

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the problem which includes the reasons for conducting the research, the problem in teaching vocabulary, and the suitable activity which is needed to improve the students' vocabulary mastery. This chapter also describes the formulation of the problem, objective of the problem, and scope of the problem.

1.1 The Background of Problem

Vocabulary is one of the important elements in teaching English. This statement is supported by Hatch and Brown (1995: 1). They say, "Vocabulary is the foundation to build languages, which plays a fundamental role in communication". It describes that by mastering vocabulary; people can express their ideas and understand the other basic competence well. Students of Elementary School study basic English. They study about simple words or things in their surroundings, it aims that students are able to understand simple English used in daily context. However, it is difficult to master the other competences without understanding the vocabulary, because vocabulary is the basic competence that must be reached by students in order to get other competencies like reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

There are many problems in learning and teaching English. It could be caused by the technique used by the teachers, in appropriate method, limited media, and tools used in teaching and learning process. In learning foreign language, vocabulary is important role. Without knowing vocabulary it is impossible to us to master English.

Learning vocabulary is not easy for students, and Thornbury (2002:2) said in learning the vocabulary as the second language the learner have the following challenges :

1. Making the correct connection when understanding the second language, between the form and the meaning of the words, including discriminating the meaning closely related words (e.g. lust and plush)
2. When producing language, using the correct form of a word for the meaning intended (i.e. nose not noise).

So, the teacher should be able to help the students to remember the words, to understand the meaning of the words and give the example how to pronounce the words. Students only get or know the words in textbooks or when the teacher during classroom lessons. They do not look for other words from other resources for their knowledge about vocabulary.

Based on preliminary study, the writer found some problems in teaching English at Fourth grade of SDN 02 Kresnowidodo, Tegineneng. The problems are such as the students cannot communicate in English because they do not have adequate vocabulary. In addition, the researcher several problems about students' vocabulary mastery such as difficulties in understanding the meaning of words, difficulties in pronouncing words correctly.

Those problems above happen because their teacher still cannot choose and use an appropriate technique in teaching English in order to make the students interested in studying English.

To improve the students' vocabulary mastery, the teacher must have some methods and techniques. One of them is by using the game. Playing game in learning process make students interested and they do not realize they are practicing language. it will avoid and make situation or the atmosphere enjoyable.

In this case, the writer wanted to use "Flash cards", to make students interested in learning vocabulary. flashcard is a simple picture on a piece of card or paper, which is probably the most widely used visual aids in language teaching. It means that flashcard is one of media which can help the teacher to English easily. The writer chooses this because by using flashcards hope can increase and give motivation to students to learn English especially in learning vocabulary.

The use of flashcards is related to the characteristics of elementary school students as children who commonly feel interested in something with attractive shapes and color.

Therefore the writer proposes a research entitles the use of flashcards in study vocabulary to elementary school students of fourth grade at SDN 02 Kresnowidodo, Tegineneng.

1.2 The Identification of problem

By considering the background above, the writer identified the problem as follows:

1. The students vocabulary is still lacking

2. The students did not understand meaning of a word
3. The students find difficulties in learning and mastering English words.
4. The students were less motivated to learn english
5. The students had difficulties in memorizing the words

1.3 The Limitation of problem

Based on the identification, the writer focused the study only as follows :

1. The students vocabulary is still lacking
2. The students find difficulties in learning and mastering English words.

1.4 Problem Statement

By considering the identification and the limitation of the problem, the writer formulated the problem as follows :

1. How is students' vocabulary mastery?
2. Is there any increase of the implementation of teaching vocabulary using *Flash cards*?

1.5 The Objectives and the Uses of the Research

1.5.1 The objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research are :

1. To know and describe students' vocabulary mastery
2. To know and describe whether *flash cards* can increase student's vocabulary.

1.5.2 The Uses of the Research

The uses of this research are :

1. To give information to English teacher about implementation of *flash cards*
2. Motivation for the students that they can develop their vocabulary mastery by *flash cards*.

1.6 The Scope of The Research

The research deals with investigating students vocabulary. Specifically it deals with the use of flashcards in the classroom to increase their vocabulary.

This classroom action research was conducted in the fourth grade at SDN 02 Kresno Widodo with class as subject of the research. The classes were IV A which consists of 30 students. The reason why the writer uses this class because this have already studied vocabulary.

The research limited only in particular themes taken from the 2006 English curriculum of elementary school.