REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1   English Teaching

In term of accessing to the world of knowledge, technology and economy, English can be considered as a powerful language in the world. In order to develop those needs, people have to, in some ways, possess the power of English. The demand of English in Indonesia exists with some problems. The issues of motivation, culture and the best approach to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia have to be resolved. In this case, the complex ones can be classified as the hardware problems (e.g. facilities, facilitators, and students) and the software problem (e.g. policies, curriculum, and education system) (Mantiri, 2006).

Indonesian government has launched the new concept of English curriculum as one of a local content for elementary school. As the result of this, some problems raise up dealing with the age towards level of understanding second language (L2) and students' own customs of to whom they should practice English language.

However, undoubtedly, children in elementary school whose age average is up to eleven years old are popularly believed to be better at learning second language than adults. They can learn L2 more easily. This belief seems to come from the Critical Period Hypothesis; it claims that human beings are only capable of learning language between the age of two and the early of teens (Cook, 1992).

2.1.1   Vocabulary Teaching Competence

In order to reach the goal of students' vocabulary acquisition, a teacher should consider some features which are possibly found in certain classroom. According to Hedge, there are some features concerning with the input of how an effective vocabulary teaching-learning is gained. The first is frequency in which the drill of word repetitions are given to construct more vocabulary remembered in mind. The second is pronunciation that refers to pronounce words in a correct manner. This suggests that, if the learning English is to listen and understand, then learning word stress or speech process is important. The third is contextualization. The word contextualization more intends to be considered as practices in which the vocabulary entries should be meant and placed contextually, in an appropriate and understandable use (Hedge, 2003).

In her book, Hedge adds numbers of techniques which could be used; the first is physical demonstration, using mime and gesture may be the most effective, as it will create a visual memory of word. The second is verbal explanation, involving a number of context, giving clues or meaning regarding to the clear content. And the third is synonym by giving clues through asking the similar or identical word.

2.1.2   Approach and Technique on Vocabulary Teaching

Dealing with teaching English for children, one of the common principles that may be considered to develop or choose methods is that learning a foreign language should be fun and natural (Setiyadi, 2006). The choice of vocabulary and structure also make English teaching for children different from other levels. Thus, they should be taught in an easy way such as integrating the attractive and useful materials through some methods.

Approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language and the nature of language learning and teaching. Meanwhile, technique means all activities taken place in a language class, an implementation phase or procedure while approach and method are as the level of design (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). It means that the approach and techniques need to walk down in harmony in a teaching leaning in a classroom.

Some techniques or strategies may be employed by a teacher to avail a vocabulary teaching such as games, music, role playing, or by memorizing and drilling. They are simply used to attract a students' motivation to be interesting in a lesson.

2.2   Students Vocabulary Competence

The central point of learning a new language can be seen in various perspectives. From the learner's point of view, knowledge of vocabulary is more reliable than grammar. It is claimed that native speakers can better understand ungrammatical utterances with accurate vocabulary than those with accurate grammar and inaccurate vocabulary (Widdowson, 1978). A

similar statement by Lewis argued that "When students travel, they don't carry grammar books, they carry dictionaries" (Lewis, 1993).

The role of mastering vocabulary entries, moreover in elementary school, is the most point towards having easier way to learn other skills in English. In an elementary school local curriculum, it is said;

> "At the end of the primary level, students are supposed to have listening, speaking, reading and writing in English in a simple manner based on their interests and development of level with vocabulary mastery more less than 500 words" (Depdikbud, 2001).

During the lesson, the researcher finds in the subject of the study, there are many students in the mentioned class who still have less competences in vocabulary achievement in term of recalling the last vocabularies gained in a question-answer for pre-lesson activity or even use them in some review cases. This is proved by lot of students who like to be quite rather than doing fault on his/her answers. They look so difficult to respond to the acceptable answer. In another case, they have difficulties in matching words to several short-answer questions, arranging words in a good sentence or completing puzzle based on given clues.

In light of doing test, students still have difficulty in matching words to several short-answer question, arranging words in a good sentence or completing puzzle based on given clues. They seem to have problem in recalling those vocabularies at certain materials.

2.3   Thematic-Unit Approach

For a specific purpose, according to Crandall, he said that teaching language (vocabulary) needs to employ in an integrated language elements and skills under one topic or theme.

> The idea of integrating the language elements and skills has been realized by using the theme as the core of organizing the teaching activities and materials. This represents the real use of language in daily communication as we always start our conversation with a topic to get across (Crandall, 1994).

