

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As a foreign language, English is not used in daily conversation by Indonesian people, but it is learned in schools or certain language courses and used in certain occasions also. Therefore, it is not easy for EFL teachers to teach it because learners do not have many chances to practice and explore their language in any activities, specifically in elementary level. Meanwhile, introducing English since the earlier age is very necessary. As Piaget said in El Bahri (2008),” A child at the age of 7 – 10 years is always interested in recognizing and knowing new words, he stands to repeat new words repeatedly so that he will memorize them”.

Learning English is not something new for elementary school students in Indonesia. It has been implemented more than ten years through the 1994 curriculum that had been decided by the government. That was said by Kasihani in her paper as quoted in International Workshop and Seminar on EYL (2008), through the 1994 curriculum the government has decided that English is taught at primary schools as a local content subject and recommended to start at the fourth grade. In the 2006 curriculum, the government has developed and decided the goal of teaching English in elementary school as cited in PERMENDIKNAS (The Regulation of the National Education Minister) no.22/2006 as followed:

Based on the goals of English education in SD/MI, the students are hoped to have abilities in :

1. Developing competence to communicate orally as language accompanying action in school context.
2. Realizing about the essential and the importance of English to increase the capacity of competition of Indonesian people in global community.

At the time that, the scope of English subject in SD/MI covers the ability of oral communication limitedly in school context, including listening, speaking, reading and writing aspects.

According to PERMENDIKNAS no.22/2006, the goals of teaching English in elementary level are focusing on the abilities of the students to develop their competence to communicate orally as language accompanying action and realizing about the importance of English to increase the abilities of Indonesian people in the world competition. The scope of English for elementary level is the ability of oral communication which covers the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Basically, skills in English do not only consist of listening, speaking, reading and writing but also have the elements of language such as grammar or structure, spelling, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Vocabulary is a list of words in alphabetical order in dictionaries as symbols of ideas which are needed by people to express and to communicate their ideas both from the first language and second language. Ur (1998: 60) stated that vocabulary can be defined as the words that teachers teach in the foreign language. A new item of the vocabulary may be more than a single word which is made up of two or three words but express a single idea. However, vocabulary is very important to be mastered first since it is an essential means in conducting communication. According to Hedge (2003:111), "The neglect of vocabulary is also surprising in view of the fact that

errors of vocabulary are potentially more misleading than those of grammar”. It is also stressed by Richards, which has recited by Hedge (2003:111), “A native-speaker child on entering school at the age of five or six would already have a productive of some 2,000 to 3,000 words”. It means that, ideally, EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners as like Indonesian beginner students should master more than 2,000 or 3,000 words to support their language.

In fact, teaching vocabulary is not easy, especially teaching vocabulary to elementary students. Jeanne Mc Carten (2007) said, “Learning vocabulary is a challenge for learners, partly because of the size of the task, and partly because of the variety of vocabulary types to be learned, including single words, phrases, collocations, and strategic vocabulary, as well as grammatical patterning, idioms, and fixed expressions”. Consequently, the teacher should pay attention to the way or technique for teaching vocabulary and decide which the best is for their students.

MINU Sukodono is a private elementary school, under Perguruan NU Sukodono foundation. Located on Jl. KH. Hasyim Asy'ari 15 in kampong Sukodono Gresik district, behind Gresik market. This school is in one location with SMP Muallimat and SMPNU 1. In this school, English lesson is taught as local content which uses 65 as a minimum passing standard.(SKM=Standar Ketuntasan Minimum). This standard is decided by the school.

As English teacher, the researcher found some problems in teaching English, specifically in understanding meaning of words. Actually, the real situation in the class was not very noisy but most of the students were very

passive. 80 per cent of the students were very silent. When the teacher gave questions to them, they were only silent and smile. When the teacher pointed to one of them, they nodded their head, and said “tidak tahu, Bu..”(I don’t know, Mam), or they can answer it, but in Bahasa Indonesia eventhough the vocabulary words have been taught by the teacher. Only 20 per cent of them raised their hands and answered the teacher’s questions. If they were given english exercises, some of them came to the teacher and asked the meaning of the word, some of them knocked the table with their pencil, or turned around the class to ask the answer from their friend. From the result of the exercises, the teacher found many mistakes in answering the questions. It was one of the indications that the students extremely got problem in mastering vocabulary words.

Dealing with the discussion above, the researcher assumes that there must be a strategy in teaching vocabulary with joyful process which can make all the students active in joining the lesson and also use the technique that can make all the students have chances to practice their vocabulary.

