

GRANDPARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR GRANDCHILDREN'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

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INTRODUCTION

Learning English as foreign language is crucial for many Indonesian people. That is why the language is officially taught to the early childhood education to advanced level of college in Indonesia. As stated by the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture (*Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 1995), "English is a compulsory subject in the curriculum of formal education and that should be taught from elementary school until senior high school." English is then taught elementary schools as one important supportive subject (*muatan lokal*) besides the local language (e.g. Javanese language), *SBK-Seni, Budaya & Ketrampilan* (Art, Culture & Handicraft) and religion.

While there had been many researches investigating about parents' role in children learning processes, very little was known about grandparent-as-parents involvement in students' academic context. This is rather unfortunate because in Indonesia, it is quite common for a grandparent to have the full responsibility to take care of a grandchild. In some cases, children do not live together with their own parents for a special reason or purpose. Not a few of them are separated from their parents because of crime actions like drug addiction, robbery, report of neglected, death, or illness (Edward, 2006). Another reason may be because the parents have long working hours or maybe they work out of town. These are some of the possible reasons why some children are taken care by their grandparents instead.

Based on the reasons above, the researchers became interested to investigate grandparents' involvement in their grandchildren's English language learning. The research question that was aimed to answer was: In what ways are the grandparents involved in their grandchildren's English language learning? By finding out the result, it is hoped that this research will help other grandparents or parents to manage and to support their children or grandchildren in improving their English language learning. For the English teachers, they would know the right technique to manage the students with the similar family background.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Factors Affecting Children's Learning

According to Ellis (1990), there are internal factors and external factors that may affect language learning. He stated that internal factors, or psychological factors, are related to individuals themselves. Included in this are the learners' age, aptitude, cognitive style, personality, motivation, and attitude. There is also external motivation or the influence from outside that may affect language learning. Included in this motivation are two important external factors namely the learners' family and social background.

For this study, the external factor of family and social background and their relation to language learning process becomes the main issue. To specify the term family background, Marjoribanks (1995), stated that it was "set of conditions that affect individuals' life". Parents' education, occupation, and awareness are included in family background. In addition, the number of students' siblings, the free time to study, and the availability of facilities are also included.

In addition, Kaufmann (2005) believed that students are unique and they have their own characteristics. They subconsciously bring the habit to school. Students who are not used to read pictures or text or studying in groups are

likely to get difficulty in adapting to the school study system. Another simple example is related to having breakfast. He found that children who used to pass breakfast time because the parents were too busy with daily morning activities tended to get lower academic achievement than children who had breakfast. Furthermore, a lot of parents believe that education is the mere responsibility of schools. Because of this wrong perception, they tend to ignore the needs of their children's education at home. He further argued that the parents who continue controlling their children's school work or just accompanying their study time brought positive results to the children's education.

Further, Hargreaves (1991) identified three important factors which help students to be successful in schools. These are family background, financial condition, and the attitude of family members on education. In regard to family background, he uttered that children from single parent family are exposed to more educational problems than those children from two parents. As single parent, either a father or a mother usually has double functions both as a bread winner and a childcare. In case of a single mother, she might need to get to work full time, do house chores, and help children to do school work, or go shopping. Because of this single role, the mother may have no time to monitor the children's education. The same thing is also true to a single father. As a result, the single parent tends to "become less supportive of their children's efforts to handle the routine challenges of friendships, school, homework, and family life" (Hargreaves, 1991, p. 38).

The second factor is financial condition. Hargreaves (1991) stated that this also affect children's success at school. Unlike the children from financially capable families, low income families have a hard time in providing their children with sufficient number of books, child care service, extra-curricular activities, or computers to support their learning processes.

Because of that, the children were likely to participate less in academic life which may result in poor academic achievements. On the other hand, children from high income families could easily get the access towards books, extra-curricular activities or computers, and other academic facilities. Therefore, they might have more opportunities to gain success in their school life.

The last factor is the attitude of family toward learning processes. Hargreaves (1991) explained that the way parents think or behave have effects on the children's foreign language learning. In supporting their children, parents might feed them with nutritious food, ask or help them with school work, as well as give praise for something good or punishment for mistake.