Regarding to this statement, the researcher wants to transform how students have been learning so far to the basic claim of better language learning through integrated sub-unit materials into under one theme. This sort of approach is supposed to be able to, at least reduce the students' confusion in mastering vocabulary. Students are expected to map what they have learnt about certain vocabulary under themes.

A few concepts of learning and teaching have crystallized recently. The earlier concept of integrating the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and the three language elements (pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar) coming from the audio-lingual approach to communicative approach which emphasize the communicating of message.

From those messages in which including of ideas, opinions, feelings or emotions of people taking part in the communication, the message itself comes from a variety of topics or themes commonly discussed in students' daily life such as family and relative, foods and drinks, transportation, school life, occupation, recreation, etc. This concept expects us to more explicitly state the objectives of teacher's instructional activities including language teaching and learning in a competence-based form.

The description above indicates the rationale of Thematically Integrate Approach to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language and its materials development is essential applied. According to Mora, Thematic-Unit Approach means an accommodation of needs and abilities of students by using selected materials in a unity of theme. This aims to combine some useful unit materials and some languages focus under particular theme toward better achievement at certain skill (Mora, 2006).

Dealing with teaching through thematic-unit, there are several advantages in which Thematic-unit planning is employed at particular English classroom (Mora, 2006); first is, the concepts are interrelated, meaning that the building vocabulary knowledge of where they want to study is integrated in a four language skills. Second is, vocabulary is repeated and reinforced, meaning that at thematic-unit planning students are supposed to be drilled in a various sub materials under one theme. Third is, information is connected in a meaningful way, meaning that in only one theme that consists of material units, students are learning more information to support the main lesson to what they should know. The fourth is, material is adjusted for language level, meaning that the specific sub materials are gathered suitable with student language level and those can be added or reduced concerning with the proficiency. For process of having this sort of approach the entire units of material can be compressed to shorten the time during the semester program by the teacher instead of wasting more time without applying this approach.

2.3.1   Integration of Thematic Planning

According to Ritter, it is believed that a language course will be more natural if the lessons are organized on a topical or thematic basis (Ritter, 1999). Regarding to the theory, this thematic-unit approach has been tried out for several years in the first and the second grade of elementary level in Indonesia since competence-based curriculum applied in 2004. The integration among unit themes gathered with identification of supporting materials in the four skills teaching action, brings about the increasing vocabulary entries. It becomes a concept due to the unity of selected words or phrases at certain material are in harmony compressed and students are supposed to know and recall more than what they are learning about during the recent lesson.

The vocabulary is listed under certain theme. The list shows the area of vocabulary in which the lexical items are topically related. For example, under personal identity theme, someone is expected to find specific items such as name, address, age, birth, country, religion and so on. Whereas, other vocabulary items dealing with this theme, teacher can also integrate teaching numbers, name of days and month in mentioning date of birth and even more, spelling alphabet is also required to undertake.

According to Mora, before a teacher decides to apply a thematic-unit approach, he or she should formulate through viewing this structure of a teaching unit; first is an overview that refers to the covering topic or theme, meaning that teacher must stress why the

content is important for the intended learners. This needs to be scheduled for each sub-unit. Teachers are free to add to this section by other suitable materials. The second is an objective which is close to the goal of having the study. The objectives in a teaching unit will relate to understanding (knowledge to be gained), problem solving skills, value and attitude development (Mora, 2006).

Identification of syllabus and appropriate lesson plan are surely required to lead a teaching learning process. Syllabus refers to a unity of selected materials which guides language teacher to decide what to teach (selection), the order in which is taught (gradation), how meaning of forms are conveyed (presentation) and what to be done to master a language (repetition) (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Lesson plan is defined as planning for action of how teaching learning in a classroom is reached containing with the objectives, materials used, activities, evaluation and references.

This is an example of a syllabus of a thematic-units application which is implemented in the first grade of elementary school composed based on East Java local-content curriculum referred to competence-based curriculum 2004 (Dinas P&K, 2005) :

Table 1
English syllabus for class 1 elementary school
Theme   : My Family and I

Basic Competence	Study Experience	Indicator	Integrated Materials *)
Listening • Listening to and doing things	• Imitating and pronouncing	Students are able to ; • Imitating and pronouncing	• Alphabets A-Z • Numbers ; 1-5

Speaking • Explaining simply the content of pictures Reading • Reading words aloud Writing • Writing letters A-Z	members of family ; father, mother, brother, sister • Identifying picture of family members • Spelling student's own name and others' • Mentioning numbers or counting 1 – 5 • Reading aloud letters A-Z and words about members of family • Completing words with letters	members of family • Mentioning name of family members • Spelling student's own name and others' • Mentioning numbers or counting 1 – 5 • Identifying letters A-Z as part of words about name of family members and way to read them • Writing incomplete words about family members	• Colors; blue, red, green, etc. • Member of family ; father, mother, brother, sister • Expression of greeting ; Hi, Hello, Good Morning … • Adjectives ; possessive "My" e.g. My father, My friend, etc.

