

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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### **1.1. Background of the Study**

The aims of teaching English are defined with reference to four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four language skills can be mastered if one has a good store of vocabulary. Without a lot of words, nothing can be conveyed (Harmer, 1991:152). Having the same opinion with Harmer, Rubin (1994:79) points out that one cannot understand a language or express himself if he doesn't have a wide range of vocabulary. In other words, a student with a poor knowledge of vocabulary will not be able to communicate with foreigners and he will have a big problem in reading textbooks which are mostly written in English. It is, therefore, necessary to equip the students with as many vocabulary as possible.

Since vocabulary seems to be the key of mastering a language, teaching vocabulary to the students becomes the main concern in teaching English nowadays. However, how hard and how many vocabulary the students have been taught, the expected result seems to be beyond their reach. One of the reasons is that the technique being used in teaching vocabulary items, that is giving the students a list of words and asking them to memorize it, is not quite promising. Teaching vocabulary is not that simple. It is not only giving the students a list of words and asking them to memorize it. This technique appears to be impractical and inefficient since there are so many words the students have to learn. Besides, memorizing the words and their meanings which are quite unrelated to one

another makes the students demotivated and they will easily forget the words (Scrievener 1994:73).

Realizing that asking the students to memorize a list of words is not a good way in teaching vocabulary, many experts and researchers made efforts to find effective ways in teaching vocabulary to help the students speed up their acquisition of vocabulary. From the studies conducted by the experts and the researchers, pictures seems to be a good technique in teaching vocabulary. The use of pictures as one of the visual aids in teaching vocabulary is beneficial. It can draw the students' interest and arouse the students' motivation. As what Morgan (1982:1) says, learning a foreign language is not a simple process. Visual aids can encourage the students to keep learning with a great motivation. Other experts, Wright and Safia Haleen (1991:vi), say that using visual aids will make teaching more effective, communicative and interesting.

Considering the above facts, the writer thinks that the use of pictures will be very useful in teaching vocabulary. However, it has been realized that vocabulary is very broad since vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words in the language (Ur, 1996:60). Among the words, phrasal verbs are most frequently used in English written texts and in daily conversation. Therefore, teaching phrasal verbs to the students is important since it can help the students understand English and speak or write in English. As stated by Dixson (1983:xi), in understanding phrasal verbs, a student not only improves his listening, but he can also speak or write more precisely and gracefully.

Based on the facts above, the writer is encouraged to conduct a further study on the effect of using pictures in teaching phrasal verbs on the vocabulary achievement of

the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Based on the above background, the writer wants to carry out a study on the influence of using pictures in teaching vocabulary of phrasal verbs to the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus. The problem to be answered in this study is: Does the use of pictures in teaching phrasal verbs to the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus affect the students' vocabulary achievement?

### **1.3. Objective of the Study**

In line with the statement of the problem, the objective of the study is to find out whether the use of pictures in teaching phrasal verbs to the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus affect the students' vocabulary achievement.

### **1.4. Hypotheses**

There are two hypotheses in this study. They are the Null Hypothesis (HO) and the Alternative Hypothesis (HA).

#### **1.4.1. The Null Hypothesis (HO)**

It states that there is no significant difference in the effect of using pictures compared to a list of words in teaching phrasal verbs on the vocabulary achievement of the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus.

#### **1.4.2. The Alternative Hypothesis (HA)**

It states that there is a significant difference in the effect of using pictures compared to a list of words in teaching phrasal verbs on the vocabulary achievement of the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus.

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to give a good and useful information about a technique, i.e. pictures in teaching vocabulary especially phrasal verbs that can help the students keep interested in learning vocabulary, retain and recall the words better and guess the meanings of the words more easily. It is, then, expected that by using pictures students can widen their knowledge of vocabulary.

#### **1.6. Scope and Limitation**

Due to the limited time, facilities, and expense, the writer finds it necessary to limit the phrasal verbs being taught, the picture being used and the subject being examined.

Realizing that there are so many phrasal verbs, this study is limited only on the teaching of phrasal verbs which are idiomatic and transitive ones. The reason for choosing idiomatic phrasal verbs is that those phrasal verbs usually become a problem for the students. It is particularly caused by the meanings of the phrasal verbs which are completely different from their bases. While transitive phrasal verbs are chosen for this study since those kinds of phrasal verbs are the most frequently used in English written and spoken text (Celce-Murcia and Diane Larsen-Freeman, 1983: 268). Here, the writer

treats those phrasal verbs as part of the vocabulary based on the consideration that grammar is also related to vocabulary. McCarthy (1990:12) states, “ any word in the language can be examined from the point of view of grammar, and, vice-versa, even words like articles and prepositions, can be considered as vocabulary items.” Therefore, the writer, in this study, will not discuss phrasal verbs grammatically. She simply focuses on the use of pictures in inferring the meaning of phrasal verbs and she wants to find out whether this technique gives a good result on the students’ vocabulary achievement. The students’ vocabulary achievement that was measured was the students’ receptive vocabulary.

There are two kinds of pictures i.e. individual and situational pictures (Szyke, 1981:45). The formers are suitable for teaching the item alone, while the latter are those which show persons or objects in action. Since it is about teaching phrasal verbs, the writer uses situational pictures.

As the subjects of this study, the writer took the available three classes of the first year students of SMUK St. Stanislaus belonging to the school year of 1997-1998. The reason for choosing the first year students of SMU is based on the consideration that the main goal of teaching English in SMU, according to the 1994 English Curriculum in Indonesia is to enable the students comprehend English reading texts in which the students will inevitably find so many phrasal verbs. Therefore, it is necessary to equip the students with lots of phrasal verbs as early as possible so that they will not find any difficulty in understanding English reading texts. Besides, they are assumed to have learned enough vocabulary that they can give the one-word equivalents of the phrasal verbs. From the

three classes, one of them received treatment with pictures in learning phrasal verbs, while the others were taught phrasal verbs using a list of words. The rest is considered as a try-out group to whom the writer tried out the test to determine whether the test was appropriate before it was administered to the experimental and control groups.

### **1.7. Definition of the Key Terms**

To avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding, the writer thinks it is necessary to define some key words.

#### **a. A phrasal verb**

A phrasal verb is combination between a verb and a particle which is clearly to be treated as an adverb (Geoffrey and Leech 1989:35).

#### **b. Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is the words in the language (Ur, 1996:60).

#### **c. Achievement**

Achievement is performance by a student in a course : quality and quantity of a student's work during a given period. In this study, students' vocabulary achievement is represented by their scores after they are given a receptive vocabulary test (Webster, 1986:16).

#### **d. A Picture**

A picture is an image or likeness of an object person or scene produced on a flat surface, especially by painting, drawing, or photography (Webster, 1989:1022). Here

the pictures used by the writer are a set of drawings or illustrations accompanied by question-prompts which help the students focus themselves on the exact meanings expressed in the pictures.

### **1.8. Organization of this Study**

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I discusses the introduction of the study. Chapter II deals with some related literatures that support the writer's study. Chapter III is about the methodology of the research. While chapter IV presents the data analysis and the findings. Chapter V, as the last chapter, will conclude the whole discussion in terms of summary and suggestions.