

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language can not be separated from human life As a means of communication among human, it is used to express feeling and thought, and is also basic for the acquisition of understandings, attitudes, and ideals which are important to individuals, groups and society (Petty and Jensen, 1980:4).

As an international language, English has gained its popularity all over the world including Indonesia. In the past, English was only taught in secondary school. In current years, however, the teaching of English is expanding into kindergarten school settings. The Decree of Ministry of Education and Culture, No. 060/U/1993 states that English may be given to elementary school students as a local content. The phenomena have caused many English Educators charged with teaching teachers or curriculum and material development to raise questions about how to teach EFL to children (Fauziati, 2002:169).

The age of our students is the major factor in our decision about how and what to teach. People in different ages have different needs, competencies, and cognitive skills. We might expect children of primary age acquire much of a foreign language through play, for example adults, we can reasonably expect a greater use of abstract thought. Children in primary or elementary school setting generally learn by doing.

Mastery of the art of vocabulary is an important aspect in learning a second and foreign language and success is measured in terms of the ability to

carry out conversation in the target language (Nunan, 1991:51). In order to be able to conduct conversation, the students need to be able to express ideas, wishes, opinions, attitudes and information orally. Then the partner must pay attention by listening to the speaker to decode the message and finally is able to give appropriate responses to the partner.

In SDN 03 Ketapang at the fourth grade, teachers teaching vocabulary in Elementary School faces many problems related to the students, the method and the media used. Most of the students cannot speak English well. They get difficulty to express their opinion and feelings. They become frustrated and confused when they have to respond to someone, because they do not know how to say it in English vocabulary. Limited vocabulary they mastered causes low ability to speak and they become passive, afraid of making mistakes, shy, and not self-confident.

Vocabulary is also neglected by the teachers. This can be caused by the fact that there is no oral exam at the final examination. So the teachers pay less attention to this skill. The teachers also admit that they need much improvement on their English pronunciation. They have limited knowledge and experience about effective English teaching especially vocabulary. So far, they have not used English classroom. Not all the English teachers can create an interesting and exciting condition to motivate the students in learning English vocabulary. They do not know how to set up the atmosphere of the class to become relaxed, fun and enjoyable. Such a condition leads to the student failure to gain an optimal achievement.

Usually students in elementary school have limited vocabulary, because they got difficulties to memorize the meaning, focusing the study and the

pronunciation of English words. From the result of the interview with the English teacher and the students of elementary school, it can be found that limited vocabulary is their problem learning English. It is difficult to them memorize the meaning and the pronunciation the words. They also no interested in studying English because they feel bored with the teacher technique and media used. The media used by the teachers are less varied. They only media for formal classes are printed materials or printed textbooks. Besides that learners in this school like create something in teaching learning process. So the teacher and the writer try to use plasticine to create something for learners and as the media to increase teaching vocabulary.

Plasticine is a soft substance like clay that is made in different colours, used especially by children for making models. Plasticine is one media to motivate student's interest in vocabulary skill and making the learning activity more meaningful and exciting.

Based on the explained above the writer is interested to conduct a research about increasing vocabulary skill by using plasticine.

B. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study the writer formulates the problem statement as follows:

1. How plasticine is used in teaching vocabulary for the fourth grade of elementary school students?
2. What are the results of the teaching vocabulary by using plasticine to SDN 03 Ketapang?

3. How is the students' response to the technique implemented?

C. Limitation of the Problem

In this research, the writer has limited the problem to make the research easier. In elementary school, there are many ways to teach, but the writer only focuses on the effectiveness of plasticine as the media to teach English vocabulary to the fourth grade students at SDN 03 Ketapang, Susukan, Semarang, in 2006/2007 academic year.

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem statement, the writer formulates some objectives of the study to:

1. Describe plasticine used in teaching vocabulary for the fourth grade of elementary school students.
2. Find the result of the teaching vocabulary by using plasticine to SDN 03 Ketapang.
3. Describe the student's response to the technique implemented.

E. Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this research will have some benefits in the English teaching learning process, especially in teaching learning vocabulary.

There are two kinds of theoretical and practical benefit in this research:

1. Theoretical Benefit

- a. The result of the research can be useful for English teacher in giving additional input in increasing English teaching vocabulary.
- b. The result of the research can be used as the reference for those who want to conduct a research in increasing English teaching vocabulary.

2. Practical Benefit

- a. It will give information and knowledge about increasing English teaching vocabulary.
- b. The English teachers can adopt the method in increasing English teaching vocabulary.
- c. The writer can find the strength and weaknesses of the English teaching by using plasticine as a media at SDN 03 Ketapang.

F. Research Paper Organization

The researcher is going to discuss the study in five chapters. Chapter I is introduction which covers background of the study, problem statement, limitation of the problem, significance of the study, and research paper organization.

Chapter II is review of related literature which covers previous study, general concept of vocabulary, characteristic of young children, general concept of plasticine, teaching techniques suitable for children and the design techniques of teaching vocabulary by using plasticine as the media.

Chapter III is research method that consists of type of research, action purpose, object of the study, method of collecting data, and technique for analyzing data.

Chapter IV is related to the process of the implementation of teaching vocabulary by using plasticine as the media in teaching learning process and the student's response to do activities.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion.