

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English as a language which is used internationally or globally has been taught in almost all countries in the world. It has become the language which is most frequently used in international trade, diplomacy, and tourism and that is studied by more people than any other languages. English is also one of the most important means for acquiring access to the world's intellectual and technical resources. In Indonesia, English as a foreign language is a compulsory subject to be taught from the elementary up to the university level because its function is as a language international communication in the 21st century. Teaching English is not simple. It needs appropriate way as a strategy to teach students because it covers to the four skills namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To achieve the four skills, vocabulary cannot be separated.

Vocabulary as one of the important elements should be well mastered. It has a very important role in learning a language including English because vocabulary is the total number of words that make up a language. The total stock of English words enables learners to master English proficiency as in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills well. Those four skills will be effectively learned by learners if they have words bank or wide coverage vocabulary. Considering the importance of vocabulary in mastering English communicatively,

the writer is interested to discuss this study in the effort of increasing students' vocabulary mastery by applying some appropriate strategies.

Deal with the goal of English teaching and learning process in Indonesia based on the latest curriculum, Educational Unit Level Curriculum, students' English proficiency in mastering the four language skills, particularly in reading skill (besides listening, speaking and writing skills) in order to enable them to communicate in that language. Wassman (1993: 25) states that the broadest vocabulary is needed in the reading and listening skills. It means that vocabulary is used as the basic element to grasp those skills because it influences learners' ability to translate and construct a sentence to get the meaning of each word in English correctly.

Developing a vocabulary is extremely required to understand the whole text easily, particularly in English teaching and learning processes for Indonesian foreign learners. Vocabulary knowledge in learning English enables students having the real meaning of a word successfully. If students do not know the meaning of a word, they will find some difficulties in both receptive and productive language. The process of oral and written communication is going to be late; even there must be misunderstanding of getting inferential meaning in the process of communication.

Vocabulary plays a very important role in developing the four language skills, the more vocabulary the learners have the easier for them to develop their language proficiency. So, the teaching of vocabulary makes teacher aware of the importance of integrating the teaching vocabulary into the teaching of the four

skills. In fact, many teachers understand of the importance of teaching vocabulary to their students, but they are not aware on how to teach them correctly. They do not realize that integrating vocabulary into the teaching of the four skills will help the learners use their vocabulary in a more natural and meaningful way.

At present, many students especially at the first year of the Senior High School are still unable or difficult to understand the meaning of words in the passage or text, they have limited vocabulary to comprehend the meaning a text, they do not know the context of words which is used in the text, they cannot compose their writing task and they get the difficulty to state the some sentences in English. Those students' problems occur because they understand of the importance of studying vocabulary. They feel bored with the way of teaching in which they are asked to find out the meaning of the difficult words in dictionary and then they try to memorize the word meaning. In addition, many teachers tend to stress the teaching mostly on grammatical rules. When they teach reading comprehension, they do not give clear explanations about the techniques or strategies on how recognize the meaning of the words.

For this purpose the teaching of vocabulary using Semantic Feature Analysis (SFA), Frayer Model (FM) and Contextual Redefinition (CR) can motivate and make the students interested in learning English because in this way they will enjoy, will be not bored, and will help them in learning vocabulary. Moreover, it is expected that the students understand the meaning of words easily.

In teaching by using Semantic Feature Analysis (SFA) strategy, there is the use of categorization which can explore the concept or word. It helps students

to see how words within a category alike and different and to relate the meanings of new words to prior knowledge by contrasting features and characteristics of word categorization so that the students can understand the meaning of the words. In Frayer Model (FM) strategy, the students will discover the meaning of the word by defining, describing its essential characteristics, providing examples and offering non- examples of the word. While, in Contextual Redefinition (CR) strategy, there is the stresses the importance of context in predicting and verifying word meanings. This is as the combination of context clues and definition to know the meaning of the word.

Based on these facts, the researcher was interested in conducting a research on the effect of Semantic Feature Analysis, Frayer Model and Contextual Redefinition Strategies on students' vocabulary mastery. It meant that the effect of implementing the three strategies in teaching vocabulary mastery should prove whether they were effective or not on students' vocabulary mastery.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of this research can be stated in the following questions:

1. Do the Semantic Feature Analysis, Frayer Model and Contextual Redefinition Strategies significant affect students' vocabulary mastery?
2. Which one of these strategies is the most effective strategy among the others?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In relation to the research problems, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find whether teaching vocabulary with Semantic Feature Analysis, Frayer Model and Contextual Redefinition Strategies significant affect students' vocabulary mastery.
2. To examine which one of these strategies is the most effective strategy among the others.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Vocabulary is one of the basic elements in mastering the language skills. It is impossible for the students to understand what their teacher explains without using more vocabulary. There are a lot of strategies that can be used in enhancing the students' capability in English especially in vocabulary.

This study has a specific intention to discover the students' vocabulary mastery. There are so many factors in affecting on students' vocabulary mastery. In narrowing the study, it is limited to the teaching of vocabulary from an interactive view of reading comprehension.

In teaching English vocabulary, there are some strategies of teaching vocabulary including conceptual mapping, semantic mapping, semantic feature analysis and contextual redefinition. Considering the number of variables, it was focused on three strategies, i.e. semantic feature analysis, frayer model and contextual redefinition. Thus the three strategies would be implemented during the

research and the study was held at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta Nurul Islam which is the same level Senior High School, at Nagori Serapuh Gunung Malela.

1.5 Significance of the Study

It is very important for a teacher especially an English teacher who devotes her time in improving vocabulary mastery for her students. It is common to say that a teacher who cannot solve a question or does not has a wide coverage of vocabulary, it is difficult to teach vocabulary and sometimes in teaching vocabulary, the teacher asks students firstly to memorize many words without caring whether the students understand or master those words which they have memorized. In other words, the teachers should equip themselves with the information about the stages of vocabulary before they actually begin teaching vocabulary well. The finding of this study will at least expected to answer the proposed problem and it will also use for the improvement of the teaching in Senior High School level because they might enrich their English language in improving their strategies in teaching vocabulary. The problem as indentified by the researcher in her thesis would also contribute something for the understanding why the students in general could not understand the meaning of English vocabulary.

