

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In learning English as a second language, Indonesian students encounter many problems which are mainly caused by the differences that exist between the target language and their native language. Most students in Indonesia are unable to comprehend a book in English with a satisfactory degree of fluency. When they are obliged to read a book in English, it takes a long time to do so. It is very often imperfectly understood and leads the students to rote memorization of facts they do not really understand. For many years, English has been taught to Indonesian students starting from their first year of Junior High School, but many of them still find difficulties in reading English passages. One of the reason is that their knowledge of vocabulary is still low.

The limited number of vocabulary the students have makes it difficult for them to understand certain written texts. This is quite disappointing because the focus of teaching English in Indonesia is reading comprehension. It is stated in the 1984 Curriculum (1984:12), "Siswa memiliki minat dan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris terutama membaca...". It is in accordance with Kufaishi's opinion

(1988:42) which states that students' listening comprehension, writing and reading abilities are hampered by their vocabulary.

In response to this matter, recently much attention has been paid to the possibility of teaching English at the elementary school because it is assumed that younger students have the capacity for learning and acquiring a new language more easily than adults. Kasbolah (1992) as quoted by Ingrid (1993:2) says,

Research on language development between 1950s and 1960s showed that the children possessed unique capacities for language learning. The main argument was the psychologists and linguists felt that sooner the students learned a language, the better they should begin as soon as they began his formal education.

Li-Shing (1981;10) states that using pictures is one of the most successful technique in teaching English. Pictures are very effective in teaching vocabulary to elementary students. Pictures represent real things besides they can make lessons more lively and interesting.

Furthermore, Bumpas (1963:32-33) suggests pictures as a technique to increase the students' vocabulary. He says that pictures can take learning experience more concrete, realistic and dynamic for young children. Besides, pictures provide necessary variety and foster a high degree of interest. Ernestova (1981:9) supports the idea above. She says that pictures can increase students' motivation and provide useful practice materials as well as the materials.

The important thing is that children cannot conceptualize from abstract things very easily and hence, deductive reasoning is very difficult for them. Instead, they are most readily to conceptualize from concrete things and hence, inductive

reasoning is assumed to be easier for them. Therefore, using real things to teach children is mostly advisable. Piaget, as quoted by Fisher and Terry (1986:24) claims that the teaching of children should be created as concrete as possible since their thinking is grounded in the concrete. Dubin and Olshtain (1977:24) claim that children need to be motivated and one way of motivating them is by means of pictures. It means that pictures can make many words clear and can arouse students' motivation.

Realizing the importance of teaching vocabulary, the writer is interested in carrying out a study on using pictures in teaching vocabulary to elementary students in order to help the students master the vocabulary and to know how far the use of pictures in teaching vocabulary can arouse the students' motivation in learning English.

1.2 Research Problems

The research problem in this study is:

Is there a significant difference between the students taught vocabulary with picture and those taught with traditional technique in terms of their vocabulary mastery?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out whether there is a significant difference in terms of vocabulary mastery between the students taught with picture and those taught with traditional technique.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Shepherd (1973:39) mentions that vocabulary is basic to communication as one will not be able to communicate easily without knowing the words he wants to use. Brown (1980:13) also says that secondary school pupils and adults feel terrible frustration of not being able to say what to say in English, just because they lack the vocabulary. Thus, learners who have only little and insufficient vocabulary will get troubles in communication and will find difficulty in acquisition process.

Vocabulary plays an important role in reading. It means it can influence the students' failure or success in comprehending reading texts. Wiriyaichitra (1982:21) states that when reading texts in English, students often face crucial problems, namely: being unable to get the meaning of some words and thus being unable to comprehend what they are reading. They can comprehend English texts or passages if they possess a wide range of vocabulary. Without having enough vocabulary, the students have difficulty in getting the information from the English texts or passages.

Mukarto (1989) as quoted by Susilastuti (1990:3) says that in the teaching of English in our Indonesian context too much time and effort are spent on the teaching of structure and reading comprehension, while very little time is spent on the teaching of vocabulary. Further, he says that it is true that the final goal of the English instruction in high school is that the students are able to comprehend English textbooks they have to read when continuing their study in the university or other institute of higher learning. However, in order to be able to do so, they should have sufficient knowledge of vocabulary.

There are many kinds of visual aids that can be used in teaching vocabulary. One of them is picture. According to Ernestova (1981:4) pictures provide necessary variety and foster a high degree of interest. They increase students' motivation and provide useful practice materials as well as test materials. Lee and Coppen (1970:2) also support the opinion above by saying that visual aids like pictures can brighten up the classroom and bring more variety and interest into language lesson.

1.5 Hypothesis

In this study, the writer states two kinds of hypothesis:

1. The Working Hypothesis

There is a significant difference between the students taught vocabulary with picture and those taught with traditional technique in terms of their vocabulary mastery.

For the purpose of statistical analysis, the working hypothesis needs to be turned to Null Hypothesis.

2. The Null Hypothesis (H₀)

There is no significant difference between the students taught vocabulary with picture than those taught with traditional technique in terms of their vocabulary mastery.

1.6 Significance of the Study

In line with the objective of the study, the significance of the study is that it will give some contribution for the teachers of English especially at the elementary school, encouraging them to use pictures as a means of teaching English vocabulary. Hopefully, the teaching of English vocabulary at the elementary school can be more effective and interesting.

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

There are various techniques used in improving students vocabulary such as songs, dialogues, pictures, puzzles and other medias. Here the writer limits this study only to the use of pictures as a means of teaching vocabulary. The use of pictures here is only for the elementary students of International Language Studies Course.

However, the treatment is given five times with different topics. The topics are about animals, parts of the body, common things, occupations and sports. Those topics are taken from Oxford English Picture Dictionary by E.C Parnwell, *Communicative and Meaningful English for SLTP 2B* by Tim Bahasa Inggris, *Test Your Vocabulary I* by Peter Watcyn-Jones and *Start Building Your Vocabulary* by John Flower.

In this study, three groups were used. Randomization of subjects into the three groups was not possible, so they were used as intact classes. One group received the picture technique, another one received the traditional method and the other one is used for measuring the validity and reliability of the test items that is pilot

group. There are also two variables namely independent and dependent variables. The independent variable here is teaching vocabulary by picture while the dependent variable is the students' vocabulary mastery.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

There are some key terms that should be defined in order to avoid misunderstanding. Those terms will be explained as follows:

Pictures

Webster (1986:1711) defines picture as something that by its likeness vividly suggests some other thing.

Vocabulary

Harry(1969:94) defines vocabulary as the words that are used in speech and writing or those that will be needed merely to comprehend, especially in reading.

Teaching

According to Hornby (1974:886) teaching means giving instruction or giving lessons to somebody. While Kimble and Garnezy as quoted by Brown (1987:6) define teaching as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand.

Traditional Technique

Allen (1983:2) defines traditional technique as a technique which requires learning a certain number English words with the meanings of those words into one's language.

Elementary Students

Elementary students here are the students who take English as an optional subject and who have known some English words before. They are unselected as to ability, they are unmotivated towards learning English and sometimes even hostile towards doing so and the teaching is far from intensive (Strevens, 1977:10).

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. Introduction is presented in chapter one. Chapter two is review of related literature. Chapter three describes the research methodology. Chapter four deals with the analysis of the study. Conclusion and suggestion are presented in the last chapter, chapter five.