Hargreaves (1991) said that despite the three factors above, there is one thing that should also be considered, that is the relationship between parents and children. "Many other factors, including the stability and consistency of the child's family life and the child's continuing relationship with both of his or her parents, are also important predictor's of the child's academic success." (Hargreaves, 1991, p. 46).

Moreover, Gardner (1975) as cited in Brendan (2006) stated that parents can give positive attitude toward the learning processes of their children like turning off the TV in studying time, or helping to do homework. The high awareness of learning needs can also be reflected from the parents' education background that in the end can support children academically. These are usually visible from the parents who came from higher education level like senior high school or college graduate, in contrast to parents from low education level such elementary graduate or drop out. They tend to ignore their children's academic development at school. They rarely check the children's homework, but may give physical punishment for bad grades.

Children of Grand Families

Edward (2006) actually found that children of grand families tend to display significant behavioral and emotional problems at school. Therefore, he uttered that the need of teacher and school based mental professional – a school for those who need special needs or suffers mental retardation – is needed to offer intervention and extra support for them. His research also revealed that male students with this background usually fail to complete schooling years although according to Edward (2006), the grandparent already had tried the best but they still need supportive service from the teacher, the school, the government, and the environment.

Racicot (2003) also studied the condition of complex and unique grandparent family in raising grandchildren. She discovered that the grandfather suffered financially in spending the life saving or taking a debt to pay for the new parental role. Sometimes, grandparents had to quit from a job to stay at home and take care of the grandchildren. One of issues faced by the grandparent was unhelpful environment, for example in enrolling the children in school without legal documentation.

Different from Edward (2006) and Racicot (2003), Laire and Kalil (2001) stated that children who came from single parent families and live together with the grandfather or grandmother shows positive attitude in learning development and social life. They tend to do less smoking, drinking, and substance abuse compared to children from two parents. The study found the fact that single mothers who lived with the parents, brought advantages for the children, since the grandfather replace the figure of father. So, this research found that children from single parent who lived with grandparents, show better academic progress than children from a single mother family without the presence of grandparents and married parents.

THE STUDY

The study was a qualitative research. It explored grandparents' involvement in their grandchildren's English language achievement in school. The context of the study was a public elementary school in an area in Salatiga. The school was chosen because some of the students there lived with or were taken care by their grandparents. Another reason was because one of the writers worked there as an English teacher. Therefore, it was easier for the researchers to find the data.

The participants were some students from the sixth grade who lived with or who were taken care by their grandparents. Students from the sixth grader were chosen because they tend to be easier to accommodate and handle compared to lower grades students. To choose the participants, a small interview with the classroom teacher was conducted to find out participants that could support the study. The classroom teacher, Mrs. Tyas, already taught these students from the 4th grade, and knew the school performance of students and their family backgrounds. After talking with Mrs. Tyas, we found three students that could become the participants. Although the focus of the research was 'grandparents', but apparently, it was the grandmother who dominated in the caring and education development of the participants of this research.

Further information about the participants is described in 'Discussion'.

After finding the participants, appointments were arranged to interview both the students and the grandmothers. Interview was used in this study because doing an interview in qualitative research is believed as a method in obtaining data which was more reliable and valid compared to other methods (Damaianti, 2007). Interviews with the students were done in Indonesian, but interview with the grandmothers were done in Javanese because this was their daily languages and also for politeness reason and after the interview was done, it was transcribed into written text. Then, the result was analyzed by looking for similar theme that appeared related the issue of grandparent playing a role in language learning. Finally, conclusion for the research was drawn.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Description of the Participants

Below is the description of the subjects who participated in this study (Table 1). Pseudonyms were used instead of their real names for confidentiality reason. What was interesting was that the three students that became the subjects of this research apparently had different academic result in their English class (Table 2). Below are tables of the description and a table of the grades of the three participants in English language class.

