Grandparents’ Involvement in Their Grandchildren Learning English as A Foreign Language

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Abstract

Research on parent involvement affect children’s development has been carried out many times. However, the role of grandparents is rarely done by researchers. Nowadays, some grandparents have a role in supporting child foster while the parents are busy at work. Therefore, this study attempted to discover the grandparents’ involvement toward their grandchildren in elementary school. This study attempted to answer the question: In what ways are the grandparent’s involving in learning English as a foreign language? The participants of the study were 3 families which consist of three grandchildren and three grandparents. The research reveals that the grandparents with different backgrounds had different attitude toward their grandchildren’s English language learning.

Keywords: grandparent involvement, learning language and family background, the attitude of grandparent

INTRODUCTION

Learning English as Foreign language is crucial for Indonesia people. 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.” The need of English was applied in elementary school by using it as one of important supportive subject muatan lokal besides local language (e.g. Javanese language), SBK-Seni, Budaya & Ketrampilan (Art, Culture & Handicraft) and religion.

According to Ellis (1990), there are internal factors and external factors that affected language learning. He stated that internal factors, or psychological factors, are related to individual themselves. They are learner’s age, aptitude, cognitive style, personality, motivation and attitude. The other category is the influence from outside, or external factors. Two important external factors are learners’ family and social background.
For this study, the external factor of family and social background which affects 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, provided free time to study, and the availability of English facilities are also included.

In addition, Kaufmann (2005) believed that students are unique and they have their own characteristics. They subconsciously brings 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. 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. Take a simple example of 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. He further argued that the parents who continue controlling their children’s school work or just accompany their study time brought positive results to their children’s education.

Further, Hargreaves (1991) indentified three important factors which help students to be successful at schools, i.e. family backgrounds, financial conditions, 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 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 had 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. It also affected the children’s success at school (Hargreaves, 1991). 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. In other words the way parents think or behave and their effect 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).

Hargreaves (1991), said that despite the three factors above, there is one thing that should 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 the homework. The high awareness of learning needs can also be reflected from the parents’ education background supporting 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.

While there had been many researches investigating about parents’ role in children learning processes, very little was known about grandparent-as-parents involvement in academic context. Since, this was an unique family system that consists of grandparent as parent and grandchildren. Edward (2006) found that children of grandfamilies tend to display significant behavioral and emotional problems at school. He also uttered the need of teacher and school based mental professional- a school for those who need special needs or suffers mental retardation, to offer intervention and extra support for them. His research also revealed that male students with this background usually fail to complete schooling years. However, 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.

In relation to this, Racicot (2003) 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. Sometime, they 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.

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. In view the fact that the study used participants or children who have family structure of never married or divorced mother in multigenerational households (They lived with the grandparent or one of them), two biological cohabiting parents, step families, never married mother, divorced single mother, and single mother with male cohabiters, single father families, grandparent-headed household with no parent present, and married-parent families. Mostly children from single parent family who lived with grandparent graduated from high school and continued their study to college. The study found the fact that single mother who lived co-residence with the parents, brought advantages for the children, since the grandfather replace the figure of father. Children from single parent who lived with grandparent, shows better academic progress than children from a single mother family with out the presence of grandparents and married parents.

So, parents’ involvement has a significant role in the academic development of the children. In some cases, not all children live together with their own parents. The children who do not stay with the parents might have a special reason or purpose. Not a few of them separated from parent because crime actions like drug addicted, robbery, report of neglected, death, or illness Therefore, they are taken care of their grandparents instead (Edward, 2006).

Based on the reasons above, I became interested to investigate grandparent involvement in learning language. The research question is “In what ways are the grandparent’s involving in learning English as a foreign language.” By finding out the result, it will help other grandparent or parent to manage and to give a right stimulus for their children or grandchildren in improving their English learning. For the English teachers, they would know the right technique to manage the students with the similar family background.

The Study

The study was a qualitative research. It explored the relationship between grandchildren who lived with the grandparent in relation to their language achievement in
classroom. The participants were three grandchildren and three grandmothers. In this study, I used interview in collecting the data. Interview in qualitative research was believed as a method in obtaining data which was more reliable and valid compared to other methods (Damaianti, 2007). This research used pseudonyms for confidentiality reason.

I started with choosing the participants. I used my English students of elementary school whom I had taught. Then, I looked for the participants who lived with their grandparents. After that, I conducted a small interview with the classroom teacher to find out participants that could support my study. I made an appointment by phone for interview in her house. Mrs. Tyas already taught these students from the 4th grade, and knew the school performance of students and their family backgrounds.

