

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer presents the background of the research problem, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the theoretical framework, hypotheses, assumptions, the definition of key terms, the organization of the study, and the summary of chapter one.

1.1 Background of the study

English is an International language. It has become an important language that is needed not only for adults but also for young learners. English needs to be introduced as early as possible so that students can master English better in the future. In this study, the writer chooses the first graders of elementary school as the subjects of her study since it is considered that young learners possess unique capacities for language learning (Kasbolah, 1992). They can absorb the language better in their young age because at that age, they love to imitate, to pronounce, and to learn the language (Kasbolah, 1992:4). Another reason for the writer to choose the first graders of elementary school as the subjects is that because other related studies have not used the first graders of elementary school as the subjects of the study.

We can find that in many parts of the world, English has been used internationally, but one of the problems in English learning is learning the vocabulary. While actually, vocabulary is an important component of the language

that needs to be learnt. The writer selects teaching vocabulary because having a strong basis of English vocabulary for young learners is very important for their future in mastering English better. Learning English starts basically from the vocabulary. Carter and McCarthy (1998:vii) say that vocabulary is the heart of language teaching and learning and without vocabulary, students cannot continue with other English skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing. Rubin (1994:7) also supports the idea by stating that one cannot speak, understand, read, and write a foreign language without knowing a lot of words. For this reason, pupils will be able to understand the English language more easily if they understand a heap of vocabulary. It will be more difficult for the pupils to comprehend the language, either written or spoken, if they have less vocabulary understanding. This is supported by Sternberg (2001:90) "Vocabulary knowledge is essential to comprehension". Children will not know the meaning of "I eat banana" if they do not know the word-meanings of "I", "eat", and "banana". The learning of the second language will be easier to perform if pupils have rich vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 1980:8).

Vocabulary learning needs to be introduced as early as possible. But sometimes, Elementary school pupils can not memorize the English vocabulary very well. Most of the teachers still use the traditional way of teaching which use word-translation. On the other hand, Wright and Sofia Haleen (1991:vi) point out that using visual aids will make teaching more effective, communicative, and interesting, and according to Lado (1984), coloured pictures is said to have been successfully used to show the meaning of words. It shows that the use of pictures is very good indeed. This problem makes the writer curious because in fact some

English teachers in Elementary schools, specifically in SDK ST THERESIA 1 Surabaya, still use word translation instead of coloured pictures. The writer is wondering which technique is better to be applied at Elementary level.

Teachers need to vary the techniques used in teaching. Whatever the technique is, the best way to teach a foreign language is to bring the lesson as close as possible to the real life situation. W.R.Lee (1982:2) states that the situations which bring a foreign language to life in the classroom are provided by gestures, pictures, dramatization, activities, telling stories, touching things, and also by certain games or contests. Nowadays some schools, particularly International schools, have tried different techniques to teach vocabulary. They may use coloured pictures, songs, or strip stories for teaching vocabulary to the young learners. According to Bumpas (1963), coloured pictures can say more than words and they can make a learning experience more concrete, realistic, or dynamic for young learners. Pictures can represent the real life images for the young learners which will help them learn English better. This idea is supported by Wright and Sofia Haleen (1991:vi) who point out that using visual aids will make teaching more effective, communicative, and interesting. Pictures have been successfully used to show the meaning of words as stated by Lado (1984).

Marie Ernestova (1981:9) said “The possibilities of using pictures in teaching a foreign language are practically unlimited, and success comes to the teacher with foresight, ingenuity, and imagination. Many of the advantages are obvious. Pictures provide necessary variety, are popular, and foster a high degree of interest. Pictures increase students’ motivation and provide useful practice material as well as test material”.

But unfortunately, there are also some disadvantages of using coloured pictures in teaching vocabulary. It is considered ineffective if the coloured pictures

are ambiguous and they cannot represent the goal of the target language that needs to be achieved.

Looking at the advantages of coloured pictures above, the writer chooses coloured pictures as the technique used for teaching vocabulary to Elementary school pupils after considering that they can acquire vocabulary better when they see or do the action by themselves. The writer selects teaching vocabulary using coloured pictures also because coloured pictures can represent the real life images and they can make the learning experience more realistic, concrete and dynamic for young learners.

One of the techniques that are used by most teachers is that they mostly teach the vocabulary traditionally. Chamberlain (1984) states “It is undeniably true that most of the English teaching procedures at school are still based on traditional books which are concerned excessively with an understanding of grammatical structure, an expanding of wordy vocabulary and a little knowledge of pronunciation and intonation”. Teachers often use **the word-translation technique**. For example, the teacher writes the Indonesian word “menyanyi” and the pupils have to write the English word “sing”. Teachers tend to do this repeatedly.

There are some advantages of using this technique. Students will be able to be more accurate in applying them because it encourages the learners to think about meaning concurrently and that this technique can be used at all levels (Stoddart, 2000:6). Another advantage is that word translation can be used by the teachers to teach a lot of vocabulary just in one time.

However this technique is considered as an old-fashioned one and cannot motivate vocabulary learning. This idea is supported by Scriver (1994:73) by

stating that memorizing the words and their meanings which are not quite related one another makes the pupils unmotivated and they will easily forget the words. The use of word translation can also lead to the misconception of the word meaning if the pupils do not have the scheme of the target culture learnt. It is supported by Jonathan Stoddart (2000) who state that translation can only be used in a limited number of situations and the transposition of ideas and concepts become very difficult if the target culture is unknown, or only partly known.

Looking at the advantages and the disadvantages of the use of word translation as the technique used in some schools nowadays, the writer chooses this technique as a comparison. As what the writer has stated above that both word translation and coloured pictures have their own strengths and weaknesses, the writer is wondering which technique will show better achievement on the pupils' vocabulary achievement?

