CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to the Decree of Minister of Education and Culture Number 060/U/1993, English in Indonesia has been a local subject matter at elementary school. Hence, teaching English, particularly at elementary schools has totally been encouraged. It is expected that the students will not only learn and comprehend English as early as possible but also practice simple conversation.

English as a foreign language is very crucial to be learned since childhood because children are the best learners; they are very excited to learn anything, to learn something new, including learning English as a foreign language. In addition, children seem less embarrassed then adult to talk in a foreign language. Therefore, when a child learns English since her/his childhood she may become a good achiever in English proficiency (Cameron, 2001:1).

The fact is supported by empirical research on the effect of age and language acquisition findings that was conducted by Krashen, Long, and Scarcella (1979). They conclude that acquirer who begins natural exposure to second language acquisition in her childhood absolutely can get higher achievement in her language proficiency compared to those who begin the exposure in adulthood.

However, factor of age is very important in learning language, but knowing how to learn language is important as well. The primary stage of learning language should

be preceded by learning vocabulary (Wallace, 1982). According to Přibilová (2006), all languages consist of words. Languages come forth first as words; both in situation where human learn their first language and in situation where human learn any following languages. Therefore, learning vocabulary should take into consideration in language learning process.

Meanwhile, vocabulary teaching methods that have been practiced in Indonesian classroom for many years is not yet successful in improving students' English proficiency. Vocabulary teaching methods that have been practiced in Indonesia for many years is probably less effective. Many teachers at elementary schools use one way of language learning that they think as the simplest and the fastest strategy, i.e. memorizing strategy. The writer herself experienced this method. She was asked to find the translation, the synonyms, or the antonyms of certain words, and then she had to memorize them all. In the following meeting, she would have test to check her vocabulary mastery. Through this method, she could memorize many words easily at that time. But after class ended, she forgot. She just remembered the words in short term memory.

Teaching vocabulary at elementary school is not as simple as many people assumed. When teaching vocabulary, it does not only mean teaching the meaning of the words but also teaching grammar and function of the words. So that, knowing grammar and function of the word, children will be able to recognize, remember, and use the words later in conversation (Cameron, 2001:78)

According to Krashen (1989), children acquired vocabulary incidentally. They acquired vocabulary in informal contexts such as in the playground. They tend to pick up language in everyday situation from other children in their environment relative quickly because they want to play and make friends. They acquired the words in unconscious way without paying attention to abstract language forms and explicit instruction of any kind. In other word, vocabulary have to be learned incidentally from a variety of sources including, but not limited to such sources as television, parents, internet, film etc. Similarly, stories may also provide a source of incidental acquisition of vocabulary.

One of the methods that can facilitate informal, incidental, meaningful learning in a foreign language context is TPR storytelling (Blaine, 1990). This method was invented by Blaine Ray, a Spanish teacher in Bakersfield, California, in 1990. It is an extension of James Asher's TPR theory. Blain combined James Asher's TPR theory with Stephen Krashen's language acquisition strategies. Blain states that TPR provides incidental, informal, and meaningful learning context but it just focuses on imperative mode of speech, whereas in real communication students need to achieve narrative and descriptive mode of speech. Therefore, he develops TPR Storytelling to provide narrative and descriptive mode of speech in learning foreign language.

TPR Storytelling provided a clear context; supported by happening, language, and pictures pattern which are easy to guess. As the context serves meaningful learning, TPR storytelling can lead the learners to long term retention. By TPR storytelling, vocabulary can be learned in a comprehensive and natural way. Besides,

young learners can easily understand the meaning of a vocabulary since the use of facial expression, movements and gestures make the meaning of that vocabulary clear. Children can be asked to imitate some actions performed by the teacher to reinforce their comprehension. This principle refers to the principle of Total Physical Response from Asher, which says that listening and doing action are very helpful for children to acquire target language.

Concerning the explanation above, the writer is interested in using TPR Storytelling in English vocabulary teaching of an elementary school to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Pinter (2006:86) has suggested that the use of stories in English vocabulary teaching can help young learners to understand the vocabulary based on the context. Hopefully, this study " The Use of TPR Storytelling in Teaching English Vocabulary" can answer many teachers' question about how to teach their students vocabulary effectively so that the students can comprehend the vocabulary that they have learnt. Besides, this study can give teachers a valuable suggestion to improve their teaching quality by providing appropriate method to students.