I choose the 6th grader because they tend to easy accommodate and handle. Unpredictably, I discovered that there were children who lived with grandparent showed different academic result in English participant. I was curious to know grandparent role in family and the way they supporting children development. This would be further described in description of the participants in Table 2.

After talking with Mrs. Tyas, the classroom teacher of sixth grader who had gone along with them from the 4th grade, I found three students that could become the participants of my study. Although the title of the research was grandparents, but in collecting data I only found that it was the grandmothers who dominated in child rearing and education development. Then, I interviewed the three grandchildren and three grandmothers in their houses.

After that, I started to transcribe the interviews into written text (see Appendix A-J). Then, I analyzed the result. In analyzing process I related the issue of grandparent playing a role in language learning. Finally, I drew the conclusion on the research.
The Discussion

A. Description of the Participants

Below are tables of the participants’ description and a table of the grades of the three participants in English language class.

Table 1. Description of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ Initials</th>
<th>Names of Students</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Names of Grandmothers</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Financial background</th>
<th>Education background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant A</td>
<td>Ipin</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mrs. Sumarni</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Working as farmer and wrapping crackers</td>
<td>Not graduate from elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant B</td>
<td>Mei-Mei</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mrs. Tiyem</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Retirement fund of soldier’s wife</td>
<td>Graduate from elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant C</td>
<td>Susanti</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mrs. Choir</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Retirement of elementary teacher</td>
<td>Bachelor of elementary education (D2PGSD-Diploma dua Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. English grade’s participants in 6th grader.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nama</th>
<th>UH</th>
<th>UTS</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>UAS</th>
<th>UP</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipin</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mei-Mei</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susanti</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12
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 semester test score)

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

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

**Participant A**

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, I found that Ipin was considered as the son of Mrs. Sumarni. He did not know that Mrs. Sumarni was actually his grandmother, because he was an illegally adopted by the grandparent. He was left behind by his birth-mother (Harni) who was unmarried at the time he born. Although he looked like an ordinary male student, actually he got learning problem. By his age, he should get junior high school 3 years earlier. During the learning process, he always forgot the materials that had been thought. He was hard to understand material in any exacta lesson. According to his classroom teacher, 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 game like guessing word, chain words, etc. He gave up if he should translate all the English words into Indonesian.

Ipin’s grandmother, Mrs. Sumarni, was 55 years old. Her 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 side job, wrapping crackers at her neighbor’s house. The grandmother had the role as a mother to take care of Ipin and the grandfather become the
breadwinner or as a father. Moreover, she did not graduate from elementary school. She became the participant with the lowest education background compared to two grandmothers.

Participant B

The second participant was a girl, named Mei-Mei who was 11 years old. This girl was a student with average academic performance scores. Her performance in class was not always good because sometimes she could easily understand materials but sometimes not. She lived with her parents, brother, and one 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. She 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 create vocabulary words using picture, game, and puppet show.

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 came from her late husband. The aging grandmother had several health problems that made her to avoid hard jobs like do grassing, planting or taking care of cows. She used to clean the house or to cook for family.

Participant C

The third student Susanti was 11 years old. She is 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. Then the grandmother took the responsibility in taking care of the granddaughter.

The grandmother of Susanti was named Mrs. Choir. She was 72 years old. She used to be an elementary school teacher. Then she had retired 12 years ago. Before becoming a teacher,
she graduated from *SGB (Sekolah Guru B)* in 1959, *SGA (Sekolah Guru A)* in 1961 and the last bachelor of elementary education (*D2PGSD- Diploma dua Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*) in 1970. Her daily activity was caring for her granddaughter. She was very discipline in school matters. She had two children. Her first son lived with his wife in Semarang. The other, her daughter was Susanti’s mother.

Further, Susanti who came from single parent family, did not look have financial problem. Since, her grandmother always supported in material and morale. Though, the mother was busy with her jobs. She got many affection and attention from her grandmother. Her grandmother also concerned on what does she do, read and learn.

**B. Interview Result**

The result of the interview showed that grandparent’s involvement in the grandchildren academic achievement in 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. The attitudes show motivating, facilitating, and monitoring.

