

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In teaching English as a second or foreign language for kindergarten and elementary school, vocabulary is one of the most important elements in learning language, English language. McCarthy (1990: 1) states that the biggest component of any language course is vocabulary. No matter how well the students learn grammar, no matter how successfully the second language mastered, without words to express a wide range of meaning, communication in second language cannot happen in any meaningful way. Somehow, learning vocabulary in basic levels (kindergarten and elementary level) is a main element of learning English language. That's why, vocabulary must be learnt by the students as early as possible.

Learning English particularly vocabulary is very important to support the ability of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Without mastering vocabulary one will face difficulties to improve his/her ability to communicate with others, but without grammar comprehension, the learners still can communicate. An expert, hence, Thornburry (2002:57) states,

“if you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most improvement if you learn more words and expression. You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words!”

In fact, in Indonesia, the teaching of vocabulary has not been done optimally yet. It can be seen that students face difficulties in speaking. When they join speech competition, they often stop speaking because they miss words. The fact is caused by their limited vocabulary. So, that's why teaching English vocabulary is important from elementary levels.

Based on the phenomena above, the researcher formulates the problems while doing teaching-learning process. Following is the problems observed during the teacher-learning process of English in SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta:

1. They were not interested in English class. They thought that English is a difficult lesson, because the ways to pronounce and write the English words are very different.
2. The students have less self-confidence. They feel shy in speaking English in front of the class, so it influences in the students' pronunciation. They tended to pronounce the letters of the word in the mother tongue style.
3. The students' intelligence also influences their vocabulary mastery. It is seen from the students' way in memorizing words.
4. The way of teacher teaches is not interesting. The teacher does not promote vocabulary learning by using interesting media.

Meanwhile, teaching English for the young learners especially in elementary school students is not easy thing to do. As the young learners, they have certain characteristics and need certain treatments. The characteristics of the young learners that have much mobility and still want to play around, force the teachers to make a creative and fun situation in the classroom.

A game is an interesting technique to teach language for children. Brumfit (1995: 142-143) defines games based on their characteristics. First, games are activities governed by rules. Second, it sets up clearly defined goal. Third, the achievement of these goals signals the end of games. And the last is that games ought to lead of having fun.

Wright, *et al.* (1983: 1-2) points out some reasons of teaching vocabulary by using games. First, games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. Second, games help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. Third, the meaning of the language they listen, read, speak, and write will be more vividly experienced and therefore better remembered. Fourth, games can be found to give practice in all language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), in all the stages of the teaching and learning sequence (presentation, repetition, recombination, and free use of language) and for many types of communication such as encouraging, criticizing, agreeing and explaining. Based on the problems above, the writer is interested in conducting an action research entitled ***Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery Using Card and Board Games at the Fourth Year of SDN 1 Begalon in 2012/2013 Academic Year***

B. Limitation of the Study

In order this study can be deeply examined, the writer needs to limit the study as follows:

1. The subject the study is limited to the fourth year students of SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta.
2. The object of the study is limited on the vocabulary mastery using card and board games used by the fourth year students of SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta.

C. Problem Statement

The problem discussed in this research can be stated as follows:

1. Can card and board games improve vocabulary mastery of the fourth grade students of SD Negeri 1 Begalon ?
2. Are card and board games effective to improve the vocabulary mastery of the fourth grade students of SD Negeri 1 Begalon ?

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem statement above, the objectives of this study can be formulated as follows:

1. To describe the improving vocabulary mastery using card board games of the fourth grade students of SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta.
2. To describe whether or not improving the vocabulary mastery of the fourth grade students of SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta using card and board games is effective.

E. Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the research would be useful for the reader and the writer herself. Those significances are:

1. Theoretical Significance

The result of this research can be used in developing English teaching-learning process, especially in improving English vocabulary mastery.

2. Practical Significance

This research can give the significance:

a. The teacher.

The result of the study will help the teacher know the students' difficulties in learning vocabulary and enable teacher to solve the problems by applying appropriate strategies to improve the vocabulary mastery.

b. The students

It is expected that the result of this study can give some advantages to the students at the fourth grade of SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta. Through card board games, students are expected to have good improvement in vocabulary and learning behavior during the teaching-learning process.

c. The school

It is expected that the information can be a useful input for improving vocabulary mastery in SDN 1 Begalon Surakarta. It is hoped that the school is able to improve its quality of teaching and learning process.

d. Other researchers.

It will give some information and knowledge to the readers about the process of teaching vocabulary. It is expected that this research is a source reference in doing research especially for those who are concerned in class action research so that this research can help them.

F. Research Paper Organization

The organization of the research paper is given in order to make the readers understand the content of the paper, it is as follows:

Chapter I is introduction which consists of background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, significance of the study, and research paper organization.

Chapter II is review of related literature. It contains of previous study and some related studies; general concept of vocabulary mastery, card and board games, theoretical framework, and action hypothesis.

Chapter III is research method. In this chapter, the writer presents type of the research, subject and object of the study, setting, data and data source, method of collecting data, technique for analyzing data.

Chapter IV is research result. In this chapter, the writer discusses the implementation of improving vocabulary mastery using card and board game. In this chapter, the writer also discusses the finding of the research.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion. In this chapter, the writer draws conclusion and propose the suggestion based on the result of the research.