Table 1. Description of Participants

Names of participants (Pseudonyms)	Sex	Age	Names of grandmothers	Age	Financial background	Education background
Ipin	Male	14	Mrs. Sumarni	55	Income from farming and wrapping crackers	Did not graduate from elementary school
Mei-Mei	Female	11	Mrs. Tiyem	75	Income from retirement fund of being a soldier's wife	Elementary school
Susanti	Female	11	Mrs. Choir	72	Income from retirement fund of being an elementary school teacher	Diploma of elementary education (D2PGSD*)

*Diploma Dua Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar

Table 2. Participants' English Grade in the 6th Grade

Names	UH				UTS	PR				UAS	UP	NA
	1	2	3	RT		1	2	3	RT			
Ipin	70	80	83	78	60	75	70	87	77	30	50	59
Mei-Mei	100	72	85	86	60	95	80	66	80	60	85	74
Susanti	100	85	92	92	80	95	80	92	9	68	95	85

Note:

UH : *Ulangan Harian* (Daily test scores)

RT ULANGAN: *Rata-rata nilai ulangan harian* (The average of 3 grades daily test scores)

UTS: *Ujian Tengah Semester* (The mid-semester test score)

PR: *Pekerjaan rumah* (Daily homework scores)

RT PR: *Rata-rata nilai pekerjaan rumah* (The average of 3 grades daily homework scores)

UAS: *Ujian Akhir Semester* (The end-of-semester test score)

UP: *Ujian Praktek* (The practice test score)

NA: *Nilai Akhir* (The average scores of all tests)

Below are some extended descriptions of the participants based on the interview with the classroom teacher, Mrs. Tyas, and the participants themselves.

Participant A: Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni

The first participant was Ipin. He was a 14-year-old male student who lived with his grandparents and his uncle. He lived with them since he was born. From the interview with Mrs. Tyas, it was found that Ipin was considered as the son of Mrs. Sumarni. He did not know that Mrs. Sumarni was actually his grandmother. He was left behind by his birth-mother who was unmarried at the time he was born. Although he looked like an ordinary male student, he seems to have some learning problems because students at his age should already be in junior high school. In class, he always forgot the materials that had been taught. It was also difficult for him to understand any exact lesson. He never got good marks for almost all school subjects except for Art and Music lesson. However he liked games in English and he wished as always learning English using games like guessing words and chaining words. On the other hand, he gave up if he should translate English words into Indonesian.

Ipin's grandmother, Mrs. Sumarni, was 55 years old. Her daily activity was gardening and cutting grass for two cows. Besides that, she took

care of Ipin and one son (Ipin's Uncle / Neno). At night, she had a side job that is wrapping crackers at her neighbor's house. The grandmother had the main role as a mother and to take care of Ipin. She did not graduate from elementary school.

Participant B: Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiyem

The second participant was a girl named Mei-Mei who was 11 years old. This girl was a student with average academic performance. Her performance in class was not always good because sometimes she could easily understand materials but sometimes not. She lived with her parents, a brother, and a grandmother. Her father worked as driver who delivered eggs out of town, while her mother also worked to wrap eggs in the same place. Her brother was in senior high school. Because of her parents' job condition, Mei-Mei spent more time with her grandmother instead of with her parents who always came home late. She uttered that she liked English lesson. Because she loved to learn vocabulary using pictures, games, and puppet shows.

The grandmother of Mei-Mei was 75 years old. Her name was Mrs. Tiyem. She graduated from elementary school. She had only one daughter, the mother of Mei-Mei. She lived with her child and her family. Financially, she relied on retirement fund which she got from her late husband. The aging grandmother had several

health problems that made her to avoid physical jobs like grassing, planting or taking care of cows. She used to clean the house or to cook for family. She also took the main responsibility to take care of Mei-Mei and her brother.

Participant C: Susanti and Mrs. Choir

The third student, Susanti, was 11 years old. She was considered as a smart student. She was the best student in her class. She lived with her mother and grandmother. Her parents got divorce when she was in the first grade. Her mother was a cashier in a shop. The mother worked from 9 A.M. - 9 P.M. and she met the daughter only in the morning. So, the grandmother took the responsibility in taking care of the granddaughter. Although Susanti came from single parent family and the mother was busy with her jobs, she did not seem to have any financial problem since her grandmother supported her both in material and morale. She got many affection and attention from her grandmother. Her grandmother also had concerns on what she do, read and learn.

The grandmother of Susanti was named Mrs. Choir. She was 72 years old. She used to be an elementary school teacher but she is retired now. Before becoming a teacher, she graduated from *SGB (Sekolah Guru B)* in 1959, *SGA (Sekolah Guru A)* in 1961 and the last was getting a Diploma degree in elementary education (*D2 PGSD- Diploma dua Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*) in 1970. Her daily activity was taking care of her granddaughter. She was very discipline in school matters.

