CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, theoretical framework, hypothesis, the significance of the study, assumption, limitation and scope, definition of key terms, and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The important thing in life is language to communicate with other people. Therefore, people need language for communication. Through language, we learn about our surroundings and convey information that we need about the people and the world around us. English is now important as one of the international languages. However in Indonesia, English is still as a foreign language, it has been taught in many schools and levels.

The teachers also need to help their students to develop their English skills during teaching learning process. There are four basic skills that will be taught. They are reading, writing, listening and speaking. Those four skills are also suspended by three language components that also need to be learnt. They are grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In Indonesia, where English can be categorized as a foreign language, natural settings

are difficult to find. Based on Krashen (1975:78) the English teaching learning process is mostly done in the classroom, as a formal setting and identical with language learning. Although, by nature, a language classroom is a formal setting in which language learning takes place, it is reasonable to say that language acquisition also takes place there if the teacher uses English everytime she is in the classroom with her students. When the teacher exposes her teaching materials and always tries to speak English to her students in English, the students will not only grasp what is taught by the teacher but will also unconsciously acquire what is not purposely taught by their teacher. Here, both conscious and unconscious language mastery takes place. The point is, although classroom has been identical with learning and categorized as a formal setting, it is possible for the students to acquire "some" language during the teaching learning process in the classroom. Krashen (1989:66) says "The classroom may serve as a "consumption" informal environment as well as formal linguistic environment". In addition, he points out that classroom can contribute as an informal linguistic environment as the source of the main linguistic data for language acquisition.

One of the main language components is vocabulary. Vocabulary is the main component to obtain a prosperous communication and as the key in using the language. Vocabulary is a central component of language proficiency and provide much how well learners are able to listen, speak, read, and write.

Kasbolah (1992:11) states "Children learn languages better than adult because they have a unique capacity for language learning". Children do not need to learn the new languages seriously and intentionally to be able to acquire it.

Realizing the benefits of learning a new language at an early age, many elementary schools these days start teaching English since their students are in the first grade although the government has officially decided that English is supposed to teach starting from the first grade. Some private elementary schools in big cities such as Surabaya and Jakarta even start teaching English to their kindergarten and pre school students.

Based on Rubin and Thomson (1994:79) a language cannot be spoken, read, understand and written if people do not know a lot of words. According to Hornby (1989:125) vocabulary is the total number of words that make up language. Celce Murcia and Larsen (1992:15) states "Group vocabulary into two: function words and content words". Function words are the words that have little or no lexical meaning of their own. Although, content words are the words that function as symbol for the phenomena which we react upon as the world of reality about symbols. Therefore, Celce Murcia and Larsen (1992) classify content words into four namely noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

This kind of study has been done in 2006 by Djatimulya. In her study, she implemented her study at SENTRA: FOREIGN LANGUAGES since March 2006. The writer is also interested to find out the students' English vocabulary that has been acquire

through the learning process and the acquisition process since they were in the first grade of elementary school. The writer is going to implement this study. This study is slightly similar from Djatimulya's study. She did her study by doing some observation in her class, since she was the teacher of that class at SENTRA. On the other hand, the writer conducting a vocabulary test used in this study was designed by the writer herself. It was implemented at a selected school of elementary school in Surabaya. Therefore, the writer makes this study entitled "The Vocabulary Acquisition of a Selected School of Second Grade of Elementary School in Surabaya".

1.2   Statement of the Problem

From the reasons presented in the background of this study, the problem of this study is stated as follow "What content words areacquired by the second grade of elementary school students?"

Based on Celce Murcia and Larsen (1992) content words consist of: noun, verb, adjective and adverb. Because they were only three content words are exposed in elementary school namely noun, verb, and adjective. So this study only tries to answer these three questions:

1. What nouns are acquired by the second grade of elementary school students?

2. What verbs are acquired by the second grade of elementary school students?

3. What adjective are acquired by the second grade of elementary school students?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, this study intended to:

1 find out the nouns acquired by the second grade of elementary school students,

2 find out the verbs acquired by the second grade of elementary school students,

3 find out the adjective are acquired by the second grade of elementary school students

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give benefits for English teachers and other researcher also give contribution to the second language learning and acquisition theories especially for the extent of teaching English as a foreign language to young learners. The subjects in this study are the second grade of elementary school students. This study

will give useful information about the vocabulary acquisition of the subjects in this the study. By turn, those information will give a description about the contribution of Teaching English to Young Learners to the students' acquisition process as well as to the students' learning process. Understanding such information will be useful for English teachers for young learner in improving their teaching process.

