

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The course of English should be given in every school in Indonesia. Even though English as the foreign language in this country, since from fundamental education is elementary school until for high school they have to have English inside. In 1992, the government establish that English is official entered in every school of Indonesia but as the local content course in elementary school, both of the public school and private school. In essential, English is introduced in 4th grade of elementary school because their intelligence is enough capable to receive this English comprehension.

Most Indonesian students get many troubles in learning English. One of the most significant problems that make students difficult to master English is vocabulary. That is really true, how can they express their idea without enough ability in vocabulary. It is clear, vocabulary is very important to master a language. It is clear, vocabulary is very important to master a language. There are two ways to improve vocabulary mastery, they are incidental and intentional ways. Improving vocabulary mastery incidentally can be achieved through learning vocabulary in context in reading and listening (Nagy in Maghsodi, 2010).

Many students usually have problem in using vocabulary when they are asked to use the vocabulary in writing and speaking, because the will be difficult in the structure and pronunciation. They may confuse when they get different

structure but using the same word. the use of academic vocabulary causes considerable difficulties for the majority of ESL or EFL learners (Chung & Nation, 2003; Cobb & Horst, 2004), because such lexical terms occur with much lower frequency than general-service items in the texts (Worthington & Nation, 1996). Jeremy Harmer (1995) said, students can acquire vocabulary. they should have the following knowledge about the words : meaning (sense), word use, word formation and word grammar. Acquire vocabulary has important function child growth, because the child who acquires many vocabularies learning has big self confidence and can influence his friends (Wulan, 2004).

The researcher wants to investigate how the elementary students acquire the vocabularies at school, because there is not a research about vocabulary acquisition in Indonesia especially in Gresik. The researcher interests how the students acquire the vocabularies at school, because vocabulary is the basic thing to learn and also mastery language especially English.

This is empirical data on vocabulary acquisition based on some researchers, one of them is Baker. In Baker's research, he analyzed kindergarten students. In the reslut of research, he found that some of the students could acquire 3.000 words per year on the average or 8 words per day and the other students could acquire or learn one or two words per day.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on those statements above, in this study the writer aimed to answer the research question: “How do the elementary students acquire the vocabularies at school?”.

1.3. Objective of the Study

According the problem statement above, the objectives of the study is to find out how the elementary students’ acquire the vocabularies at school.

1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this study, the researcher scopes the study to the way the elementary students acquire the vocabularies at school based on their book and the materials which have been taught by the teacher. The students at the fifth grade will be researched by the researcher. Generally, vocabulary has two types, there are active vocabulary and passive vocabulary. active vocabulary includes words which are used in writing and speaking, while passive vocabulary includes words are understood as we listen and read. Students will mastery many vocabularies fast if they use the vocabularies frequently in their daily activity. The researcher will investigate how the elementary students acquire the vocabularies at school, so the researcher focuses on the active vocabulary. In this part, the researcher will interview the classroom teacher of fifth grade also.

1.5. Significance of the Study

1.1.1. Theoretical of Significance

The researcher expects that this research will give information about how the elementary students at fifth grade acquire the vocabularies at school. The finding will be explained with qualitative data from any source.

1.1.2. Practical of Significance

The result of this study can contribute some benefits to students and teachers. Here are the benefits:

1. Reader

This study is important to be done because it will give positive contribution for English learners to make them easy to learn English and acquire many vocabularies.

2. Students

This study can help the students who have the difficulty in acquiring vocabularies.

3. Teacher

This study can give the new way to the teachers to teach vocabulary to the students, especially for Elementary Students.

1.6. Definition of Key Word

- **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is the word that must be learned by all people who want to learn English, especially for the fifth grade students who are studying

English in school. The words that have been taught by the teacher in the class.

- Acquisition

Acquisition is the process of achieving mastery of words that must be learned by fifth grade students who are studying English in school based on the materials that have been taught by the teacher. The words have been practiced in their daily activity. So that they use the words as active vocabulary.

- Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary acquisition is identified as involving progressive developments learners' mental lexicon (Henriksen 1999; Nation 2001; Schmitt 2000). It is documented that vocabulary acquisition is incremental given three major aspects of mastering words: knowing a word in terms of form (spelling, pronunciation), meanings (translation, synonym), and use (morphological patterns).