Interview Result

The result of the interview showed that grandparents showed several kinds of involvement in their grandchildren's English language learning. The analysis will be classified into several issues related to learning language. The results of interviews describe the grandparents' attitudes towards their grandchildren's English

language learning, that are divided into the attitudes of monitoring, facilitating, and giving assistance.

Monitoring

The first factor that the grandmothers did to support their grandchildren's language learning was monitoring. The monitoring that the grandmothers in this study did was in forms of reminding the child to do his/her homework, accompanying the child when they did their homework, and also showing concerns on the child's school matters.

From the interview, it was evident that all of the grandmothers reminded the grandchildren to do their homework:

Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni/Ipin's Uncle

Especially in Ipin's case, there were contradictory answers between Ipin and his grandmother about this issue. Therefore an interview with the uncle was done to triangulate the result.

Researcher : “[Nenek] pernah nanyain nggak, ada PR ndak atau tugas?”

(Has she ever asked you if you had homework or assignments to do?)

Ipin : “Pernah.”
(Yes, she had)

Researcher : “Apakah Anda pernah lihat ibu Anda meneliti atau mengecek, kalau Ipin PR-nya udah dikerjakan atau belum?”

(Have you ever seen your mother checking Ipin's homework?)

Ipin's Uncle : “Nggak, paling cuman lihat atau ngomel nek belum dikerjakan.”

(No, she doesn't check his work, and she only reminds him to do the homework.

Researcher : “Oh...jadi mung ngelingke tok yo, Mas, nek ada PR atau tidak?”

(So, she only reminds about the homework?)

Ipin's Uncle : "*Iya*"
(Yes.)

Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiyem

Researcher : "*Nek nenek itu pernah nggak ngingetin kamu ada PR ndak hari ini, kerjakan dulu?*"
(Does your grandma remind you to do the homework?)

Mei-Mei : "*Pernah. Paling disuruh ngerjakesek, trus nek main bisa nanti.*"
(Yes, she does. Then she tells me to do the homework before playing outside.)

Susanti and Mrs. Choir

Researcher : "*Nek Eyang Uti kamu pernah ngelingke nek ada PR atau nggak?*"
(Does your grandmother remind you to do your homework?)

Susanti : "*Ya sering.*"
(Yes, she often reminds me about it.)

Another form of monitoring that was done by the all the grandmothers was by accompanying the child when they did their homework:

Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni

Researcher : "*Njenganan ngerencangi lareniupun sinau ngoten? Nggih nate?*"
(Have you ever accompanied your grandchild doing his homework?)

Mrs. Sumarni: "*Nggih... nggih kulo nggih sering ngrencangi ngonten niku ning sianu niku mesti kulo kancani...Nggih kulo kaleh nonton tv ngoten.*"

(Yes, I used to accompany during the study time while I am watching the TV.)

Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiyem

Researcher : "*Njenengan nate ngewangi wayahipun nyinauni bab bahasa Inggris?*"
(Do you help her with English's homework?)

Mrs. Tiyem : "*Nak ngewangi mboten, nek ngancani nggih kulo kancani. Nek ngewangi wong kulo men mboten saget basa Inggris.*"

(I am not able to help her in doing the English homework, but I sit next to her while she is doing or studying it.)

Susanti and Mrs. Choir

Researcher : "*Eyang Utimu pernah ndak nemeni belajar?*"
(Does your grandmother accompany you while studying?)

Susanti : "*Ya, yang biasa nemenin itu Eyang Uti, wong nak Ibu pulang aja jam 10 malem.*"
(My grandmother is the one who usually to accompany me, because my mom always comes home late at 10.00 p.m.)

Researcher : "*Njenengan nate ngewangi wayahipun nyinauni bab bahasa Inggris?*"

(Do you help her with the English's homework?)

Mrs. Choir : "*Nggih kedongan nak kulo saget, nek mboten saget ken kulo tanglet kancane. Nggih paling ngrencangi*"
(Sometime I help her if I could, but when I couldn't, then I accompany her while studying.)