**Motivating**

Motivation in language learning played a significant role. Gardner and Lambert added, “Apparently, when there is a vital need to master a second language, the instrumental approach is very effective” (Lambert, 1972, p. 130). From the interview occurred that Ipin had a purpose to learn the language, since his future job need mastering English. As previous study explained by Gardner and Lambert (1972) that a learner would learning language better if he had a specific goal than those had not. Unfortunately, Ipin stucked in condition that he lost his motivator. At the past Ipin role model on learning was his uncle’s wife who was dead a year ago. Since, the grandmother was uneducated person and she could not help
much in language learning. Not surprisingly, she showed unsupportive attitude while Ipin studying, like this interview result below:

Interviewer: “Nak teng griya niku wayah ipun biasane le sinau teng pundi?”
(Where does Ipin used to study at home?)
Grandmother A: “Nggih woten niku ruang tamu ngajeng TV. TV ne nggeh distel nek dipateni. Mboten angsal.” (He used to study in the living room and turn on the television. If it is off then he would refuse to study.)

Mei-Mei was highly motivated with English lesson. She also uttered that she loved every task on English especially in drawing, or making vocabulary pictures. Her grandmother also agreed that her granddaughter looked very happy if she had an English homework. Although, the grandmother could not help much, Mei-Mei asked help from her neighbor, *Mbak Nia*- she is a senior high school student. Mrs. Tiyem also recognized the important of acquiring the foreign language. She had shown in creating a good atmosphere for study and reminding to do the homework. Another attitude showed motivating in language learning, for example sitting next to a child who is studying, although grandmother had no idea about the English homework. This moment illustrated her attention and affection which were given. It was also supported by Mrs. Tiyem’s statement while she accompanying her granddaughter, Mei-Mei

Researcher: “Njenengan nate ngewangi wayahipun nyinauni bab bahasa Inggris?” (Do you help him/her with English’s homework?)

Grandmother B: “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 her studying.)

Researcher:”Ting ngriya wonten pangenan engkang kagem sinau wayah ipun?”
(Do you prepare a room for her to study?)
Grandmother B: “Nggih paling ning ngajeng Tipi niku ning nggih kulo pateni, mangkeh ndak nggangu le sinau.” (She usually studies in front of the television, but I turned it off in case it is disrupting her study.)

After that, Susanti had the grandmother who always helped her in studying. Mrs. Mrs. Choir taught the granddaughter how to be discipline in study. She always made Susanti study eventhough there was no homework. The grandmother also supported her by giving money to buy school equipments or stationaery that she wished.

Researcher: “Njenengan nate ndukani wayahipun bab sekolah ingkang kurang sae? Seumpami angsal nilai elek ting wulangan?” (Have you ever been angry to her? Because she got bad grades at school?)

Grandmother C: “Nggih kadang nggih kulo seneni.” (Yes, sometime I get angry on her.)

Researcher: “La engkang menapa, mbah?” (Why do you do that?)

Grandmother C: “La nggih sing sinau amben dinten kok le ngarap jeh kliru.” (She already studies every day and do exercise, but still make mistakes.)

Below was a table of interview result on how did grandparent involvement in motivating their grandchildren. The explanation already wrote on the previous paragraphs.

**Table 3. Motivation of grandchildren**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of students</th>
<th>Name of grandmother</th>
<th>Motivation *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ipin</td>
<td>Mrs. Sumarni</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mei-mei</td>
<td>Mrs. Tiyem</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Susanti</td>
<td>Mrs. Choir</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Monitoring**

The next factor that influnced language learning was monitoring. As Hargreaves (1991) stated that the consistency of family in monitoring child’s development at school and at home, was one of aspects in controlling school success.

*I graded motivation from my own opinion and based on the interview result.
In Ipin’s case, there was contrary data between the Mrs. Sumarni and Ipin. Then, I interviewed the uncle to explain how did his mother monitor Ipin at home. The result was contradictory from the grandmother’s interview result. Neno also approved that there was no monitoring from the grandmother and she never checked Ipin’s homework. She just sometime asked about homework. This shown in the interview of the uncle who justify the fact.

Researcher: “Apakah mas pernah melihat ibu Mas memberi perhatian Ipin tentang perihal sekolah, atau ngecek PR nya, atau apa?” (Does your mother also give attention on children’s academic life?)

Uncle A: “Ndak tahu mbak. Ibu saya itu ndak tahu-apapa soal sekolah-nya, wong bacanya aja ndak lancar, paling tahunya ya masak dan ngarit.” (My mom knows nothing about school. She can not read and only knows about grassing or cooking.)

Researcher: “Trus setahu Mas, apa yang biasa ibu Mas lakukan ketika belajar.” (As you know what usually your mother does while Ipin studying?)

Uncle A: “Ibu saya... ibu saya ndak pernah nunguin dia belajar, paling ngelengke nek ada PR lek dikerjake”. (My mom never accompanies him. She uses to remind him to not forget about homework.)

