

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1. Background of the Study

Based on the curriculum 1994, English as an international language is taught as a subject at the elementary school, starting from the fourth grade. The reasons of giving the students a foreign language according to M.A. Dawson (1963:14) are : first, English has been admitted as an international language. Second, the students are expected to be able to practise English in a real communication. And the third, English is required in many occasions in Indonesia, such as in a restaurant, in a hotel, in a school, in business affairs etc. It is also done since science and technology have developed so rapidly and the language used to communicate the findings of science and technology has been mostly in English.

Therefore, much attention has been paid to the teaching of English at the elementary school because many experts assume that younger students have a greater tendency for learning and acquiring a new language, English, more easily than adults. It is proved by Kasbolah's (1992:11-12) statements as follows :

Research on language development between 1950s and 1960s showed that the children possessed unique capacities for language learning. The main argument was that psychologists and linguists felt that the sooner the student learned a language, the better. They should begin as soon as they began their formal education.

Learning a new language is not an easy thing for the students, especially for the elementary school students since it is a new experience for them to hear and use English words and even sentences. They also have to memorize how to pronounce the English words correctly since every word has different pronunciation. Therefore, the teacher obviously has to help the students in such a way so that they can master simple words to express simple ideas and their daily needs.

Teaching vocabulary by memorizing a list of words can arouse the students boredom and fatigue. The students tend to be asked to memorize the words again and again, and it is undeniable that they get bored, tired and even hate it. On the other hand, teaching is a process. In the process, all components are activated to carry out their own tasks. The teacher's task in teaching is to create an environment or situation in which the students can learn. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to vary their techniques in increasing the students' motivation to learn vocabulary. There are many techniques used in language teaching such as songs, pictures, games and others.

The writer uses games because games are interesting, enjoyable and spontaneous. It also can make the situation of the teaching learning process more vivid. This is expected to be able to encourage the students to speak "Supplementing regular lessons by a large variety of game activities motivates even the usually non responsive, shy; passive on lookers, and they become active participants, displaying their competence and newly found confidence in communicating in the foreign language" as stated by

Jeffic (1986:39). It will also stimulate the students to communicate in the target language (Wallace, 1982:105).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the above background, the writer wants to make a study on the influence of Action Word Games in Teaching Vocabulary to Children. The problem to be answered in this study is : "Do the students who are taught by means of Action Word Games have better vocabulary achievement than those who are taught with translation?".

1.3. The Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to find out whether the use of Action Word Games to Children in the third and fourth grades of elementary school has a positive effect on the students' achievement in mastering English Vocabulary.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this study can give some contributions in the teaching of English vocabulary to Children.

1.5. The Scope and Limitation of The Study

There are various techniques used in improving students' vocabulary such as songs, dialogues, puzzles and other medias. Here, the writer limits this study only to use Action Word Games as a means of teaching vocabulary. The materials are "Actions in Sequence; Hop, Skip, Jump a Word; Gestures" which are taken from "Action Plans" by Mac Donald and Rogers Gordon, "New Ways in Teaching Young Children" by Linda Schinke - Llano and Rebecca Rauff, "Children in Action" by Carmen Argondizzo. The writer presents these games because they can help the students in learning and mastering the vocabulary and the games are easy enough for children.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

The writer makes this study based on the theory of learning English through action. According to Asher (1979:177), learning another language through actions offers one of the most exciting prospects for foreign language teaching. Total Physical Response is an approach to language learning in which the students act out commands given by the teacher, which aids them in acquiring a cognitive map of the language and use the commands to manipulate the movements of their teacher and classmates.

1.7. Hypothesis

In this study, HA / Alternative Hypothesis is : The average score of the students who are taught vocabulary through Action Word Games is higher than the average score of the students who are taught with translation.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

To clarify the terms used in this thesis and to avoid misunderstanding on the part of the readers the following definitions are given :

- a. Action Word Games : is a type of game used in teaching vocabulary by presenting the action words through the movement's of the student's body.
- b. Teaching : It is a teacher's effort to help the students to have clear understanding of what a word denotes or refers to, or to know the meaning of a word (Mukarto,1989:66).
- c. Vocabulary : It is a total number of word which (with rules for combining them) make up a language (Hornby,1987).
- d. Motivation : It is learning language skills and knowledge through fun and personal challenge (Ong,1981).

- e. **Language Learning** : It is serving as an adjunct to techniques of teaching the grammar and sound system of the new language (Weeds,1972:28-29).

1.9. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one is Introduction, and chapter two is Review of Related Literature. Methodology is in chapter three while chapter four is about Data Analysis and Findings. The last chapter, chapter five is about conclusion that consists of Summary and Suggestions.