The next monitoring that the grandmothers did was by showing concerns on the child's school matters. The grandmothers sometimes showed this by asking the grandchildren about school matters and being angry if there were problems related to school matters:

Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni

Researcher: "*Oh... nggih lare nipun nak teng sekolahan, nate pirso mboten? Sae nopo mboten? Perkembangane niku to bu ting sekolah khusus nek sinau bahasa Inggris to bu. Njenengan nate nangeleti napa ngechecki ngoten mboten?*"

(Oh... have you ever known or ask of what his development at school? Especially in learning foreign language, have you?)

Mrs. Sumarni: "*Nggih niku paling kulo nangleti angsal pr napa mboten. Nek kulo ken nyinaoni nggih mboten saged*"
(Yes, I usually ask him about homework. Although I can't help him to do the homework.)

Researcher : "*Nak teng griya njenengan nate mboten ndukani larenipun nak salah napa nak wonten napa?*"
(Have you ever get angry to him for some mistake?)

Mrs.Sumarni: "*Nggih... Nggih angel niku bocahe. Nggih riyen niku semangat le belajare sakwene bojone Ndimik niku tasih sugeng. Asmane niku Annah. La trus mboso ditinggal kaleh Annah niku trus ngedrop mboten purun le sinau. Dikandani nggih radi ndablek. Nek kaleh si Anah niku lak manut. Niko nggih sering nyenei ning sering marai. Dadi bocahipun manut. Tapi sakniki wah susah sakwene ditinggal Annah niku.*"

(Yes, I have... He is a difficult child. In a past, my son's wife still alive, named Annah who is very concern about his education. She was a discipline and helping him doing homework He obeys whatever she said. Unfortunately, because serious illness, she passed away

last year. Then after her death, he drops on study's motivation. He denies order or someone command. Now, he rarely studies at home.)

Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiyem

Researcher: "*Nenek kamu pernah nggak marah tentang urusan sekolah, atau apalah?*"

(Has your grandmother ever get angry about your school stuff?)

Mei-Mei: "*Ya kalau saya dapat nilai jelek pasti dinasehati panjang banget padahal cuman mau bilang rajin belajar.*"
(Yes, she gets angry if I get bad mark then she gives me a long advice which basically tells me to study hard.)

Researcher: "*Nek kamu tu selain itu selain dingetke, ditemenin, nenek kamu pernah nggak nanyain disekolah diajarin apa? Ketemu apa aja gitu*"

(Besides reminding and accompanying you, does your grandmother ask you about what happen at school?)

Mei-Mei : "*Ya nenek sering tanya di sekolah apa aja, saya kalau sama nenek suka cerita-cerita tentang sekolah, apa yang saya lakukan di sekolah.*"
(Yes, she usually asks about school matters. I use to share with her about my school and what I do there.)

Susanti and Mrs. Choir

Researcher : "*Trus, Eyang Uti kamu pernah nggak marah urusan sekolah.*"
(Has your grandmother ever get angry about school stuff?)

Susanti : "*Kalau saya dapat nilai jelek waktu ulangan, padahal sudah pernah dikerjain. Eyang Uti bakal marah sekali. Nek ngomel atau marah-marah ndak pernah tetapi biasanya*

saya didiemin aja ndak diajak omong seharian.”

(Yes, she does. If I got bad grade, although I had studied before the examination, she gets very angry. She wouldn't yell to me, but she won't talk to me for a whole day.)

Researcher : *“Njengan nate ndukani wayahipun bab sekolah ingkang kurang sae? Seumpami angsal nilai elek ting wulangan?”*

(Have you ever been angry to granddaughter if there are problems related to school? For example when she got bad grades at school?)

Mrs. Choir : *“Nggih kadang nggih kulo seneni...Lha nggih sing sinau amben dinten kok le ngarap jeh kliru.”*

(Yes, sometimes I was angry to her...She already studies every day and does exercise, but she still made mistakes.)

It seems that all grandmothers monitor their grandchildren learning, including their English language learning in some ways. This was done by reminding the child to do his/her homework, accompanying the child when they did their homework, and also showing concerns on the child's school matters. The grandmothers did this possibly because like Hargreaves (1991) stated, "the consistency of family in monitoring child's development at school and at home, was one of aspects in controlling school success".

