CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of background of study, research questions, aims of study, limitation of study, significance of study, clarification of terms and organization of paper.

1.1 Background

To be able to use English, students have to know English vocabulary before they are introduced to other English aspects: grammar and pronunciation, as Wilkins (in Thornbury, 2002:13) notes "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". Consequently, learning English vocabulary has become the most important thing for English students. Another research using the questionnaire and observation by Putri (2002) an English teacher of one institution in Bandung, many students master the patterns of English grammar (e.g. the structure for the simple present tense), but they do not know how to use and apply it in daily life. Furthermore she portrays that the lessons are too focused on grammar (and not in conversation), but students are rarely given guidance on how and what is the function of the elements of grammar that they learned.

Likewise Putri (2002) enlightens that an English teacher rarely using English in giving the materials, therefore it can be one factor that influences students' vocabulary mastery because the students unusual to use the language as often as possible. Classroom atmosphere is one of the most important predictors of students'

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success in learning (Brophy and Good, 1986). Therefore, it is necessary to undertake a study to discover an interesting method to build enjoyable atmosphere to help students in mastering vocabulary. Huyen and Nga (2003) with the three reasons from their research state that games can be one of techniques in teaching vocabulary.

Vocabulary itself is total number of words in a language (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary: 2000). As vocabulary becomes the key aspect in learning language, it should be introduced through interesting ways. In line with that Lewis and Hill (1998) state that students will not achieve success in learning unless they enjoy the process. From that statement, it can be seen that students' feelings toward a learning process will influence their achievement.

There is a misconception that all learning should not be in fun and relaxed atmosphere. Actually, it is possible to find learning not in serious and solemn condition. Games help language learners to learn a language and enjoy it at the same time (Kim, 1995). Mei and Jing (2000) consider that the way children learn their mother tongue is the same when they learn English as a foreign language through playing games where there is no stressful situation which make them can learn much more. By using a game, students will enjoy a learning process which at first makes them feel bored. Classroom atmosphere that derive from the game can make students learn better because they learn without pressure. It is also supported by Huyen and Nga (2003) that "games bring relaxation and fun for students. They help them learn and retain new words more easily". In a similar vein, Wierus (in Uberman, 1998)

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states that relaxed atmosphere is needed by students to remember things faster and better. One way to create this atmosphere is learning through games.

Some studies show that teaching vocabulary through games can help students improve their vocabulary and other language skills. Results of study about the use of games in teaching vocabulary show that they provide students with an interesting, challenging and enjoyable atmosphere in classroom activities and they also contribute in helping the students to absorb materials more easily (Yulia, 2010). Another study portrays the effectiveness of the Spelling Bee game in teaching narrative text. The result shows that Spelling Bee encourages students to learn much more about words given, therefore, they get more understanding about the text. On the other hand, Spelling Bee can also help students to practice their spelling and vocabulary skills (Rahayu, 2009).

The game that was used in this study was Spelling Bee. According to Uranga (in Rahayu, 2009) Spelling Bee is a kind of competition where the competitors have to compete to spell words given correctly. Spelling Bee is more than a memorizing activity because beside students have to memorize the words they are also introduced to a complicated thinking process when they receive several clues to spell the word correctly, such as definition, alternative pronunciation, kinds of words (noun, adjective, verb) and the use of words in a sentence.

Based on the *National Spelling Bee* retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelling bee, the purpose of this game is to help students enhance their skills in spelling, vocabulary, concepts and develop their correct

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English usage. There are also some advantages in using Spelling Bee. It can improve students' spelling skill, vocabulary skill, comprehension in the text given and it also can be used by students to practice their concentration and their ability in memorizing (Rahayu, 2009).

As written in English syllabus that accordingly to *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP 2006)*, the English teaching, especially reading skill for junior high school students, involves the teaching of paragraphs or texts. The texts taught are recount, narrative, descriptive, procedure and report. A recount text is a text that tells events in the past, usually in the order when they happened (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). Recount text is chosen because of its familiarity to students. This text type is usually found in personal letters, diaries, biographies and history.

Considering the explanation above, this study is conducted to find out whether the use of Spelling Bee in teaching recount text can improve students' vocabulary mastery and to investigate students' responses toward the use of Spelling Bee in their English class.

1.2 Research Questions

The questions of the research are stated as follows:

1. Can the use of Spelling Bee game improve students' vocabulary mastery?

2. What are students' responses toward the use of Spelling Bee game in learning English vocabulary?

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1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate whether the use of Spelling Bee is effective to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

2. To discover students' responses toward the use of Spelling Bee in learning English vocabulary.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

The study focuses on the effectiveness of using Spelling Bee in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The study was conducted in one of junior high schools in Bandung by selecting two classes as a control group and an experimental group.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is expected to provide information for the next English education students concerning the knowledge of teaching vocabulary. In addition, this study is expected to provide information for English teachers in finding an appropriate method to teach vocabulary.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

There are some terms that will be clarified to avoid misunderstanding. The terms are as follows:

Vocabulary : A unit of language, consisting of one or more spoken sounds or their written representation that functions as a principal carrier of meaning (Kamil et al. 2007:284).

Games : An activity which has rules, a goal, and competition as parts of its component and criteria (Kramer, 2000)

Spelling Bee : A contest in which contestants will be eliminated if they fail to spell a word given correctly (Uranga in Rahayu, 2009).

Recount Text : Text that tells events in the past, usually in the order when they happened (Anderson &Anderson, 1997).

1.7 Organization of Paper

Chapter I describes the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, limitation of the study, research methodology, research design, population and sample, data collection, data analysis, and organization of paper.

Chapter II focuses on the review of the related theories and literatures to vocabulary, Spelling Bee game, and recount texts.

Chapter III contains explanation about the methodology of the study.

Chapter IV covers data collected, data analysis, and the interpretation of the findings from the study by using certain statistical formula so that it would be easier to discuss.

Chapter V draws the conclusion of the study and also suggestion for further studies.

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