CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Vocabulary plays a crucial role in language teaching and learning because it is needed in reading, communication, and language acquisition. One of the greatest problems confronting English foreign language learners when reading materials written in English is a heavy load of difficult words and expressions that they do not retain even after they have read them and checked their meanings in dictionaries many times. And it makes the students dislike memorizing vocabulary. It is good to know the meaning of the difficult word through dictionary. But Harmer (1991:175) adds that the teachers do not want students to be checking every word of a reading text in their dictionaries when they should be reading for general understanding. Besides, the teachers do not want the students' ability to be spontaneous to be limited by constant reference to dictionaries.

Benda (1983:18) also agrees with the opinion above. He states that in reality, students find difficulty in comprehending English reading text because of the poor vocabulary. The mastery of vocabulary is neglected and considered as a secondary aspect. The teaching and learning activity only concentrates on understanding the contents of reading texts. The students do not pay particular attention to difficult words, but just skip over expressions they can not understand. As a result, the students will not remember the new English words in the passages and when the

words apeear in other passages, the students have already forgotten the meaning of the words they have already found before.

Another opinion comes from Lewis (1993:8) that most students equalize 'vocabulary' with words. Teachers complain that students translate word by word, but at the same time ask *Are there any words you don't understand*. Many 'bits' of language (lexical items) do not consist of a single word (*by the way, the day after tomorrow, coffee table, I'll see you later*).

Since vocabulary is a part of language, the vocabulary development is very important for the students of ILS Ambengan Surabaya.

Teaching vocabulary using spelling technique can cause the students to be lazy and bored to learn vocabulary. For example, when the students do not know the meaning of the difficult words of a reading passage, the teacher will only tell them the meaning without giving them exercises related to the difficult words.

Stemgo, one of vocabulary games, can be used as a variation for teaching vocabulary in order to avoid the students' boredom, to fulfil the students' need, and to help them learn vocabulary. Moreover, Stemgo is most effective when followed by a reading passage that contextualizes difficult words made on the various stems used, thereby giving students a chance to discover how a knowledge of stems can help them make educated guesses at the meanings of words they have never seen before.

According to Bernbrock (1983:45), Stemgo is a variation of vocabulary bingo that is specially designed to teach word stems. It is a game for previewing the meaning of the roots of words.

There are some steps of playing this game. First, before playing Stemgo, the writer should explain how to play it and give the example. Second, to know whether the students understand the game or not, she gives the students a homework that contains a list of word stems, which they have to complete. Third, the next day in class, she distributes vocabulary bingo sheets – sheets with sixteen large squares in four adjoining rows and columns. At the top of each square, she writes a stem, leaving space beneath for the students to write in three words using that stem. Fourth, for the first fifteen minutes of class, she has students work in pairs to write in three words for each stem. Fifth, after completing their sheets, they can use an overhead projector, a felt board, or the blackboard to display a stem and two words using that stem. And sixth, if one of the teams has on its sheet the two words the writer has given, the team can check that square. When a team has four checks down, across, or diagonally, it wins.

In this study, the writer observed the process of ILS students learn vocabulary using Stemgo.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

This study is intended to answer the following question.

How do ILS students learn vocabulary using Stemgo game?

1.3. Objective of the Study

This study is intended to describe how ILS students learn vocabulary using Stemgo game.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study is expected to enrich the theory of learning vocabulary through games, give information to the teacher about the usefulness of Stemgo, and contribution to textbook writers.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this study, the writer limits the study on teaching vocabulary especially Noun and Adjective to the students of ILS. Since the students of ILS get English at school, the writer wants to present something new in order to raise the students' motivation.

The writer also expects the students to use the English - Indonesian Dictionary in order to make them know which words are called Noun, Adjective and also to make them know the meaning of the words.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

There are three theories underlying this study. The first is theory of vocabulary. It deals with the relation between word and meaning. The second is word games. It is concerned with students' needs. The third is Stemgo which is one of the word games. Stemgo focuses on teaching word stems. That is why from this game, the writer tries to describe how ILS students learn vocabulary using Stemgo game.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

There are some key terms that should be defined in order to avoid misunderstanding:

Stemgo

Bernbrock (1980:45) states that Stemgo is a variation of vocabulary bingo that is specially designed to teach word stems.

Reinforcement

Foss and Hakes (1978:268) define that reinforcement is a process of strengthening and shaping particular behaviors.

Vocabulary

Hornby (1974:978) defines that vocabulary is total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language. In this thesis, vocabulary refers to the lexeme; a single word with a single denotative meaning.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction. It gives the readers some explanation about the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, theoretical framework, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. Chapter II deals with the review of the related literature. Chapter III discusses the research methods which covers research design, the informants of the study, instruments, the procedures of collecting the data and the techniques of data analysis. Chapter IV describes the findings and discussion of the findings. Chapter V presents the summary and suggestion of the study.