Facilitating

The next factor which was found in the research was facilitating. The interview result shows that the grandmothers facilitated the grandchildren in supporting language learning. The grandmothers facilitated the grandchildren in different ways. They facilitated their

grandchildren's English language learning by providing a good studying environment to the grandchildren, sending the grandchildren to language courses (or *bimbingan belajar*), buying things that can help the grandchildren's English language learning, or giving the grandchildren money.

Two of the grandmothers facilitated their grandchildren's learning by providing a good studying environment to the grandchildren. This includes deciding if the TV needed to be turned off when the grandchildren were studying:

Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni

Researcher : *“Nak teng griya niku larenipun biasane le sianau teng pundi?”*
(Where does Ipin used to study at home?)

Mrs. Sumarni: *“Nggih woten niku ruang tamu. Ngajeng tv. TV-ne nggeh distel nek dipateni. Mboten angsal... Nek dipateni nggih mboten purun le sinau.”*
(He usually studies at the living room and turn on TV... If I turn off then he refuses to study.)

Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiyem

Researcher : *“Ting ngriya wonten panggenan engkang kagem sinau wayah ipun?”*
(Do you prepare a room for her to study?)

Mrs. Tiyem : *“Nggih paling ning ngajeng tipi niku ning nggih kulo pateni, mangkeh ndak ngganggu le sinau.”*
(She usually studies in front of the television, but I turned it off in case it disturbs her study.)

One of the grandchild also admitted that he was sent to a language course, although in the end he stopped going there because of his laziness:

Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni

Researcher : "Oke pernah nggak ikut-ikutan bimbingan belajar gitu?"

(Okay.... Have you ever joined kind of a short course?)

Ipin : "Pernah"

(Yes, I have.)

Researcher: "Atas keinginan siapa? Kamu sendiri atau orang tua?"

(Was it your own will or your parent's?)

Ipin : "Orang tua"

(My parent.)

Researcher : "Trus kamu ikut?"

(Then did you join the class?)

Ipin : "Ikut...dah dulu...Kelas lima... [Cuma] 1 minggu...[sekarang sudah tidak karena] males"

(Yes, I did...It was a long time ago...I was a fifth grader at that time... [I only joined for] a week...[now I have stopped because] I became lazy.)

One of the grandmothers facilitated her grandchild by buying things (like a dictionary or CDs) that can help the grandchild's English language learning:

Susanti and Mrs. Choir

Researcher : "Kamu punya buku atau film bahasa inggris, kamu dapat dari mana?"

(Do you have any book or cassette in English? Where did you get it?)

Susanti : "Punya,Bu. Saya pernah dibelike buku kamus yang isinya tulisan ada bahasa Inggris juga kaset kartun."

(Yes, I have a dictionary with no illustration and several cartoon CDs)

Researcher : "Kalau Eyang Utu pernah nggak belikan kamu sesuatu yang ada hubungane sama bahasa Inggris?"

(Does your grandmother give you English book or anything related to English lesson?)

Susanti : "Ndak pernah, paling Eyang Utu kasih uang terus gek saya buat beli buku atau kaset kartun."

(Never, she does not, she usually gives me money, and then I buy what I want.)

Researcher : "Njenengan kedah maringi buku menapa fasilitas ingkang seumpami numutke ting les-lesan, kagem wayah ipun?"

(Do you already facilitate her in language learning process by buying new books, other facilities?)

Mrs. Choir : "Riyen nate sepindah kulo tumbas-aken kamus bergambar warna-warni."

(Yes, I once bought her a colorful pictorial dictionary.)

One of the grandmothers also reported to give the grandchildren money to facilitate her grandchild's English learning. She did not give the thing right away so because she did not know the kind of thing that the grandchild needed. By giving money, the grandchild can choose the thing that she liked and needed to support her English language learning.

Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiyem

Researcher : "Kamu punya buku atau kaset, film atau yang bau-bau bahasa Inggris?"

(Do you have any book or cassette, film related to English?)

