

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

The English language has developed into the most important language in the world for international communication. It is also used in the international scientific and technical community. As science and technology have developed so rapidly, and the language used to communicate the findings of science and technology has been mostly English, Indonesian people have got to learn it if they do not want to be left behind. Consequently, English has occupied an important place as the first foreign language in Indonesia. It is learnt and taught, either formally or informally, in any parts of our country as a compulsory foreign language, even according to the 1994 curriculum, it will be optionally taught to the students of elementary school.

Most of English students in Indonesia especially elementary school students find difficulties in learning English at school because of many problems such as: time limited, situation, the uninteresting subject, or the unclear explanation. As a result, those students take English course outside school time in order to be able to master English. That is why an English teacher has to be able to find some ways of learning that can change the situation in classroom, does not like at school. There are several kinds of activities to improve the situation in the classroom to lessen the burden in learning such as: playing language games, pictures,

puzzles, and singing songs.

Memorizing English vocabulary is rather difficult for elementary students because English is a foreign language. The writer as a teacher finds some ways to make lesson interesting because she has to improve the situation in the classroom if she wants to reach successfully. In fact, most of elementary teachers in Indonesia use translation of word list for teaching learning activities. Using translation of word list is not interesting for the students and very little time is spent on the teaching of vocabulary.

It is, however quite a pity that the second type of teaching vocabulary in many school is not contextualized yet. The teacher usually teaches vocabulary by asking the difficult words found in the passage. Then he gives the meaning of them to be memorized or they could look up the words that they did not know in a dictionary. As a result, after one week or more, many of the memorized words have disappeared. The teacher does not realize that memorizing a lot of words will bring difficulties to the students to master them. In addition, when the words are learned in translation, the students are not trained to make educated guesses by utilizing their knowledge and experience. They are not encouraged to rely on their natural intelligence and to use a dictionary or ask another person.

Furthermore, Dorothy Brown (1980:8) suggests a technique that may help the students cope with the aforementioned problem in their vocabulary activities. This technique is known as cloze procedure, which is a process of systematically deleting words a passage and replacing

them with blanks to be filled by the students. In order to fill the gaps, the students are supposed to make guesses on the omitted words.

The writer chooses a card game to teach vocabulary to elementary students because game can make elementary students feel happy and they will not get bored. They also can remember the word in English quickly or easily.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the importance of improving teaching vocabulary to elementary students, this study is conducted to compare the effect of card game and translation of word list in teaching vocabulary. In this study the writer tries to answer the following questions: Is there any significant difference between the students' vocabulary mastery who are taught using card game and those taught using translation of word?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

From the problem above, the objective of this thesis is to determine whether teaching English through card game gives better effects to elementary students.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on word learning game with vocabulary cards as introduced by Fountain (1980). In his article, he confirmed that vocabulary cards provided learners with a simple but effective way of

increasing their rate of vocabulary learning. Words on cards are more efficient than words in reading passage because the learners can use the cards to organize their own repetitions of learning effort.

1.5 Hypothesis

Dealing with the question above, the following hypothesis are proposed:

1. The Alternative Hypothesis

Elementary students who are taught English vocabulary through card game have better scores than those who are not taught English vocabulary through card game.

2. The Null Hypothesis

Elementary students who are taught English through card game do not have better scores than those who are not taught English vocabulary through card game.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited to the teaching of English vocabulary to elementary students grade 4. In this study, the language games chosen are the ones, which are suitable for elementary students grade 4, that is card game about My Body and My Family. The criteria of being suitable are (1) easy to understand, (2) not dangerous, and (3) give fun to children.

1.7 Assumption

Students in Elementary school usually like games but they do not realize that they can learn English vocabulary through games. Learning English vocabulary through games is fun for children. It can motivate them to learn English.

1.8 Definition of the Key Terms

It is necessary for the writer to define the key terms used in her thesis. The definition covers the terms such as: Game, Card Game, and Translation, Word List and Translation of Word List.

1. A game is (a) an amusement of pasttime, (b) a scheme or strategy employed in the pursuit of an object purposes: method or procedure, (c) a physical or mental competition conducted according to rules in which the participants play indirect opposition to each other, each side striving to win (Webster 1986:933).
2. Card Game is a vocabulary game using cards, which is played by group of individuals and each of the groups should compete to win the game.
3. Translation means giving the meaning of (something spoken or written) in other language (Hornby, 1974:919).
4. Word List is a list containing sound or combination of sounds or the written symbols forming a unit of the vocabulary of a language (Hornby,1974).
5. Translation of Word List are a list containing the translation of English

students' exercise.

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is composed of five chapters. Chapter one is introduction, discussing background of the study, summary of the problem, theoretical framework, hypothesis, assumption and definition of the key terms. Chapter two deals with review of the related literature mainly the one, which is relevant to experimental research. In chapter three the writer tries to present the methodology, the data analysis and interpretation of the finding are presented in chapter four, while the last chapter contains the conclusion and the suggestions.