According to Sutjiadi (2003), comics should be able to influence society in a positive way, which is why writers need to have a lot of references from a real life story to produce a powerful comic as a media communication tools. Comics are also a part of a society's culture. Their presence on the shelves makes their stories and vocabularies available for selection and incorporation into the mixture of values, beliefs and symbols that influence people's perceptions and behaviors.

Given such background, the use of comics in teaching speaking skills is going to be explored in this thesis. The writer would like to do research of using comic strips in teaching storytelling in English of junior high school students. Furthermore, the writer wants to understand the description of comic strip application in improving students’ ability in retelling a story. Hence, students are

expected to be able to retell the story in the comic strips using their own utterances.

This thesis is a replication study of previous thesis by Royanti (2007). However, there is a different term used. Royanti referred to the term ‘story retelling’ while this study applies the term ‘storytelling’. Furthermore, what makes it different is that the previous thesis used fiction comic which was 17th edition *The Very Best of Donald Duck Comics (Bilingual Edition)*. It was a fiction comic. Meanwhile, this thesis uses English educational comic book, which is a non-fiction one. The title of the comic book is *Komik Pendidikan Belajar Bahasa Inggris Dasar* by Srie Wulanike. This is another gap between two studies.

Royanti’s research applied experimental quantitative research. The experiment was held through pretest-posttest equivalent group design. Meanwhile, this study applies qualitative research method. This method has its own strength because it creates little disruption of the natural setting (Merriam, 1998).

The research of previous thesis was conducted in SMPN 1 Bojong Pekalongan which is a public school. However, this study is conducted in a private school which is SMP Ulul Albab Sidoarjo. With the differences mentioned earlier, hence the final results of these studies are expected to be totally different.

1.2 Statements of The Problems

1. Does English comic strip help enhance the ability of storytelling of eight grade students of SMP Ulul Albab Sidoarjo?
2. What are the students’ views of teaching speaking focusing on storytelling by

using English comic strip?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to describe the process of teaching speaking by using English comic strips to help enhance the ability of storytelling of eight grade students of SMP Ulul Albab Sidoarjo and to identify the students' views of teaching speaking focusing on storytelling by using English comic strips.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

The study is limited within following scopes. It is conducted to the 8th year students of SMP Ulul Albab Sidoarjo of 2015/2016 academic year. Thus, the result cannot be applied to all 8th year students of other schools. Furthermore, this study is limited to the use of English comic strips taken from a comic book for educational purpose in teaching speaking in English, especially in storytelling. Thus the result of the study cannot be generalized to fiction comic books. It focuses on teaching speaking which is storytelling. Hence, the result cannot be generalized to other speaking skills. Other language skills are not discussed in this study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study may result in theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, the writer hopes that this study can give meaningful contribution to everyone who is interested in research on teaching technique of English speaking, especially by using the English comic strips for education purposes. She hopes that this study can enrich literature about the teaching of English speaking by using English comic strips for education purposes that will provide references for further research.

Practically, the output of this study provides information for readers who are teachers, students and others who want to learn more about storytelling by using English education comic strips. It can also be a base of information for consideration in the future to publish more English comic books for education purposes and to use comic strips as supplementary materials in teaching English speaking to junior high school students.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To clarify understanding of this study, it applies the following key terms:

1. Speaking : Speaking is a productive aural/oral skill and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning (Nunan, 2003).
2. Teaching speaking : To teach ESL learners to produce the

English speech sounds and sound patterns, use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language, select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter, organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence, use language as a means of expressing values and judgments, use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency (Nunan, 2003).

3. Comic : comics are juxtaposed pictorial and other images in a deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer McCloud (1993)
4. Comic strip : a sequenced set of drawings or pictures completed with speech bubbles or bubblelike emanata telling a series of stories (Peterson, 2011).
5. Comic book : a volume in which all aspects of the narrative are represented by pictorial and linguistic images encapsulated in a sequence of juxtaposed panels and pages (Duncan and Smith, 2009)
6. Storytelling : an activity when students can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from somebody beforehand, or they may create their own stories to tell their classmates (Kayi, 2012)