Mei-Mei : "Kamus yang tulisan dibelikan Ibu"

- (Yes, I have a dictionary which was bought by my Mom.)
- Researcher : *“Kalau nenek kamu pernah ndak membelikan sesuatu buat kamu? atau ngasih uang”*
(Has your grandmother ever given you books or some money?)
- Mei-Mei : *Pernah dikasih uang, trus baru kemarin saya belikan kaset Barbie yang ada terjemahannya bahasa Inggris-Indonesia, murah lho, cuman tujuh ribu.”*
(Yes, she has. She once gave me some money. Yesterday, I used the money to buy a Barbie CD with the English-Indonesian subtitle. It was cheap, only seven thousand rupiahs.)
- Researcher : *“Njenengan kedah maringi buku menapa fasilitas ingkang seumpami numutke ting les-lesan, kagem wayah ipun?”*
(Do you already facilitate her language learning by buying new books, or other facilities?)
- Mrs. Tiye : *“Riyen pun ditumbaske makne kamus bahasa Inggris sing bergambar.”*(Her mother has bought a colourful dictionary.)
- Researcher : *“Nak njenengan piyambak nate maringi?”*
(Then do you ever give something to her?)
- Mrs. Tiye : *“Nek kulo mboten ngertos karepe bocah, nggih kulo ken tumbas kiyambak.”*
(I do not know what the children wanted to buy, so I ask them to buy by themselves.)

It was evident that all grandmothers tried to facilitate their grandchildren’s learning, including their English language learning. However, because of the different financial background, the numbers of facilities given to

the grandchildren to improve their language skills were also different. This may also lead to different opportunities in learning the language. Also according to Hargreaves (1991), by having less facilities, students may also participate less in the subject.

Giving Assistance

The last factor that was found in the research was giving assistance. This was done only by one grandmother, that was by helping the grandchild to do her homework or when she was studying at home:

Susanti and Mrs. Choir

- Researcher : *“Kalau di rumah ada yang sering bantuin kamu kerjakan PR di rumah? Siapa?”*
(Who usually helps to do your homework at home?)
- Susanti : *“Ada Eyang Uti, kadang juga Ibu kalau dia sudah pulang awal.”*
(My grandmother usually helps me, but sometime my mom helps me if she could go home early.)
- Researcher : *“Kalau Eyang Uti sering bantuin kamu pas belajar? Contohnya?”*
(Does your grandmother help you while studying? Any example?)
- Susanti : *“Bantu mencari jawaban di buku, atau kasih tahu jawabane. Nek ndak tahu ya saya tanya tetangga tentang materi yang diajarkan.”*
(She helps me to find the answer or just dictate the answer. If it was too hard I asked my neighbor.)
- Researcher : *“Njenengan nate ngewangi wayah-ipun nyinauni bab bahasa Inggris?”*
(Do you help him/her with English’s homework?)
- Mrs. Choir : *“Nggih kedongan nak kulo saget, nek mboten saget ken kulo tanglet kancane. Nggih paling ngrencangi.”*

(Sometimes I help her if I could, but when I couldn't, then I only usually accompany her while studying.)

The two other grandmothers stated that they do not help their grandchildren's learning at home. However, this was actually understandable since the grandmothers did not assist the grandchildren because they were not able to help, not because they do not want to. However, this did not mean that the grandmothers and grandchildren did not do anything. They can ask their neighbors for assistance:

Ipin and Mrs. Sumarni

Researcher : *"Oh... kalau di rumah e... Ipin sering dibantu orang tua ndak tentang bahasa Inggris?"*

(Oh... if you study at home, will your parent help you to do English assignment?)

Ipin : *"Nggak"/No!*

Researcher : *"Nggih nak larenipun wonten pr semisal bahasa Inggris njenengan saget geh ngewangi garapke?"*

(Then, if he gets difficulty in English homework, will you help him?)

Mrs. Sumarni: *"Nggih mboten saged to bu. Lah boro-boro bahasa Inggris? Lha wong basa Indonesia men maca kulo mboten saged?"*

(Of course, I could not help him at all in English. Even I don't read Indonesian fluently.)

Researcher : *"La menawi bapak napa ibu engkang mboten saged ngewangi larenipun sinau, njenengan ngerencangi larenipun sinau ngoten? Nggih nate?"*

(Although you can't help him to do the homework, at least do you accompany him?)

Researcher : *"Nggih... la nak seumpami larenipun pas sinau trus dugah nemoni. Wah... niki pelajaran angel niki bu. Lare ipun ngresulo njenengan nate presa mboten?"*

(And if Ipin gets difficulty in working with homework, has he ever share to you about that?)