In the other side, Mei-Mei was lucky enough to have grandmother who paid attention on her. Mrs. Tiyem always reminded her about homework and study at night. She also accompanied her while studying. Although she did not understand English language she really cared about her granddaughter school life. The interview result gave details on monitoring made by Mei-Mei’s grandmother.

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

Grandchild B: “Pernah paling disuruh ngerjake sek, trus nek maen bisa nanti.” (Yes, I have. Then she tells me to do the homework before playing outside.)
Researcher: “Nek kamu tu selain itu selain ngingetke, nemeni, nenek kamu pernah nggak nanyain disekolah diajarin apa? Ketemu apa aja gitu?” (Besides remind and accompany you, does your grandmother ask you about what happen at school?)

Grandchild B: “Ya nenek sering tanya di sekolah apa aja, saya kalau sama nenek suka cerita-serita tentang sekolah, apa yang saya lakukan di sekolah.” (Yes, my grandma usually asks about school matters. I use to share with her the stories which I get from school and what I do there.)

As well, Susanti had grandmother who was an elemantary teacher. Mrs. Choir gave full monitor on her granddaughter learning development. Since she spent all the day with her. As a though girl who had broken family, it did not influence her education life. As long as she had motivated grandmother who taught her to study hard and to pray a lot. Here, the interview result gave a picture on how important did monitoring in acquiring foreign language.

Researcher: “Eyang Uti mu pernah ndak nemeni belajar?” (Does your grandmother accompany you while studying?)

Grandchild C: “Ya, yang biasane nemeni itu Eyang Uti, wong nak ibu pulang aja jam 10 malam.” (My grandma used to accompany me, since my mom always comes home late at 10.00 p.m.)

Researcher: “Nek Eyang Uti kamu pernah ndak ngelingke nek ada PR atau nggak?” (Does your grandma remind you to do the homework?)

Grandchild C: “Ya sering.” (Yes, often.)

Below was a table of short description about monitoring themes which found in interview result.
**Table 6. Monitoring by Grandmother**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of students</th>
<th>Name of grandmother</th>
<th>Monitoring *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ipin</td>
<td>Mrs. Sumarni</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mei-Mei</td>
<td>Mrs. Tiyem</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Susanti</td>
<td>Mrs. Choir</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Facilitating**

The last factor which found in the research was facilitating. The interview result explained how grandmother facilitated the grandchildren in supporting language learning. It should not be always in a form of special things which might cost a lot of money. Although, by praising, asking development made at school, or accompany while studying, unintentionally these would build appreciation on language learning for the children. These would encourage the grandchildren to study language further.

Ipin’s grandmother showed negative attitude by never checking his school work. From the interview Mrs. Sumarni stated that she only asked if there was any homework or not. She added if Ipin got problem in homework she would help him by asking the neighbor. However, her answer was contradictory to Ipin’s statement. Ipin said that she has asked about homework once, but then she did not help to do it. In addition, she never cared about how was his school life. Because of the different answer, I triangulate this result by interviewing Ipin’s uncle, Neno. According to him, the grandmother was too busy with her activity in farming and looking for extra money. The fact was that she never accompanied or even helped Ipin in studying. She accompanied him while studying by watching serial TV. This attitude was disadvantage for grandchild in finding quiet place or a good atmosphere for concentration in study. In addition, she got angry to him every time he had bad grades or could not go to the next class.

* I graded monitoring from my own opinion and based on the interview result.
The contrary facts shown in grandson’s and uncle interviews which implied that the grandmother actually never cared about Ipin’s school work. Below is the interview result which showed how the grandmother treated Ipin from Uncle’s perspective.

Researcher: “Apakah Mas pernah melihat ibu Mas memberi perhatian Iwan tentang perihal sekolah, atau ngechek PR nya, atau apa?” (Does your mother also give attention on children’s academic life?)

Uncle A: “Ndak tahu mbak. Ibu saya itu ndak tahu apa-apa soal sekolah, wong bacanya aja ndak lancar, paling tahunya ya masak dan ngarit.” (My mom knows nothing about school. She can not read and only knows about grassing or cooking.)

Researcher: “Trus setahu mas, apa yang biasa ibu mas lakukan ketika belajar.” (As you know what usually your mother do while Ipin studying?)

Uncle A: “Ibu saya..ibu saya ndak pernah nanguin dia belajar, paling ngelengke nek ada PR lek dikerjake.” (My mom never accompanies him. She uses to remind him to not forget about homework.)

