

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter has five parts; background of the study, statement of problem, purpose of study, significance of study, and definition of terms.

1.1. The background of the study

Man is the highest and noblest of God's creation. In fact, man is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26, 27; Jas 3:9). "Being images of God and reflecting God in our lives is not an option for us because God created us that way. We display His image as we use our unique freedom and abilities. We honor and reflect God's majesty by ruling over the works of His hands in responsive ways". (Van Brummelen, 2009, p. 100). Since man was created by God, man has ability to communicate with God in the form of language. In fact, God brought the animals towards man and he named them one by one (Gen 2: 19-20). It is very interesting that when man was created by God, he was already able to communicate with his creator.

Since the fall of man into sin, men keep trying to seek ways and to make their name famous by attempting to reach heaven by their own efforts. This story is told in Genesis 11: 1-9 and known as the story of the Tower of Babel from which we get the word 'babble'. Prior to this period, all men spoke a common language. However when they decided to build a tower to heaven God came from heaven and scrambled the language and that is why we speak different languages. It was the pride of man in thinking that he could get to heaven by his own means that caused God to confuse the

common language and create new languages. The other thing why God came down and scrambled their language was the fact that human beings did not want to do the mandate where they have to fill the earth and spread to the other parts of the world.

The spread and progress of human civilization means that languages keep expanding and growing. There have been many new words created and this is proven by the number of new vocabulary entries into any kind of language dictionary. English for example is a language that keeps adding new words into English dictionaries. *Language hat* (2003) records that there are 2,500 new dictionary entries each year.

Since English has become a *lingua franca*, a shared language of communication used between people whose main languages are different or a language spoken all over the area at one particular period of time, it is being taught in Indonesia schools as essential subject-matter. In fact, some schools, particularly the international schools use English as their instructional language to deliver the lessons. English is taught from kindergarten to university level. In an Indonesian national school, English is taught for the same period of time as the other subjects. English is the subject that students are afraid of most because it is difficult to learn. English has many rules and many times it break its own rules. Whether the students like it or not, English is one of the subjects that the students must take on the National Exam. In the remote areas, many students are not motivated to learn English because their schools lack resources such as books, articles, teachers, and internet from which they could get knowledge and information.

The school where I did my last teaching practicum is an example of the problem. The school counselor informed me that 70% of the students in that school came from low income families where their parents were not good role models for them. Parents did not pay much attention to their children and just let them go about doing whatever they wished. Most of the students did not even have clear reasons why they had to go to school. Some said that they came to school simply to please their parents.

I spent five months in this school teaching the students English. The students in that school had a very small English vocabulary and it is no wonder they found it very difficult to communicate in English. The teachers in this school focus too much on grammar which is dealing with rules. I think that's the very reason why students cannot speak another language. Students would rather acquire vocabulary and this issue became my concern in this research.

In teaching English vocabulary, I used several methods that I considered effective to help students. Those media are flashcard (picture cards), songs (lyrics), and movies (short clips). All of these methods have their own strengths and weaknesses.

1.2. Statement of the problem

1. What are the useful media to teach English vocabulary for students in grade VIII in a Christian school in Ambarawa?
2. How well do students learn vocabulary through these media?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purposes of the study are mainly to answer the questions previously stated on the statement of problem which are as follow

1. To know the useful media used to teach vocabulary in grade 8 in a Christian School in Ambarawa.
2. To consider how well students learn vocabulary through media used.

1.4. Significance of the Study

I expect this research to be useful for students, teachers, and future researchers.

1. For the students,

I expect that students used as the subject of this research will improve their English vocabulary.

2. For the English teachers and educator,

This research can be an inspiration to teachers and educator on how vocabulary should be taught to the students. By this research, I am trying encourage the audience to build an awareness of effective methods in enhancing the students' English vocabulary in a classroom setting.

3. For further studies

I also expect that this research can contribute to the English teaching and learning process. Hopefully this can be useful for other Teachers College students teaching English

1.5. Definition of Terms

1. *Lingua franca*. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2007, p. 896) defines

lingua franca as "a shared language of communication used between people whose main languages are different or language spoken all over the area at one particular period of time".

2. Language is "a system of communication in which words and their written symbols are combined in rule-governed ways that enable speakers to produce an infinite number of messages". (Hetherington, Parke, Guavain, & Locke, 2006, p. 271)

3. Vocabulary. Collins English Dictionary (1994, p. 1718) defined vocabulary "as a listing, either selective or exhaustive, containing the words and phrases of a language with meanings or translations into another language."

5. Learning strategies are defined as "specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques – such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task –used by students to enhance their own learning (Oxford, 2003, p. 359 as cited in Scarcella and Oxford 1992, p. 63)

6. Media is any kind of tools or channels used by people to convey message or information (Sadiman et al, 2008, p. 6)