CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problems, purposes of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Mastering English needs a hard work because English is not easy to learn. It is impossible to master English without mastering vocabulary. Wilkins (in Shejbalova, 2006) summed up the importance of vocabulary for language learning: “Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.” This point of view is also echoed by Thornbury (2002), “If you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most improvement if you learn more words and expressions. You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words!”

Based on a research conducted by Syamsudin (in Rahmanda, 2009), it has been found that more than 75 % students are poor in vocabulary. While studying vocabulary, the students feel bored and get a big burden because they must memorize, memorize, and memorize. So, the students hate to study English, especially vocabulary. As a result, they are poor in vocabulary that is necessary to read English.

In the past, teachers used to select and present vocabulary from concrete to abstract. Words like ‘door’, ‘window’, ‘desk’, etc., which are concrete, used to be
taught at beginning levels. However, words like ‘honesty’, ‘beauty’ etc., which are abstract words, used to be taught at advanced levels because they are not “physically represented” in the learning/teaching environment and are very difficult to explain.

Also, teachers used the classic repetition method. For example, if students wanted to learn that the Indonesian word pintu means door, then they just say aloud “pintu… door…pintu… door…pintu… door…” hundreds of times and eventually it will sink in.

Nowadays methodologists and linguists suggest that teachers can decide and select the words to be taught on the basis of how frequently they are used by speakers of the language. That is the most commonly used words should be taught first (Harmer, 1993; 104).

Lewis (2010) states that the obvious problem with the repetition method mentioned above is that there is no association. Even if the students repeat the pair to themselves a million times, they are still not actually linking the two words together, just trying to force them to match in their mind. Therefore, the right way is have fun and use imagination. All students need to do is to create a very amusing, animated, unforgettable image in their mind that links both words to each other. For example: the students want to learn that Indonesian word pelawak means joker, then they can use their imagination by looking at a joker card in rummy, and imagining like a person who always makes a joke. So when students face Indonesian word pelawak, they directly imagining a rummy card means “joker”.

The theoretical consideration above is also supported by the empirical works that have been done by researchers. Purwoharto (2002) studied the teaching
techniques of vocabulary of the fourth years students at MIN I Malang. The study was conducted to know the teaching techniques employed by the teacher. The result of the study showed that the teacher used two techniques in teaching vocabulary. The techniques were guessing pictures and singing a song. Of the two techniques, students were interested in singing a song. They were very enthusiastic because they were free to express their styles and they felt happy.

Furthermore, Multazim (2005) found out four techniques in teaching vocabulary used by the teacher to make the students easier to define new words or difficult words in a certain text. He found that the effective teaching techniques of vocabulary included hearing the word, pronouncing the word, games, and grasping the meaning. Among those four techniques, the games technique was the most interesting because students could enjoy the material presented. It is based on his research about a study on vocabulary teaching techniques of the third year students at MTS Persis Camplong Madura in academic year 2004-2005.

Based on the researchers above, we know that technique in teaching vocabulary is important to help students to increase their achievement in English. The reason of choosing this research is that the researcher believes that techniques in teaching vocabulary are important to support the success of learning and teaching process.

The researcher is interested in choosing Sang Bintang School (SBS) English course because it has gained some achievements. First, SBS has new and great techniques in teaching English especially vocabulary; that is studying vocabulary without making note. Instead, the teachers give association, imagination, or unique
memory and make students enjoy studying. Second, it takes six weeks to help the students master English by using “Kampoeng Jenius” method, studying without memorizing, making note, and having homework. Next, SBS has gained the following achievement: (1) it has been selected as one of Pemuda Emas Kalbar by KNPI; (2) it has been awarded the Best Young Entrepreneur in Kalimantan area by Mandiri Bank; (3) it has released an inspirational book entitled ‘Keajaiban Belajar’; and (4) it has many branches in Indonesia with thousands of alumni. With those achievements, it is assumed that the teaching technique of English in this school is good.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. What techniques do the teachers use in teaching English vocabulary at Sang Bintang School English course - Malang?

2. How do the teachers implement the techniques of teaching English vocabulary at Sang Bintang School English course - Malang?

3. How is the students’ response toward the techniques used by teachers in teaching English vocabulary at Sang Bintang School English course - Malang?
1.3 Purpose of the Study

Related to statement of the problems stated previously, the purposes of this study are:

1. To describe the techniques of teaching English vocabulary used by teachers at Sang Bintang School English Course – Malang.
2. To describe how the teachers implement the techniques of teaching English vocabulary at Sang Bintang School English Course – Malang.
3. To know the students’ response toward the techniques used by teachers in teaching English vocabulary at Sang Bintang School English course – Malang.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that the result of this study will give contribution for English teachers in teaching and learning vocabulary. It means that the result of the study can be used as a feedback by the teachers to improve their teaching. Practically, it is hoped that the result of this study will give some information about the way to teach and learn English better, especially vocabulary subject. Then, it is also hoped that the result of students’ perception will help teacher to determine the appropriate technique used in their class. Theoretically, this study is also expected to increase and enlarge the researcher’s understanding in using teaching vocabulary techniques.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on the vocabulary teaching techniques used by the teachers of Sang Bintang School English Course – Malang, and the students’ response toward
the techniques. The researcher limits to the two teachers who teach in class of 14\textsuperscript{th} in Sang Bintang School English Course – Malang. They are the Grand Instructor, who is the leader of teaching in the class, and Instructor, who is the team of the Grand instructor. They are selected because they have been teaching in SBS for five years, and have a lot of experiences there, so that the researcher will get rich data. Then, the class of 14\textsuperscript{th} in of SBS is selected because it consists of adult learners who are university students. This class consists of 20 students, and they almost have the same grade in their study and, of course, it makes easier to research.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

1. **Teaching** is showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instruction, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand (Brown in Ferry, 2008). In this study, teaching means showing or helping students to learn how to study about vocabulary.

2. **Technique** is any of a wide variety of exercises, activities, or tasks used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objective (Brown, 2001:16).

3. **Teaching Technique** is implementation of method which actually takes places in a classroom. It is particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective (Anthony in Siti, 2007). In this study, teaching technique means trick or strategy used by the teacher when they conduct the teaching of vocabulary.

4. **Vocabulary** is a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or a set of words that individual speakers of language might use (Brown in Siti, 2007).
5. **Response** is the student’s conception of the teacher about learning and teaching technique (Decarico in Bobby, 2005). In this study, students’ response means that students’ reaction to the vocabulary teaching techniques used by teachers.