

CHAPTER II

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT OF THE STUDY

This study concerns the correlation between sex and elementary school students' mastery of vocabulary. The respondents of the study are the students of SD Negeri Bunulrejo I and II Malang, especially the students of the fourth year. SD Negeri Bunulrejo I No. 44 and SD Negeri Bunulrejo II No. 45 Malang are state elementary schools, located at Jalan Hamid Rusdi Timur No. 455 Kelurahan Bunulrejo Kecamatan Blimbing Kotamadya Malang. This area is in the middle area of Malang.

Both schools have six classes: The first year students' class up to the sixth year students' class. The formation of students in SD Negeri Bunulrejo I No. 44 Malang is as follows:

- 44 students in the first year
- 37 students in the second year
- 36 students in the third year
- 35 students in the fourth year
- 39 students in the fifth year
- 27 students in the sixth year.

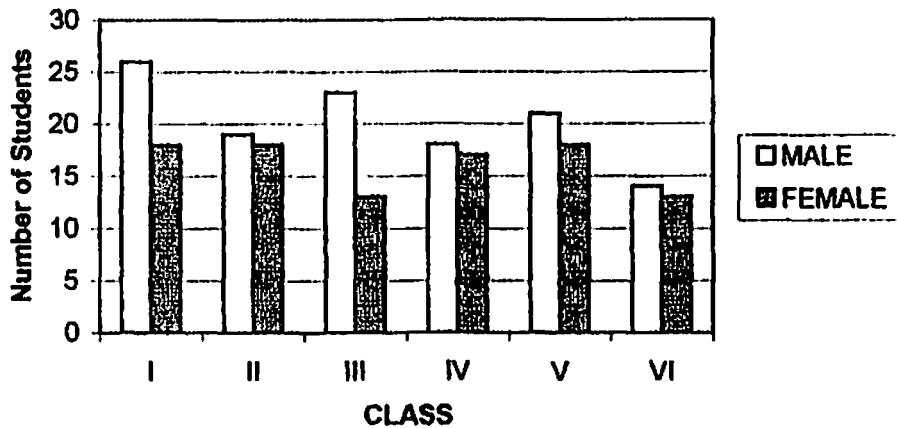
So, in the period of 2000 - 2001, SD Negeri Bunulrejo I Malang has 218 students, 121 male students and 93 female students. The distribution of male and female students is shown in the following table:

**TABLE 1. The Distribution of Male and Female Students
SD Negeri Bunulrejo I No. 44 Malang**

CLASS	THE NUMBER OF MALE STUDENTS	THE NUMBER OF FEMALE STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER
I	26	18	44
II	19	18	37
III	23	13	36
IV	18	17	35
V	21	18	39
VI	14	13	27
TOTAL	121	97	218

From table 1, we know that the number of male students in each class is bigger than the number of female students. Therefore, total number of male students is bigger than total number of female students. The following histogram shows clearly about the differences between the number of male and female students:



Figure 1. Histogram of Table 1

The formation of students in SD Negeri Bunulrejo II Malang is as follows:

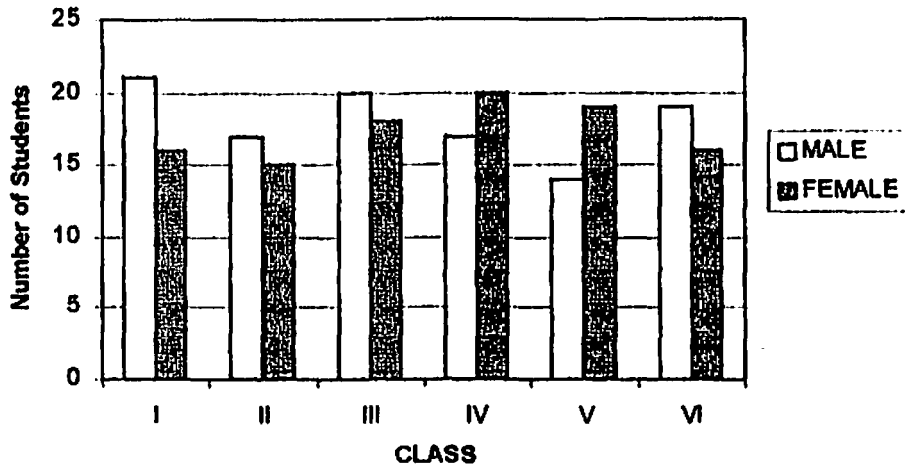
- 37 students in the first year
- 32 students in the second year
- 38 students in the third year
- 37 students in the fourth year
- 33 students in the fifth year
- 35 students in the sixth year.

