

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Human is created as the image of God and given cultural mandate to subdue and manage the world. In order to execute the mandate, God did not leave human alone as He has designed human very well and always gives His providence. Language is one of God's providences as it is a gift from God which also reflects and reveals himself (Poythress, 2009). As the image of the Triune God, human as a social being always needs language as God's gift in carrying out cultural mandate. Furthermore, human is the crown of creation who has the capability to execute the mandate. Thus, human can use language in expressing their opinion appropriately. Even though human is not perfect he/she can always persistently pursue the best using language to fulfill His mandate relentlessly. Words have an important role to build the language since there would be no language without words (Milton, 2009). Thus, it is very important for every language learner to know and pay more attention to the word they are using which is called vocabulary.

According to Nation (2001), knowing a words involves knowing its forms (spoken form, written form, and word parts), meaning (form and meaning, concepts and referent, association) and use (grammatical functions, collocations, constraints of use). Then, a language class especially in Christian education needs to emphasize the importance of

using correct form of a word to avoid such a confusion. In addition, by His Words God created everything and distinguished one thing from another as He named (defined) all that He created. Every word conveys its meaning and there is power on every word as human is the image of God. Human should use the power properly and it will not happen if the user does not know its meaning. The form and meaning of a word itself also depends on its relation to another words/context. When a student is making a sentence, a word can have inflection according to its tenses or number (plurality). As a word is used with another word, together they may convey new meaning. Thus, it is also important to pay attention to the use of a word as a student makes it in a sentence or larger context. It can be seen how God has designed human well and also provided language to be used in doing His will, the mandate that He gave.

However, the fall of man ruined the great design on human's life. Humans have become so depraved and chose to follow their own desire instead of God's design which finally messed up the design. The way humans think and do has been distorted by sin which leads to chaos and aberration from God's original design and purpose for humans' life. Humans have no longer used what God has put on them to pursue their initial purpose to glorify God by fulfilling His mandate. As the result, because of the fall humans have no longer confidently and persistently use language to always perform the best in everything and thus tend to not pursuing the best in order to glorify God. When a speaker mispronounces or misspells a word, the addressee may think about another word. It means

mispronouncing or misspelling a word can lead people into confusion. As God is not God of disorder but of peace, He also wants His followers to live in peace not in disorder.

Based on the observation in grade XI Science 2 in a private Christian school in Toraja, it can be seen that the students had problem about vocabulary. The students had difficulty to follow instruction in English and depended on their dictionary to answer both oral and written questions. They also found difficulties to answer or response to a question without dictionary. There was a tendency that the students were waiting for translation before they did their tasks or followed instruction. Spelling error and misusing another word with similar spelling were found in the students' work (see Appendix 2 and 3). It could also be noticed that the students translated Indonesian term into English using dictionary word by word, and when they made sentences some words were not used in correct context. Moreover, based on the formative conducted about vocabulary, there were 19 out of 28 students did not reach the achievement standard (which is 75). Based on the identified issue above, the researcher planned an action research to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge.

As the etymological meaning of education is “to lead out”, in teaching and learning process, Christian teacher needs to bring the students to the original design that God has made. The vocabulary learning should bring back students to confidently and persistently use language in communication which will not happen if the students are learning individually without interaction. There are several alternatives to enhance

students' vocabulary knowledge like using flash card and Total Physical Response (TPR). However, there are some factors which become obstacles. Flashcard itself is a cardboard which contains word, sentence, or a simple picture on it (Komachali & Khodareza, 2012). Flashcard can be used as a tool of vocabulary learning but it is limited. Firstly, not every word can be illustrated with picture especially abstract and inanimate words. Secondly, beside through picture, flashcard can also provide information with words or sentences but it will be like the dictionary which the students used. It is true that flashcard can be used as a tool to support the students in the learning or to help students to remember. Furthermore, the school also provided word wall (an organized collection of words in large visible letters on the classrooms' wall and the students can fill it with new words they have learn along with information related to the words) for each classroom, yet the students still had problem with their vocabulary. It goes also for TPR, as not every word can be represented in physical action/movement, especially to learn about collocational use of a word. Furthermore, the students are learning about narrative text where they need to read and the words they need to know are in a specific context which could not be separated word by word.

