

CHAPTER 1

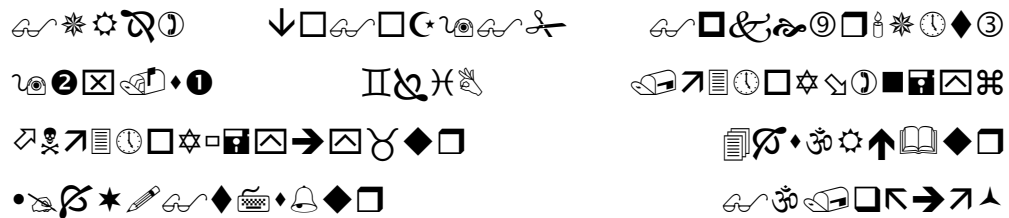
INTRODUCTION

A. Rationale

Language is a particularly important aspect of our lives. By using language, we can communicate with each other. The function of language is not only as a lesson to study, but also a way to express ideas, thoughts, opinions and feelings, either orally or written.

The essence of language in human activity on the part of one individual to makes himself understood by another, and activity on the part of the other to understand what was the main of the first.¹

A language can create harmony among individuals, societies, ethnicities, and nations. In addition, through language people can better understand each other and understand more about the world around them. Language is from God for human beings. The Holy Qur'an in the surat Al-Hujarat verse 13 and Al-Baqorah verse 31, states:



¹ Marianne Celce. Murcia and Lois Meintosh, *Teaching English As a Second Language*, (Los Angeles:Newbury Hruse Publishers, Inc, 1959). p. 183

modern science and technology. That is why, most of the scientific and technological books are written in English. Third, because of the two phenomena above, many books, journals, and other written materials, which are internationally circulated are written in English.

Considering that English has a crucial position, Indonesian government realizes that, the language has to be learned by the Indonesian people without ignoring the status of the Indonesian language as their own national language. English is taught as a compulsory subject from elementary school up to some semesters of college level. In learning English, vocabulary is the first priority, as one of basic components that plays an important role among the four language skills. It is impossible for the students to perform English appropriately if their mastery on vocabulary is very poor. In short, by having too limited vocabulary, the students find difficulty to master English skills.

In learning English, students must learn all the skills necessary to communicate. One important component of English is vocabulary. Without learning vocabulary, students cannot master English perfectly. According to Harimurti, “Vocabulary is a component of a language that had all information about meaning and using words in language”.²

Learning to build vocabulary is a powerful way to master vocabulary, enhance in the life and career. Mastering vocabulary, can increase the ability in communication. Also having a large vocabulary can benefit in school and social. It will enable to understand people ideas better and more affectively. As Pieter said

² Harimurti Kridalaksana, *Kamus Linguistic*, (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993), p. 451

that vocabulary is one of the components of language and no language exists without words. Words are symbols for ideas, means by which people exchange their thought. The more words they learn the more ideas they should have, and so they can communicate the ideas more effectively.³

Darul Hijrah boarding school is a school that introduced English as daily language. This school also uses Arabic language as the medium of their communication. Although Darul Hijrah boarding school is an excellent educational institution, it possibly still has problems in using English as their daily language.

Based on the facts above, the researcher is interested in investigating the students' vocabulary especially in the second grade students of senior high school Darul Hijrah boarding school in the academic year of 2010/2011. Hopefully, the findings of this study will give valuable input to the English teaching and learning process, especially in order to improve the students' vocabulary since vocabulary are very crucial in learning a foreign language. This writing however hopefully can give suggestions to improve or broaden students' vocabulary toward English as a foreign language.

Based on the fact from the prior research above, the writer intends to conduct research entitled **“Improving the Students' Mastery of English Vocabulary at the Eleventh Grade Students of Senior High School at Darul Hijrah Academic Year 2010/2011”**.

³ Pieter. A. Napa, *Vocabulary Development Skills*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1991) p. 6

Then to avoid any misinterpretation toward the title which is adopted in this study, the writer hereby feels necessary to explain some terms in regard to the title as follows:

1. Improving : Achieve or produce something of a better standard or quality than something else.⁴ It is about how do the students ways to improve or to make their English vocabulary better.
2. Mastering : Something regarded as having control, power, etc, or to become an expert in (an art, science, etc).⁵ It means the students' ability in English vocabulary.
3. Vocabulary : All the words of a language.⁶ In this research, the writer means English vocabulary
4. Student : Any person who studies.⁷ All the students at the eleventh grade students of senior high school at Darul Hijrah in academic year 2010/2011.

So, the title of study above means the research about the students' ways to improve their vocabularies and their level of mastery in English vocabulary at the eleventh grade students of Senior High School at Darul Hijrah in academic year 2010/2011.

⁴ AS Hornby, A.P.Cowie, *Op. Cit*, p. 625.

⁵ Victoria Neufeldt, at.al, *Webster's New World Dictionary, third edition*, Prentice Hall, p. 83

⁶ Ibid, p. 149

⁷ Martin H Manser, *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 142

B. Problem Formulation

1. How is the level of students' mastery of English vocabulary in the eleventh grade students of senior high school at Darul Hijrah academic year 2010/2011?
2. How are the students' ways to improve their mastery of English vocabulary?

C. Reasons for Choosing The Title

1. English is one of the most popular languages in the world that has become the main communication device in the field of science and technology.
2. Vocabulary is very important to learn a language, not only in a native language but also in a foreign language. The complexity of vocabulary may cause a problem in the mastery. In English as a foreign language classroom, the most difficult aspects are the retention of vocabulary.

D. Research Purposes

Based on the problem limitation above, the purpose of this research is to know the level of students' mastery of English vocabulary and their ways to improve their mastery of English vocabulary at the eleventh grade students in Darul Hijrah Academic year 2010/2011.

E. Research Significance

This research has the following significance:

1. As information for the students of English department Tarbiyah Faculty in IAIN Antasari about the real school conditions. Therefore, the English Department students who hope to become English teachers.

2. As information for the teachers of English at Senior High School Darul Hijrah to improve their teaching strategies in learning process.
3. As information for Senior High School Darul Hijrah about the students' level in mastering English vocabulary and their ways to improve their vocabulary.
4. As consideration for the future research in the same object but different point of view.
5. As enrichment of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies Banjarmasin library.

F. Organization of Writing.

This research consists of five chapters. They are systematically arranged as follows:

The first chapter contains an introduction that covers of rationale, clarification of title, problem formulation, reason for choosing the title, purpose of the research, the significance of the research, and the organization of the writing.

The second chapter contains the theoretical review on related subject, like definitions of vocabulary and strategies in learning vocabulary.

The third chapter contains the method of research consisting subject and object of the research, data, source of data, technique of data collecting, design of measurement, techniques of data processing and analysis, and research procedures.

The fourth chapter contains the report of research result, which consists of description of the research location, data presentation and data analysis.

The fifth chapter is the closure, which contains conclusion and suggestions.