However not all the grandmothers did the same things, for example the grandmother of Mei-Mei who always accompanied her when study at home. Mrs. Tiyem did not have a high education, because she graduated from elementary school, which called “Sekolah Rakyat” at the past. However, she really understood that as a student should study serious and concentration. Therefore, she created a house which suit for studying, by turning off television or radio. Then while the granddaughter study, she would sit next to her any case if she need her help. A time when Mei-Mei got bad grades, Mrs. Tiyem gave along advice about study hard and did not want her put into upset. This way looked more effective than get mad into child by yelling or using violence.

Researcher: “Njenengan nate ngewangi wayahipun wayahipun nyinauni bab bahasa Inggris?” (Do you help her with English’s homework?)
Grandmother B: “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 she studying.)

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

Grandmother B: “Nggih paling ning ngajeng tipi niku ning nggih kulo pateni, mangkeh ndak nggangu le sinau.” (She usually studies in front of the television, but I turned it off in case it is ruined her study.)

Similar to Susanti, that her grandmother always accompanied her when study at home. Mrs. Choir also did the same things with Mrs. Tiyem, which was turning off television and radio. Mrs. Choir allowed her granddaughter picking any place to study but she should responsible with her works by finishing on time. She gave drilling exercise all the time. That was why she got angry if Susanti got bad grades after routine studying. She also kept the house quiet while Susanti was studying. Then she would do housing things like neat clothes, ironing, or cooking, etc.

In this case, the grandmother became the only important adult who could control grandchildren. Whatever she says or do regarding her granddaughter’s ability to learn will have a major impact on the children’s self-concept as effective learners. By praising, asking development made at school, or accompanying while study, unintentionally these would build appreciation on learning for the children. Like the quotation of interview with Susanti, which showed the chemisatry of the child and grandmother were very close.

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

Grandchild C: “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 aj a ndak diajak omong sehari an.”
(She gets angry, if I got bad grade in examination. Then, she wouldn’t talk to me for a long time.)

Below was a table of short description about facilitating themes which found in interview result.

**Table 7. Facilitating by Grandmother**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of students</th>
<th>Name of grandmother</th>
<th>Facilitating*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ipin</td>
<td>Mrs. Sumarni</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mei-Mei</td>
<td>Mrs. Tiyem</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Susanti</td>
<td>Mrs. Choir</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accordingly, there were different financial status among three participants, which had an impact on the numbers of facilities and opportunities for grandchildren to improve their language skills. The rich grandchild got more books, course, computer, etc compare to the poor child who still worried about what to eat today than what to study tomorrow. Because of that, the grandchild was likely to participate less in academic life which may result in poor academic achievements.

**Conclusion**

This section presents about the conclusion of the study. The tables portrayed interview result on how the grandparent involving in language learning. The first participant was Ipin who had a custodial grandparent and lived in low socio-economic status. Limitation of facilities was one of obstacles for him in language learning. Then, the lost of motivation did affect his learning progress, after the death of his aunt. Unsurprisingly, Ipin got the lowest grade of the three participants.

*I graded facilitating from my own opinion and based on the interview result.*
The attitude of grandmother showed that the awareness of learning needs still very low. Consider to the grandmother’s education background which was low—not graduated from elementary school, have an effect on her attitude in language learning.

Then the second, Mei-Mei lived with parents, grandmother, and brother. She came from high socio-economic family, because she had more books, cassette, and chances to train her language skills with her friends. While in daily, she had a kind hearted grandmother who always accompanied while studying. She supported her granddaughter academic life by providing a good atmosphere to study at home. Although, she had health problem, it did not stop her effort to help Mei-Mei’s parent in monitoring their daughter. Mei-Mei could show grades which was good enough.

The third, Susanti came from single parent family and lived with the grandmother who also the ex-elementary teacher. Though mother became the single earner, but the grandmother did help a lot in stability of financial condition of single parent. Mrs. Choir also helped in monitoring the language learning development. She also held discipline in monitoring her granddaughter while studying. Since, she spent mostly time with Susanti then her mother. She also facilitated the grandchild’s need in learning process like book, dictionary, etc. She trained her granddaughter to study everyday which might help her to get the best grade. Actually, it worked since she got the highest grade not only between three participants but in her 6th grade class.

In this study, there was no any proven evidence or reliable number of participants which could validate the significant role of grandmother would affect their English grades. Because by doing the study, the data shown that mostly learning problems always had multifaceted caused which could not be identified right away. There was need of further research to deal with student learning problem. In addition the three participants had different
family backgrounds. That was why they got different output in learning English as foreign language.

For grandchildren who live with parents and grandparents, they get the benefit when the grandparent involve in child caring and learning development. Since the elder family has more time at home, compare to their own parents who are busy looking for money. Therefore, teachers should understand that every student has difference family background means also different problems to deal with.