In addition, there are several considerations to choose Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) in this research. The students are secondary students (grade XI), therefore the way they learn vocabulary should not be like primary students. For primary students, basic knowledge of each new word like the instruction and the meaning of the word is

introduced to the students one by one on itself. Secondary students can get that basic information by themselves from dictionary. In addition, secondary students need to know how the word is used in its context and the relation with another words. Thus, CIRC is suitable since it accommodates vocabulary learning through the context which is through reading passage and its steps give chance for the students to look at a word in a larger context as the students need to do lexical inferencing.

There is no part of the curriculum where the students should focus on vocabulary learning only. However, there is part where the students need to learn language features (which refers to vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) related to the four skills of English (which are reading, writing, listening, and speaking). Therefore, the students can learn vocabulary as long as it is related to the four skills of language. CIRC facilitates the students to learn vocabulary related to reading which means the teaching and learning process is still in accordance with the curriculum because the vocabulary learning is under the reading part.

Last but not least, comes back to the nature of language and the design of humans as the image of God. Language is a means of communication which needs to be used interactively. Thus, language learning should not be done individually. It allows the students to use language in interaction with their friends. As CIRC is a cooperative learning, it provides situation for learners to interact with one another and express their opinion in their group as well as giving feedback on their friends' progress. It also gives chance for the students to try their best to

guess the meaning of a word on its context (lexical inference/contextual guessing). It allows the students to try their best before they figure out the correct answer together in their group.

Based on those things and discussion with teacher mentor and supervisor, the researcher decided to conduct a research about “THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION (CIRC) TO IMPROVE STUDENTS’ VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN ONE OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS IN TORAJA”.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on what the researcher found in the classroom which has been stated on the background of the study above, the researcher formulated these following research questions:

1. Does the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) improve students’ vocabulary knowledge in one of the Christian schools in Toraja?
2. If yes, how does the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) improve students’ vocabulary knowledge in one of the Christian schools in Toraja?

1.3 Research Purposes

According to the statement of problems that the researcher observed, these are the purpose of the research:

1. To know whether the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) could improve students' vocabulary knowledge in one of the Christian schools in Toraja.
2. To know how the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) could improve students' vocabulary knowledge in one of the Christian schools in Toraja.

1.4 Explanation of Terms

1.4.1 Vocabulary Knowledge

According to Dale (1965), vocabulary knowledge is a knowledge of a word which develops in four stages, from not knowing the word at all, then knowing the existence of the word but not the meaning, then knowing the meaning in particular context, and finally knowing the word well and can use it. Meanwhile according to Milton and Fitzpatrick (2014) vocabulary knowledge can be defined through component approach of the word knowledge which are the spoken form, written form and meaning. In addition, according to Nation (2001) vocabulary knowledge is the knowledge of word' form (written, spoken, and word parts), meaning (reference and association), and use of words in receptive and productive level. Therefore, vocabulary knowledge can be defined as the knowledge of

words form in both spoken and written form, knowledge the meaning of the word in its context, and the ability to use the word.

1.4.2 Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)

CIRC learning is a cooperative learning model which integrates a reading then composes it into important parts (Slavin, 2010). According to Darmayanti (2014), CIRC is a comprehensive program developed by Robert Slavin, Robert Stevens, Nancy Madden, and Anna Marie Farnish to teach reading and language arts which involves story-related activities, directly instructed in reading comprehension, and integrated language arts/writing. Meanwhile, Durukan (2009) mentions that CIRC is a comprehensive reading and writing teaching program in which students are assigned in heterogeneous groups. Thus, CIRC is a cooperative program emphasizing on reading and writing as well as elements related to reading and writing such as story element identification and vocabulary.