So, in the period of 2000 - 2001, SD Negeri Bunulrejo II Malang has 212 students, 108 male students and 104 female students. The distribution of male and female students is shown in the following table:

**TABLE 2. The Distribution of Male and Female Students
SD Negeri Bunulrejo II No. 45 Malang**

CLASS	THE NUMBER OF MALE STUDENTS	THE NUMBER OF FEMALE STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER
I	21	16	37
II	17	15	32
III	20	18	38
IV	17	20	37
V	14	19	33
VI	19	16	35
TOTAL	108	104	212

From table 2, we know that the number of male students in the first, second third and sixth classes is bigger than the number of female students. However, the number of female students in the fourth and fifth classes is bigger than the number of male students. The following histogram shows clearly about the differences between the number of male and female students:

Figure 2. Histogram of Table 2

II.1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents of the study are the fourth year students of SD Negeri Bunulrejo I and II Malang. Most of the students in both schools come from middle class family background. Out of 70 students, there are 60 students who meet the requirements to be the respondents of the study.

II.1.1 The Age of the Respondents

School-aged children are those between 4 or 5 to 12 years of age (Strommen, McKinney and Fitzgerald, 1983:3). Since the respondents of the study are the fourth year students, their age is between 9 to 11 years old.

TABLE 3. The Age of the respondents

AGE	NUMBER
9 years old	31
10 years old	23
11 years old	6
TOTAL	60

Table 3 shows that there are 31 respondents of nine years old, 23 respondents of ten years old, and 6 respondents of eleven years old.

II.1.2 The Sex of the Respondents

Here sex means the distinction between male and female based on biological characteristics. Since the study wants to find out the correlation between sex and vocabulary mastery of elementary school students, the writer needs the same number of male and female respondents. Out of 60 respondents, the writer gets 30 male students and 30 female students.

TABLE 4. The Sex of the Respondents

SEX	NUMBER
Male	30
Female	30
TOTAL	60

II.2 LANGUAGE ABILITY

Expectations for young children's skills and abilities need to be based on knowledge of child development and how children learn. A basic principle of child development is that there is tremendous normal variability both among children of the same chronological age and within an individual child. Children's social skills, physical skills, cognitive skills, and emotional adjustment are equally important areas of development, and each contributes to how well children do in school (Santrock, 1998:549). Within any group of children, one child may possess advanced language and cognitive skills, but show poor social skills and emotional adjustment. Another child may have advanced social skills, but be well adjusted emotionally, and have good physical skills, but have poor language skills, and so on.

When children arrive in school, children take up a new role (being a student), interact and develop relationships with new significant others, adopt new reference groups, and develop new standards by which to judge themselves. School provides children with a rich source of new ideas to shape their sense of self. Elementary school children continue to learn in all areas through unstructured play, either alone or with other children. They should be taught through concrete, hands-on experience. They often do not need to distinguish learning by subject area. For example, they advance their

knowledge on reading and writing when they work on social studies projects; they learn mathematical concepts through music and physical education.

In school, children experience a different linguistics world. They meet for the first time children from unfamiliar regional, social and ethnic backgrounds whose linguistic norms differ greatly from their own. They encounter a social situation in which levels of formal and informal speech are carefully distinguished, and standards of correctness emphasized. The educational setting presents them with a variety of unfamiliar, subject-related styles of language. They have to learn a new range of linguistics skills — reading, writing, and spelling. They find themselves having to talk about what they are doing, which requires that they learn a special technical vocabulary — ‘a language for talking about language’ or *metalinguistics* (Crystal, 1989:248).

According to Noam Chomsky, language is not learned; rather, the child is born with some built in knowledge about the basic principles of language which is reflected in some fashion in basic neurological functioning. This innate knowledge or neurological process allows the child to decode the stream of sounds coming from others, turning that stream into a set of rules for a specific language (Bee, 1992:321). Children do indeed construct language and they may indeed start with basic operating principles. It may happen because children possess powerful cognitive skills that enable them to

structure and interpret their experience on a nonlinguistic basis, that is, to develop notions of agency, spatial location, causality, possession, and so on. When language starts to come in, it does not introduce new meanings to the child. Rather, it is used to express only those meanings the child has already formulated independently of language (Bee, 1992:323).

II.2.1 Students' Achievements on Bahasa Indonesia

Bahasa Indonesia is the respondents' mother tongue and it includes in the curriculum as one of the respondents' subjects. It is realized that progress in many areas of the curriculum is greatly dependent on a satisfactory foundation of linguistic skills. Therefore, teachers now pay increasing attention to children's linguistic ability as a major factor influencing their success in the learning of other subject areas, such as science, mathematics, and history.

Students have been studying Bahasa Indonesia since they were in the first year. They learn about words' meaning, construct sentences, and make paragraphs. Formerly they learn to construct simple sentences and then they learn to make more complex sentences. They also learn to define words, try to find their synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, etc. Then they learn to make paragraphs that tell about

their hobbies, activities, and experiences. Since Bahasa Indonesia is their mother tongue and that linguistic ability is a major factor influencing their success in the learning of other subject areas, it is expected that students have a high achievement on Bahasa Indonesia. The students' achievements on Bahasa Indonesia can be seen as follows:

TABLE 5. Students' Achievements on Bahasa Indonesia

ACHIEVEMENT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
> 80	5
71 - 80	27
61 - 70	20
< 60	8
TOTAL	60

Table 5 shows that there are 5 respondents who get more than 80 on Bahasa Indonesia, 27 respondents get mark between 71 to 80, 20 respondents get mark between 61 to 70 and 8 respondents get less than 60.