The writer wants to know the effectiveness of using coloured pictures on the pupils' vocabulary achievement compared to those who are taught using word translation.

1.2 Statement of the research problem

Based on the background of the study, the problem that needs to be answered is stated as follows:

Is there any significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the first graders of elementary school who are taught using coloured pictures and the vocabulary achievement of those who are taught using word-translation technique?

1.3 Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to examine whether there is any significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the first graders of elementary school who are taught using coloured pictures and the vocabulary achievement of those who are taught using word-translation technique.

1.4 The significance of the study

This research is expected to give some contributions to the Elementary school pupils in the field of vocabulary teaching. Specifically, it is expected that this research gives some empirical evidence which shows that the use of coloured pictures in teaching vocabulary can help in developing pupils' vocabulary achievement. It is also expected to provide the English teachers with techniques in teaching vocabulary to Elementary school pupils. Teachers can get more ideas to vary the techniques in teaching vocabulary to young learners in a fun and interesting way. If the use of coloured pictures in teaching vocabulary to the Elementary school pupils is good, teachers can use it. On the other hands, if the word translation technique is good, they can also use it in teaching vocabulary to the Elementary school pupils

1.5 The scope and limitation of the study

There are some various techniques that can be used to teach vocabulary to young learners such as songs, interesting short stories, pictures, and word-translation. In this research, the writer limits the study only on coloured pictures compared to word translation technique as the techniques used in teaching

vocabulary to the first grade of elementary school pupils in SDK ST.THERESIA 1 Surabaya. The writer also limits the study only to know the pupils' vocabulary achievement which are treated using coloured pictures with those which are taught using word-translation technique in SDK ST. THERESIA 1 Surabaya.

1.6 Theoretical framework

This study is based on the theory of behavioristic for Elementary pupils, the theory of teaching vocabulary, the characteristics of Elementary pupils, the theory of the use of word translation in teaching and learning English for the Elementary pupils, and the theory of the use of coloured pictures in teaching and learning English for the Elementary pupils.

When the Elementary pupils use a coloured picture, they must know the concept first and then they can identify the coloured picture. Human beings acquire concepts through sense perception and through repetition. According to Davis (1974:220), at birth, the child's world consists of a collection of completely disorganized stimuli, which are only gradually given order and meaning.

It is considered better if the pupils begin to learn a language sooner because it is shown that children possess unique capacities for language learning (Kasbolah 1992). Young learners can absorb the language better in their young age because at that age, they love to imitate, to pronounce and to learn the language (Kasbolah, 1992:4). Introducing the English vocabulary can be done in many ways. Some of which is by using coloured pictures and word translation.

Word translation can help teachers in teaching much more vocabulary just in one time and coloured pictures can say more than words and they can make a

learning experience more concrete, realistic, or dynamic for young children or Elementary School Pupils (Bumpas, 1963).

1.7 Hypotheses

From the theory above, the writer formulates an alternative hypothesis in this study which is:

“There is a significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the first graders of elementary school who are taught using coloured pictures and the vocabulary achievement of those who are taught using word-translation technique”

To test the alternative hypothesis above, the null hypothesis is formulated as the following:

“There is no significant difference between the vocabulary achievement of the first graders of elementary school who are taught using coloured pictures and the vocabulary achievement of those who are taught using word-translation technique”

1.8 Assumptions

1. The subjects (try out group, control group, and the experimental group) are of the same age and have statistically the same vocabulary knowledge which can be proven from ANOVA measurement and the t-test triangulation calculation between the experimental group and the control group used for the research.
2. The research instrument is valid and reliable
3. The condition of the classes used for the research is the same.

1.9 Key terms

There are some key terms in this study. In order to keep the clarity of this study, the writer gives the definition of the key terms such as teaching, vocabulary, coloured pictures and elementary pupils.

Teaching

Teaching means giving instruction, guiding the study or something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand (Brown, 1987).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary means the total number of words which make up a language (Oxford, 2002:461). All the words have been known to a person or used in a particular book, subject, etc. Thus, vocabulary in this study refers to the words that one knows and uses.

Picture

Picture means an account or description of something that enables one to form a mental picture or impression of it. It is a painting, drawing, sketch, etc as a work of art or an image (Oxford, 2002:310).

Translation Technique

Translation is a method which put something written or spoken from the target language into the native language (Maier, 1998:30).

Elementary pupils

Elementary is the basic and first stages of learning. Elementary pupils are children aged about 5 to 10 (Oxford, 2002:135).

1.10 Organization of the study

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I presents the Introduction. Chapter II describes the Review of Related Literature and Review of the previous studies. Chapter III deals with the Research Methodology, Chapter IV explores the Data Collection and Findings, and Chapter V draws the Conclusion of the study and the Suggestions.

1.11 Summary

The overall content of chapter I tells about why the writer chooses this topic as her study. It discusses that vocabulary is really needed to be introduced at Elementary level and that Elementary school teachers need to use coloured pictures as technique used in teaching vocabulary. Elementary school teachers are supposed to provide fun and interesting learning activities which can bring pupils closely to a real life situation. The writer's study is based on the theory of behaviorism, theory of vocabulary, theory of teaching English for Elementary school pupils, the characteristics of Elementary school pupils, the theory of the use of word translation in teaching and learning English for Elementary school pupils, and theory of the use of coloured pictures in teaching and learning English for Elementary school pupils. In this study, the writer limits the study only on the use

of coloured pictures and word translation as techniques used in teaching vocabulary to the first grade of Elementary School pupils.