Many researchers had some efforts to find out the appropriate strategy to teach vocabulary. Among others are Huyen and Nga (2003) conducted a vocabulary research using Selling and Buying Things and Snakes and Ladders game, Uberman (1998) conducted a research by using picture-puzzle game, and Kim (1995) conducted a research using Win, Lose, or Draw and Just A Minute game. The findings of all their research showed that using game in teaching vocabulary is very effective, provided the teacher can choose the appropriate game for the students.

There are so many variety of games that can be used in teaching vocabulary such as pyramid game. Pyramid game is an American TV game show which was broadcasted firstly in 1973, known as \$10.000 Pyramid game. This game was adapted as TV game show by some countries in the world using variety of names, as like Australia (Pyramid), Canada(Pyramide), Egypt(El Haram), Germany(Hast Du Worte), Indonesia(Kuis Piramida), Italy(Pyramid), Singapore(The Pyramid Game), etc.

In fact, this game is not only adapted as TV game show but also as a strategy in the class to improve students' vocabulary mastery. A Lively Vocabulary Game is one of vocabulary game adapted by Rickford Grant for his students in Japan. Knowing that pyramid game has been used in some countries, the researcher is challenged to adapt and modify this strategy to solve the problem in vocabulary mastery and then calls it with *Estafet Game*.

Estafet game which is a vocabulary game adapted and modified from pyramid game show (in Indonesia known as Kuis Piramida which is broadcasted by RCTI TV station in 2007) has some activities that is needed by the "A" fifth grade students of MINU Sukodono. It does not only ask the students to think, but also to do the dinamic activity, for example, the students should move, shout and make competition with others to be the best one. As a strategy, *Estafet Game* shows not only moving activity, but also ask the students to memorize by playing, without realizing that they are memorizing vocabulary words in certain topic. Besides, *Estafet game* is the strategy which combines guessing, memorizing, pronouncing, repetiting and competing.

It is very easy game which does not need complicated preparation. It only uses a small list of vocabulary words or it can be use students' note books or text book as the aids to play the game. Those could be the reason of why this research is needed to be conducted besides all the reasons related to the problems of teaching vocabulary which the researcher found in the classroom as stated above.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher tries to teach vocabulary by using *estafet game* to increase the students' ability in mastering vocabulary words with the subject of the "A" fifth grade students of MINU Sukodono Gresik.

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study above, then the researcher can conclude that the statement of the problem is: How can *Estafet game* improve students' vocabulary for the "A" fifth grade students at MINU Sukodono Gresik in 2011/2012?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to improve the students' vocabulary for the "A" fifth grade students at MINU Sukodono Gresik by using *Estafet Game*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Hopefully, the result of this study will give good contribution practically and theoritically.

1) *Practically,*

- a. It is hoped that this study can answer all the problems of the teacher in teaching vocabulary in the class.
- b. It is hoped that the dynamic and unique principles of estafet game can be a good way for the students in learning vocabulary so that the students' motivation can be increased.
- c. It is also hoped that this study can give further information for the next researcher who will conduct research about teaching vocabulary using estafet game.

2) *Theoretically,*

- a. It is expected that the result of this study will generate strategy on the teaching vocabulary in elementary schools.
- b. It is expected that this study will find the strategy on estafet game to improve students' vocabulary.
- c. It is expected that the result of this study will give contribution to the theory of TEFL, especially on the effective teaching vocabulary methodology.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This research is a classroom action research which has limitation in finding out how *estafet* game can improve students' vocabulary at the fifth grade of MINU Sukodono Gresik. There are two classes (parallel class) of the fifth grade in this school namely; A class and B class. The researcher conducts the research in A class because the problem comes up in this class.

The subjects of this research are the total students in the “A” fifth grade of MINU Sukodono Gresik (20 students) which consist of 11 females and 9 males.

In this research, the researcher conducts an action research in one cycle. If the result of the first cycle is successful (it can reach the criteria of success) so, the researcher can stop this study. Latif (209:11) stated that one cycle in classroom action research can be successful if it can reach the target which has been considered, criteria of success. The criteria of success for this research are if the average score of the students can reach the minimum passing standard (65) and the students’ participation in teaching learning process can be active. The topic of vocabulary words is related to the topic of the students’ lessons.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The definition of key term is to avoid misunderstanding about the problem that will be discussed. Here the researcher lists and defines the terms which will be used. The definitions of key word in this study are:

Estafet game is a vocabulary game modified from pyramid game which is used by the teacher in the class to teach vocabulary. It belongs to group game consists of five students in each group. There is one guesser and four hinters and uses some vocabulary cards as the aids.

Vocabulary is a total number of English verbs and nouns in certain topics which used in this research. It is related to the standard competence number 7 (reading aspect) and basic competence number 7.1 which stated in the content standart of English subject, namely: understanding very simple English writing

(including word, phrase and sentence) in school context (Permendiknas no. 22/
2006)