

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

English as an international language is used in many countries over the world including Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language which has played important roles in the development of Indonesia; it is used as a means of communication when Indonesia wants to cooperate with other countries. It is also used as a national development. It is apparent that English in Indonesia is very important.

As the most important foreign language in Indonesia, English becomes one of the compulsory subjects taught in education institute. English is also considered as a difficult subject for the Indonesian students, because English is completely different from Indonesian language being look at from the system of structure, pronunciation and vocabulary. The government always made effort to improve the quality of English teaching. By improving the teachers' quality and other components involved in educational process, the English teaching in Indonesia improved time to time.

Teaching English in elementary school is useful. As we know that young students especially students in elementary school have big memory to memorize everything they learn. Thus, in elementary school, English is taught as an additional subject. As elementary school is the place for students to learn English for the first time, the students just learn the basic vocabulary. Vocabulary is very important to be mastered first since it is an essential means in conducting communication. Based on the reason above, the focus should be on the vocabulary in the elementary school. It can help them understand the basis of studying English and prepare to study English in higher level.

English teaching involves four language skills; they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. In teaching and learning a language, there are four aspects that support four language skills above such as: grammar, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation that they are also taught in English teaching and learning process.

Vocabulary is major concern in elementary schools materials because vocabulary is an essential means in conducting communication. Students who want to improve their English should master the vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the important aspects in learning English. The mastery of it would be very helpful when one was learning foreign language having a great mastery on it; it would also facilitate him to comprehend the subject learnt in which it was in English. Vocabulary is used in any situation; it is in the form of spoken or written language. We should have an adequate vocabulary to improve the four language skills. Without grammar very little can be conveyed. Without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.<sup>1</sup> As the writer concluded that the quality of one's language skill depends on the quality and the quantity of vocabulary mastered, the more vocabulary he mastered, the easier to develop four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and learn English as second language generally.

Mastery of vocabulary is not an easy thing for students, especially for young learners, because young learners have limited ability in learning and memorizing the vocabulary. It is not an easy task for teacher to teach vocabulary, because of the limitation of students' ability. So the teacher needs to apply appropriate technique in the classroom. Beside appropriate technique teacher also must use interesting medium in learning activities. Allah states about the important of medium in learning, in surah Al-A'la verse 4:

أَلَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (العلق: )

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<sup>1</sup> Scott Thornbury, *How to Teach Vocabulary*, (London: Longman,2002), P. 13

“He who taught (the use of) the pen,-“<sup>2</sup>

This verse shows that Al-Qur’an give attention towards the important of medium in study. “Pen” is a medium. It means that Allah wants to transform the science to Rasulullah by using kinds of medium. As Jibril submits vision with Jibril’s verbal expression, bell, and etc. This matter is strengthened in the other verse, in surah Al-Qalam verse 1:

وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ (القلم: )

“By the pen and by the (Record) which (men) write-“<sup>3</sup>

يسطرون In this context means the learning activities. والقلم and يسطرون explain that there is tight connection between pen and learning activities. In the other word medium and learning activities are two matters sinergis. We must apply medium in learning activities relevant with the audience (student) and it must be done proportionally and professional. Proportional, it means that to accustomed with intellectuality level audience. Professional means that the use of media optimally must hold some matters; they are wise, advice, criticism.

In teaching learning process, teacher has important roles. Teacher is professional educator who has main duty to educate, teach, guide, and evaluate the learners on early children education at formal education (Elementary School, Junior High School, and Senior High School).<sup>4</sup>

In teaching a language, a teacher might realize that teacher could not apply only one or two strategies to all levels. In reverse, teacher was required to be able to recognize the characters of the students and to select an appropriate strategy to them. It was not different from teaching English to elementary school students, the teacher was supposed to know that the students was so closed with something fun and enjoyable. So whenever the

<sup>2</sup> Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur’an Text and Translation*, (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2005), P. 780

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, P. 722

<sup>4</sup> SISDIKNAS, *Undang-Undang Guru dan Dosen*, (Bandung: Citra Umbara, 2006), P.3

teacher taught, teacher had to be selective in choosing a strategy to introduce a learning material. A good teaching strategy would automatically facilitate to get students' interest in learning process.

Students in elementary school are still young learners. In this research, the researcher focuses on the students on fourth graders at SDN 01 Mulyoharjo. Usually students in young learners think that English is difficult. To tackle this image, teacher should be more creative and keep the students away from feeling bored. The teacher must be able to organize the students in teaching learning process. If the teacher cannot teach the students properly, the students will not enjoy their learning. Consequently, the teaching learning will fail.

As it is found in SDN 01 Mulyoharjo, the teacher has some problems in teaching learning process. For example, the students are bored, afraid to learn, and still passive in the English class. It makes the students' achievement in learning vocabulary low. Their difficulties in learning vocabulary make their achievement fall below the standard.