Mrs. Sumarni: *"Nggih nak kulo nyok takok, ning nak nyinauni kan mboten saged. Paling nggih kulo tanglet ke ning gone tangga niku to Bu."*

(Yes, sometime he has shared but then I couldn't help much. At least, I ask help to my neighbor.)

Researcher : *"Ning nak Ipinne niku nate ngresulo nek pelajaran angel nggih?"*

(But, has he ever share the problem?)

Mrs. Sumarni: *"Nggih, ning kulo mendel mawon ajeng pripun, la wong nyinauni nggih mboten saged."*

(Yes, but sometime I just take no notice of his problem because I can't help him.)

Mei-Mei and Mrs. Tiye

Researcher : *"Kalau kamu belajar di rumah siapa yang sering bantu?"*

(Who does usually help you while studying at home?)

Mei-Mei : *"Saya belajar sendiri. Nek nggak mudeng saya tanya mbak Nia[, my neighbor] ... [Nenek saya] ndak bantuin paling cuman nemenin."*

(I study by myself, if I do not understand then I asked my neighbor, Nia... [My grandmother

does not help me in homework, but she always accompany me.

Researcher : "*Njenengan nate ngewangi wayahipun nyinauni bab bahasa Inggris?*" (Do you help her with English's homework?)

Mrs. Tiye : "*Nak ngewangi mboten, nek ngancani nggih kulo kancani. Nek ngewangi wong kulo men mboten saget basa Inggris.*"

(I can help her in doing the English homework, but I always sit next to her while studying.)

The interview shows that there are efforts from the grandmothers to assist their grandchildren's learning at home, including their English language learning. It was true that not all grandmothers can directly help their grandchildren when they study or do their homework at home. This was probably because of their background education. On one hand, this low education background may create low awareness of the importance of studying. On the other hand, their education might not allow them to help their grandchildren's studying at home. Nevertheless, whatever the main reason was, the research show the subjects still seek for other assistance, as asking a neighbor, when they needed it.

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to answer the research question: In what ways are the grandparents involved in their grandchildren's English language learning? After interviews was done to three pairs of participants (each was a pair of a grandchild and a grandmother), the research found that the grandmothers were involved in their grandchildren's English language learning by monitoring, facilitating, and giving assistance to them. The monitoring was done by reminding the child to do his/her homework, accompanying the child when they did their homework, and also showing concerns

on the child's school matters. Facilitating was done by providing a good studying environment to the grandchildren, sending the grandchildren to language courses (or *bimbingan belajar*), buying things that can help the grandchildren's English language learning, or giving the grandchildren money. Finally, the grandmothers gave assistance to the grandchildren by helping the grandchild to do her homework or when she was studying at home, or if they could not, they may ask or allow their grandchildren to ask assistance from a neighbor.

The implication of this study is first for grandchildren who are taken care by grandparents. Although their parents seem to take less attention to their English language learning, this does not mean that their English language learning is not supported. Supports in several ways can actually be given by the grandparents too. They may actually get the benefit of having grandparents involved in child's caring and learning development. This is because the elder family may has more time at home, compared to their own parents who may be busy looking for money.

The second implication is for grandparents who have the main responsibility to take care of their grandchildren. There are numbers of ways that grandparents can do to support their grandchildren's English language learning. The fact that grandparents have low education background and low financial condition may create different kind of support or involvement give to the grandchildren. However, in any condition, grandparents should not give up supporting their grandchildren's English language learning.

The last implication is for English teachers. Teachers should understand that every student has difference family background. This may mean that their students may also get different supports when they study at home. This may result in different attitude about English language learning that the students show in class. Therefore, teachers need to remember this and

put this into consideration when teaching English to the students.

Due to the limited number of participants in this study, we realize that this study cannot be generalized to all people who have a similar background. Therefore, future studies may be done by involving more participants or participants from other areas of Indonesia, or even overseas participants. Results can later be compared and analyzed.

One issue that appears in this study was the fact that the grandmothers had different educational background, and the grandchildren had different English grade achievement. If we look at the data, the grandchild that had the grandmother whose background education was quite high, had the best achievement in English class as well. However, whether or not there is a positive correlation between grandparents' educational background and grandchildren's achievement in English class cannot be proved at this stage. However, further research can be done to prove this correlation. Another research that can also be done is to investigate the effect of grandparents' financial background to the grandchildren's achievement in English class.

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