It is believed that in conducting teaching English lesson, the integration of four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and some language aspects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) is absolutely required. Consequently, thematic-unit approach is possible employed as particular technique in which those language elements are integrated in unity.

In the fourth column, integrated materials are exposed as regard of the essential sub-units under one theme. In this case, teachers are supposed to enable to prior of what students' learning need dealing with the theme dished. Concerning with the much more materials within the action, teacher needs to allocate the time also to avoid left-discussed materials.

2.3.2   Practical Technique on Thematic Unit Approach

According to Lewis, learning vocabulary is divided into two aspects of word knowledge, those are receptive aspect and productive aspect as described follows:

Table 2
Receptive and productive aspects of word knowledge

Form	Spoken Form	R	: What does the word sound like?
		P	: How is the word pronounced?
	Written Form	R	: What does the word look like?
		P	: How is the word written and spelt?
Position	Grammatical pattern	R	: In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	: In what pattern must we use the word?
	Collocation	R	: What words or types of words can be expected after the word?
		P	: What words or types of words must we use with this word?
Function	Frequency	R	: How common is the word?
		P	: How often should the word be used?
	Appropriateness	R	: Where would we expect to meet this word?
		P	: Where can this word be used?
Meaning	Concept	R	: What does the word mean?
		P	: What word should be used to express this meaning?
		R	: What other words does this word make us think of?
	Associations	P	: What other words could we use instead of this one?

Regarding to the theory of the aspects in table 2 above, vocabulary teaching-learning emphasizes on a more detail of how a word is defined, converted and used. Thus, the technique or strategy to gain them is absolutely required instead of only recalling the entries.

To apply a thematic-unit approach as mentioned earlier, then concerning with the more aspects within learning vocabulary, a teacher should provide particular appropriate technique to use to optimize the goal.

2.3.2.1 Communicative Drills

Drilling is a technique that has been used in foreign language classrooms for many years. It is a key feature of audio lingual approaches to language teaching which emphasizes on repeating structural patterns through oral practice (Tice, 2000). Based on the Behaviorist view that learning to speak a foreign language - like other skills - is a correct habit formation, it is thought that repeating phrases correctly lots of times will lead to mastery of the language. Nowadays, we know that language learning is not like this. It is more complex and required to have a creative process, thus, language is a lot more than just a list of structures to be memorized.

At its simplest, drilling means listening to a model, provided by the teacher and students are repeating what is heard. This is a repetition drill, a technique that is still used by many teachers when introducing new language items to their students. The teacher says (models) the word or phrase and the students repeat it. In all drills learners have no or very little choice over what is said so drills are a form of very controlled practice. There is one correct answer and the main focus is on getting it right, that is on accuracy. Drills are usually conducted chorally (i.e. the whole class repeats) then individually. There is also the possibility of groups or pairs of students doing language drills together.

A communicative drill, that is, one in which the type of response is controlled but the student provides his or her own content or information (Richard, Platt, and Platt 1992:223). In communicative drills the teacher controls the learners' speech primarily by ensuring that they produce short utterances. Hence, in a thematic-unit approach, a communicative drill may be used as the alternative strategy to implement those targets of vocabulary mastery by students. The alternative things that may be concerned are such as Practical situations, Guessing Games, and True Answer. Students can practice requesting and providing information in situations such as asking for directions in a city and ordering meals in a restaurant. For example, after mechanically drilling the question- answer pattern "Where is…? It is…." and prepositions of location, students work in pairs, with one asking for directions to a specific location and the other giving directions according to a map.

Other, for example, one student chooses a famous person, and the others ask yes-no questions until the identity of the person is determined. Or, one student draws a picture of a fruit or object and turns it over on the desk; the partner guesses what the item is by asking, "Do you have a…?" until the correct answer is found. Unlike typical substitution drills, these questions are related to the student's life. For example,

after modeling a sentence, such as "My father is a doctor," the teacher asks students to construct similar sentences, in this case, truthfully stating the occupation of someone in their family.