Also, this study can be beneficial for other researchers who want to implement other relevant studies. They can use this study as their reference. This study can also support other relevant studies and they can learn from the good things done in this study.

1.5   Limitation and Scope

Being aware of the limited time and broadness of the topic, the writer decides to limit the scope of this study in terms of the students as the subject of the study and content word as the subjects matter of the study. The subjects of this study is a selected school of the second grade of elementary school in Surabaya. They had a little knowledge of English, but generally they were still unable to use their English for communication. This study concentrates on content words of the students acquire since they were in first grade until second grade of elementary school. Acquisition defined by Krashen (1989:5) as gaining proficiency in a new language which happened based on their daily experiences. Acquisition takes place in natural

setting. However, in this study, the writer likely to believe that formal settings like classroom, occurs acquisition process.

Besides the scope limitation, there are some other aspects that show the limitation of this study.

1. The time of this study is only at one specific point in time. This limited time forced the writer to limit the scope of this study. However, the writer found out some other interesting things related to the student's acquisition, she cannot study more thoroughly. However, the writer has tried to make use of her limited time to do the best in making her study meaningful.

2. The writer's background knowledge
   Since the writer is just an undergraduate student, she only has little knowledge about the theories related to this thesis. She also knows only some books that become the sources of the theories. This limitation makes it difficult for the writer to deepen her knowledge on the theories that can be sharpening the research techniques, and discussion of the results of this study.

3. Instruments
   The instrument used in the data collection is the vocabulary test. The materials of the test was taken from the teacher exposure and comes from the teacher's book. Therefore, 'Adverb' is not yet in the subjects' material, then the writer only tested three aspects namely: noun, verb, and adjective.

4. Setting

The writer only conducted the test in the classroom, so the writer cannot conducted the test outside the school because of her limitation in choosing the setting.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Some terms in this study need to be defined in order to avoid misunderstanding. The key terms defined are as follows:

1. Vocabulary is one of the four basic language skills and a part or component of the vocabulary communication. (Foreman, 1966)

2. Content word is a word that has the lexical meaning of its own. (Francis, :1966)

3. Second Language Acquisition is a subconscious process of developing linguistic concepts and rules which is very similar to the process of children acquiring their first language. (Krashen, 1989:2)

4. Vocabulary acquisition is referring to the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive, produce and use words to understand and communicate. This capacity involves the picking up of diverse capacities including syntax, phonetics, and an extensive vocabulary. (Krashen, 1989:12)

1.7   Assumption

This study is conducted to find out the subjects' vocabulary that they are acquired from the classroom, therefore the content materials was taken from inside the classroom that the teacher already exposed since they were in first grade until second grade of elementary school. In addition, the subjects who are to assume to have the same language experience because they are in the same school.

1.8   Theoretical Framework

By doing the research of this study, the writer relied on the following theories: language acquisition and input hypotheses with references to the vocabulary acquisition.

Language acquisition theory helps to understand how children in general and a selected school of second grade students of elementary school in Surabaya to acquire a new language, in our case English. Children learn their first language and usually called as mother tongue in a natural way. The theory of language acquisition brought the writer to the vocabulary acquisition. The terms of vocabulary acquisition relate to the words or vocabulary acquire accidentally by the students through the insensible learning.

According to Krashen (1989:14) the other way to improving the language acquisition competence is input hypotheses. Children

do not obtain the language rules by chance in their natural situation but also learn it intentionally from the teaching learning process at school or outside the school. When teacher of English expose her teaching in English and always tries to speak to her students using English, the students will unintentionally absorb new English Vocabulary that have not been taught by the teacher.

1.9　　Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I of this study is the introduction. It is the starting point of this study. It contains background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, limitation and scope, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. Chapter II is review of related literature. It contains a review of literature and review of related study used in this study. It presents all of the theories used to support this study. Chapter III is research methodology. It reviews about research design, population and sample/subject, instruments, the procedure of data collection, and the techniques of data analysis. It explains how the writer conducts this study. Chapter IV is data analysis. It contains the analysis of the data and findings related to the research question.Chapter V is conclusion. As the last chapter of the study, Chapter V presents a summary or conclusion, and recommendations for future research.