1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic

As it is realized that TPR Storytelling has become a great issue in contributing the effectiveness of teaching and learning English, this paper becomes interested in proving one of the kind method, as it is believed, it can raise students' vocabulary acquisition and it is expected the student can use the vocabulary in their daily life.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study only focused on finding out the effectiveness of using TPR Storytelling in teaching vocabulary at elementary school in the fourth grade students of elementary school.

1.4 Research Question

Is TPR Storytelling effective in improving English vocabulary mastery of fourth graders of an elementary school?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to contribute and give some informative inputs in teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

The findings are hopefully able to:

1. answer many teachers' question about how to teach their students vocabulary effectively so that the students can comprehend the vocabulary that they have learnt.

2. give teachers a valuable suggestion to improve their teaching quality by providing appropriate method to students.

1.6 The Aim of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out the effectiveness of TPR Storytelling at elementary school in teaching vocabulary.

1.7 Research Methodology

1.7.1 Research Design

The research method that was used by the writer was quasi experimental design. In social sciences in general, and in language field in particular, it is not realistic if we only limit our research to true experimental design because we have to reckon with the most complicated human behavior, language learning, and language behavior (Hatch and Farhady, 1982).

Quasi experimental design is one of experimental designs in which we compare means of groups' performance take place normally. Neither experimental nor control group is randomly chosen because individuals naturally belong to one group or the other. Quasi experimental design is also called 'naturally occurring group design' (Brown, 1988).

1.7.2 Hypothesis

There are two kinds of hypothesis namely null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis. In experimental research, the most common hypothesis is used null hypothesis, which state that there is no difference after receiving the special treatment (Hatch and Farhady, 1982: 85-86).

The hypothesis of this study: there was no difference of students' vocabulary mastery between before and after the treatment. Null and alternative hypothesis of this study are:

$$Ho: \mu \text{ pretest} = \mu \text{ posttest}$$

$$Ha: \mu \text{ pretest} \neq \mu \text{ posttest}$$

1.7.3 Population, Sample, and Setting

The population of the study is fourth graders of elementary schools. The kind of sample that the writer use in her study is purposive sample. The characteristics of purposive sample is various, not random, and in the same number of students. The sample is 60 fourth graders at elementary school. The students' characteristics: they are native Indonesian, they study English as local curricular, and their age is around 10.

1.7.4 Data Collection

The data were collected by using multiple choices test and instruction's test through pretest and posttest. Pretest was held to check initial vocabulary knowledge of students. Posttest was administered to check whether there was a difference between means of those tests in accordance with students' vocabulary mastery after they experienced the treatment. The treatment involved some stories that were divided into several lesson plans, and conducted in three weeks.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

Try out test consisting of 40 items was administered to fifth graders from another elementary school, which had the same characteristics as the sample. Then, the result of the test was analyzed for the difficulty level and the discriminating power and the validity of each item, and for the reliability of the test.

After the try out test was analyzed, pretest was given to the students before they experienced six-time treatment. Then, the students had posttest after those treatments were administered. The students received the same form of pretest and posttest, which consist of some selected vocabularies based on the try out test analysis.

1.8 Clarification of Terms

There are some terms used in this study that need clarification to avoid misconception.

1.8.1 TPR Storytelling

In this study, TPR storytelling is retelling story to the students through voice and gesture supported by some story aids, such as puppet and pictures. The storytelling is preceded by pre-activity that can help students recognize the key words of the story, and ended by post-activity that can reinforce what students have got from the story.

1.8.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary in this study refers to some verbs used in the stories.

1.8.3 Forth Graders

Fourth graders in this study are young learners around 10 years old or students at fourth grade of elementary school.

1.9 Organization of Paper

The paper is presented into five chapters. Each chapter is divided into subtopics that elaborate the investigated issues.

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of background of the study, research question, aims of the study, limitation of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of paper.

Chapter II is theoretical foundation. It covers the rules of teaching vocabulary to young learners, the basic concept of TPR, the concept of TPR storytelling, the implementation of TPR storytelling, and related research on TPR storytelling.

Chapter III is research methodology. It discusses research method, population and sample, research procedure, research instruments, pilot testing the research instruments, time allocation, and technique for analyzing the data.

Chapter IV is data presentation and discussion. It explores the findings and the discussions of data obtained from pretest and posttest.

Chapter V is conclusions and suggestions.

Reference ends the paper.