The problem that may occur in teaching learning process may bring negative impact to the students; afraid to learn, passive, and bored. It makes the teaching learning process become unuseful. If the teacher is not attractive, the students get difficulty in studying English. Besides, they also cannot respond the explanation of teacher. The students' mastery of vocabulary will be interested if the teacher uses suitable medium. If the media is used by the teacher are not appropriate, the students are bored and passive in learning process.

The writer looked that teacher of English subject on fourth graders at SDN 01 Mulyoharjo still use conventional methods, the teacher only translates the words and monotone, so the students will easy to get bored and they will say that English is difficult. The teacher must be able to use strategies and technique in teaching and learning process.

Learning vocabulary can be done through many ways, such as: dictionary, picture, guessing, reading, etc. To make effective techniques in

teaching vocabulary, the teacher should create various teaching techniques to increase the motivation of students; one of them is using pictorial story. Using Pictorial Story in teaching vocabulary is appropriate technique to apply in class because Pictorial Story is one kind of medium that can help teacher draw students' interest and arouse their motivation in the teaching learning process more effective.

Nagaraj stated that in many ESL (English as Second Language) classes, even where teachers have devoted much time to vocabulary teaching, the results have been disappointing. So they need to choose one of the techniques which is the best for the students get more effective vocabulary learning.<sup>5</sup>

This study would present a vocabulary teaching strategy to elementary school students. In which it was going to be very pleasant and interesting for young learners.

So the writer wants to do research on "The Use of Pictorial Story to Improve the Student's Understanding English Vocabulary" A Classroom Action Research with Fourth Grade, SDN 01 Mulyoharjo Jepara in the Academic Year 2010/2011.

## **B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic**

Here are some reasons for choosing the topic "The Use of Pictorial Story to Improve the Students' Understanding in English Vocabulary":

1. Vocabulary is a part of language component that plays an important role in learning a language.
2. Most students have difficulties in learning vocabularies. They feel bored and do not pay attention because there is nothing interesting in English subject, which the teacher presents.
3. Teaching vocabulary using Pictorial Story is an interesting strategy to teach vocabulary

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<sup>5</sup>Geetha Nagaraj, *English Language Teaching: Approaches, Methods, and Technique*, (London: Orient Longman, 1996), p. 183

### **C. Research Questions**

The problems to be discussed in this study are:

1. How is Pictorial Story implemented to improve students' understanding on English vocabulary at the Fourth grade of SDN 01 Mulyoharjo, Jepara?
2. How much does Pictorial Story affect students' understanding on English vocabulary at the Fourth grade of SDN 01 Mulyoharjo, Jepara?

### **D. Objective of the Study**

The objectives of the research are:

1. To describe how Pictorial Story is applied in teaching English vocabulary.
2. To investigate a significant effect of using Pictorial Story as medium to teach English vocabulary.

### **E. Pedagogical Implication**

Based on objectives above, the significance of the study can be stated as follows:

- The writer

The writer will get some experiences and knowledge about her study and it will be useful in the future.

- The teacher

By doing this research, the writer hopes that the output of the study will be useful to give contribution in developing English teaching especially in teaching vocabulary.

- The students

By using Pictorial Story as medium in teaching vocabulary, the students will improve their English vocabulary. They may improve their English since they find out that they can learn English through an attractive medium that they like and easy to understand.

- The school

The school will make right decision for supporting the teaching and learning process especially the teaching of English in order to get better of output. Here the students are the products of the teaching and learning process.

#### **F. Limitation of the Study**

The writer limits this study to improve students' understanding in English vocabulary from Pictorial Story given. The writer uses Pictorial Story as medium to the students to get information about the use of Pictorial Story to improve students' understanding in English vocabulary. This study will be done at fourth grade students of SDN 01 Mulyoharjo Jepara.

#### **G. Definition of Key Term**

This research uses a classroom action research approach. Before discussing this research deeply, however, in order to make it clear, the writer explains some words definitions that might help the readers to understand the research. There are some terms need to be defined. The terms used in this study are as follow:

##### 1. Pictorial Story

Pictorial means having, represented in pictures, periodical in which pictures are the main feature.<sup>6</sup> Story means account of past events, untrue statements, account of imaginary statements.<sup>7</sup> Pictorial Story is a kind of cartoon form expressing character and playing a story in sequences of closely related drawing and designed to give fun to the readers.<sup>8</sup>

##### 2. Improve

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, P. 631

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, P. 852

<sup>8</sup> Nana Sudjana dan Ahmad Rifai, *Media Pengajaran*, (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2002), P. 22

Improve means to make or become better, make good use of: turn to account, employ for a purpose.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Understanding English Vocabulary

Understanding means power of clear thought, capacity for sympathizing, seeing from another's point of view.<sup>10</sup> Vocabulary means total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language.<sup>11</sup>

It means that understanding English vocabulary is known the form and the meaning of words in English language and applies it in context.

Pictorial Story has interesting story and full of colors. Pictorial Story can motivate the students to study. To improve the students' understanding on English vocabulary by using Pictorial Story is interesting way. Because by using Pictorial Story the students' can understand the contents of the story by looking the picture.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, P. 427

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, P. 939

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, P. 959