II.2.2 Students' Vocabulary Mastery

The ultimate purpose of language teaching is that students have language skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing skill. It cannot be denied that mastering language skills is related to the mastery of vocabulary. Therefore, one's vocabulary power determines the quality of his/her language skills.

During middle and late childhood, a change occurs in the way children think about words. They become less tied to the actions and perceptual dimensions associated with words. The increasing ability of elementary school children to analyze words helps them understand words that have no direct relation to their personal experiences. This allows children to add more abstract words to their vocabularies. For example, *precious stones* can be understood by understanding the common characteristics of *diamonds* and *emeralds*. Children's increasing analytical abilities also allow them to distinguish between similar words as *cousin* and *nephew*, or *city*, *village* and *suburb* (Santrock, 1998: 333).

In the observation done by the writer, students are asked to answer thirty questions of Indonesian vocabulary. Since the questions are multiple choice, the students only have to choose one of four

choices given by the writer. The questions are taken from Bahasa Indonesia books for elementary school such as "Aku Cinta Bahasa Indonesia", especially for the third and fourth classes. The questions are about synonyms and antonyms of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. In each question, the writer made a sentence and students are asked to choose the synonym or antonym of one of the words in the sentence. Another method is the writer made a sentence and students are asked to fill the missing word in that sentence.

Although the questions are taken from Bahasa Indonesia books for the third and fourth classes, students still made many mistakes. For example, when the writer asked them the synonym of the compound noun *rumah penginapan*, there are twelve students who answered *rumah sakit*, six students answered *rumah tangga*, and seven students answered *restoran*. Other thirty-five students could answer the questions correctly, that is *losmen*. Another example is the synonym of the compound noun *pemandu wisata*. There are sixteen students who answered *pramugari*, twenty students answered *pramuniaga*, and two students answered *pramuwisma*, while three students could not answer the question. There are nineteen students who gave correct answer, that is *pramuwisata*.

The writer also asked the synonym or antonym of verbs and adjectives. For example, the writer asked them the synonym of adjective *congkak*. Thirty-seven students could answer the question correctly, that is *sombong*, while the others could not. Six students answered *malas*, twelve students answered *baik hati* and other five students answered *pelit*. When the writer asked them the antonym of adjective *dermawan*, only nineteen students could answer the question correctly. They answered *kikir*. Most of them answer *baik hati*, only four students answered *hemat* and five students answered *kaya*.

In the test, the writer also asked the meaning of figurative words such as *si jago merah*, *kuli tinta*, and *darah biru*. When the writer asked the meaning of *si jago merah*, most of the students could give correct answer, *api*. Two students answered *air*, two others answered *hujan*, and only one student answered *angin*. Forty students could give correct answer, *matahari*, when answering question about the meaning of *raja siang*. Four students answered *bulan*, four others answered *bintang* and ten students answered *awan*. In answering question about the meaning of *darah biru*, fifteen students could determine the meaning of that word correctly, that is *bangsawan*.

Twenty-five students answered *warna darahnya biru*, fifteen students answered *cendikiawan* and five others answered *sakit*.

Besides, the writer also gave them a writing test. Here the students are asked to make a composition consisting of 3 to 4 paragraphs. The composition is about *Animal*. They could tell about their pet, a fable they ever heard, or anything about animal. Mostly male students tell about their pet or their experience when they go to the zoo. In making composition, they make many repetitions. They use one word many times such as the word *melihat*. The variety of words are not as many as female students have. The example of male students' composition is as follows:

Di kebun binatang saya melihat gajah, harimau, singa dan kera.... Setelah melihat kera, saya pergi ke kandang gajah.... Kemudian ayah mengajak saya melihat ular...Di sana saya juga melihat kuda nil, buaya dan badak. ...Adik saya senang sekali melihat singa...

In their composition, female students could express their thought or feeling freely. They use different words for the same expression. They seem to avoid repetition and try to use as many as possible vocabulary they master. Sometimes they use poetic words in order to make their composition more interesting. The topics of their compositions are

more various. They tell about their pet, their experience when they went to the zoo, animal that they hate or fable. Here is the example of female students' composition:

Kecongkakan itulah yang mengubah tingkah lakunya sehari-hari. Merak yang semula pendiam, kini lebih suka berpidato. ...Dan merak pun semakin melambung hatinya. Bicaranya semakin dibuat-buat dengan maksud agar para pendengarnya lebih terpesona. Sekelumit berita bisa menjadi panjang bila merak yang menceritakan. ...Untuk mengatakan sesuatu ia selalu memulainya dengan berbelit-belit....

The illustrations above represent respondents' present linguistic knowledge. At present, they still reach that stage. They can not be compelled to reach the stage beyond their present linguistic knowledge stage. However, the respondents' linguistic knowledge will develop in accordance with their growth since their language acquisition has not completed yet.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA