

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction. It covers the background of the study, statements of the problem, the purpose of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitations of the study, and definitions of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is admitted to be very important as a part of daily conversation. Without good achievement of vocabulary, one will find difficulties to speak English smoothly and fluently. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language that has four skills, namely listening, reading, speaking and writing. The four skills are supported by the learning of language elements. They are structure, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling. Therefore, vocabulary is one of the important language elements the students should master. David P. Harris (1996:9) stated that vocabulary and grammar are two very important elements shared by all four skills. But one who is poor in vocabulary will get trouble in those skills (Deighton, 1971:461). From the statement above, it can be said that if the students learn all four skills, they have to master the vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary is a basic part to learn English skills. One crucial factor is the amount of vocabulary one possesses as vocabulary forms the biggest part of the meaning of any language (McCarthy, 1988).

Vocabulary is defined as all the words in a particular language (Wehmeier et al 2005: 1707). Vocabulary skill is one of linguistics feature, which influences the

communicative competence. Paulston et al (1976: 55) state that the one thing that interferes mostly with our students' communicative competence is pitiable vocabulary and we have recently come to accept the fact that our students have been right all these years when they complained about not knowing and not being taught sufficient words. Decarrico (2001) states that words should not be learnt separately or by memorization without understanding. Moreover, "learning new words is a cumulative process, with words enriched and established as they are met again", Nation (2000, p.6). So, if we are interested in being communicative, words are among the first order of business.

Since English is not the first language, Indonesia learners encounter a lot of problems, including the limited mastery of vocabulary, grammatical rules and language skills. There is an assumption that English student's competence of Senior High School is still low. The low achievement is partly caused by their limited vocabulary. It is supported by Puspita (2006) in her research "*A Study of Vocabulary Mastery of Year X Students of SMU N ISlawi in the Academic Year of 2005/2006*" the research showed that the vocabulary mastery of the year X students were classified in low category. As a result when they continue their study into higher level they have some difficulties because the majority of the text books is written in English. John Langan (1992: 442) stated that a good vocabulary, more than any other factor, was common to people enjoying successful careers in life.

Considering that students mastery of vocabulary is very important and its mastery of the students is still unsatisfactory (Ramelan, 1992:3). This research conducted which is aimed at finding about how is the student's vocabulary mastery and what the problem faced by the students in mastering vocabulary. This research was

done at SMA Semen Gresik Senior High School. The reason why the researchers choose SMA Semen Gresik is because that school is one of the well known private schools in Gresik. So, the researcher wants to know how the students acquire vocabulary mastery at the first grade students of SMA Semen Gresik is.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

In this research, the researcher formulates statements of the problem as follows:

1. How do the students acquire vocabulary mastery at the first grade students of SMA Semen Gresik?
2. What problems do the students encounter in mastering vocabulary?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the statements of the problem above, the purpose of the study is as follows:

- (1) To describe how is the students' acquire vocabulary mastery at the first grade students of SMA Semen Gresik
- (2) To find out the problem encounter by the students in mastering vocabulary

1.4 Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that this research can give the benefit contribution for teaching and learning, especially in teaching vocabulary. Bellows are both theoretical and practical aspect.

Theoretically, this research brings information, references and description about students' vocabulary mastery in daily conversation at the class of the first grade senior high school.

Practically, for students, to investigate their vocabulary mastery in daily conversation at the class. So they know their vocabulary skill, how they can develop the vocabulary skill.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focused on vocabulary mastery in conversation at the class of the first grade senior high school students. The scope of discussion is only to describe how the students acquire vocabulary mastery at the first grade senior high school students in conversation at the class during teaching learning English process. The limitation is for the problem faced by the students about the difficulty in mastering vocabulary in conversation at the class. This study was conducted at the first grade students at SMA Semen Gresik.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

The researcher will clarify the terms used in the title to make this thesis easy to understand:

Vocabulary is a range of words that the students know or use related to daily conversation at the class during teaching learning English process.

Mastery is the process which the students develop their capability to comprehend language, as well to produce and use words to communicate during the

teaching learning English process. In this research mastery means the ability of the students to use the words correctly in daily conversation at the class during teaching learning English process.

Vocabulary mastery in conversation at the class is additional vocabulary from unfamiliar to be familiar to mentions, express or understand everything in conversation at the class during teaching learning English process. The vocabulary that is learned by students in the first grade of senior high school in conversation at the class.