

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the introduction to the Classroom Action Research (CAR) that includes the issues dealing with the general description about the research in which is intended to improve vocabulary mastery using Memory Challenge's game. It consists of the research background, the identification of problem, the research problem, the problem solving, the hypothesis of action, the purpose of the classroom action research, and the significance of classroom action research.

A. The Research Background

English is one of the international languages and important in our life. It is used to communicate with all of people over the world and also can add our perspective. English is very important to learn. As a foreign language, English is difficult to learn especially in Indonesia, since there are differences between English and Indonesia language. Therefore, it needs a seriousness to learn. It also needs good skills to make English as familiar as possible. This happens because in Indonesia especially in many village students are not familiar with English vocabulary because they cannot do it in anyway, but if in big city many students especially in international school, they always use English in their conversation.

One component of language learning is the understanding of the vocabulary of the English language itself, in addition to other components. Vocabulary is the set of the unknown meaning and can be used by someone in a

language. Person's vocabulary is defined as the set of all words that are understood by the person or all the words which are likely to be used by the person to construct new sentences. Wealth of a person's vocabulary is generally considered to be an overview of intelligence or level of education.

Understanding of the vocabulary is generally regarded as an important part of the process of learning a language or developing one's ability in a language that has been mastered. Students often teach new words as part of the subjects specified and there are many adults who consider the establishment of vocabulary as exciting educational activities.

Mastering vocabulary is the most fundamental thing that must be controlled by a person in learning English which is a foreign language for all students and the people of Indonesia. How can one express a language if he does not understand the vocabulary of the language? Especially if it is learned a foreign language. If a student has an adequate vocabulary, English language will automatically support his achievement of English language, and vice versa. Without having adequate vocabulary, a student will have difficulty in achieving competence in the language.

The researcher realizes that teaching is not easy. English as a subject at school is still considered to be frightening one. Sometimes many students hate this subject. Actually, learning English especially English vocabulary is interesting if they want to open the dictionary because if we open our dictionary we will know more about English. But, the researcher finds a fact that the students in MTs NU Mojosari lazy are to open dictionary, even they do not have it when in English

lesson. It really happens in this school although their teacher always gives vocabulary exercises in each meeting. So, maybe this is one of other problems in our surrounding where many students hate or lazy learn about English. That is why teacher should manage English class as interesting as possible in order not be frightening anymore. English never becomes interesting subject if the teacher is always monotone in his or her teaching. So, we as a teacher should make the class interesting for the student. We must know how to make the class interesting when students get the lesson.

Mastering vocabulary, it is not easy for students of junior high school. They cannot remember words quickly and easily because they have to think slowly to get English words that they want. According to Nila Balton Smith & H. Alan Robinson, the children often find difficulty to remember the vocabulary because they can attach no meaningful experience to the vocabulary¹. So, the teacher should have new techniques and materials which can improve their vocabulary.

On the other hand, an English teacher is supposed to apply all the techniques in the process of teaching because every class has its own different characteristic. So, an English teacher must have "class management" includes approach model, method and strategy of teaching and learning. A teacher plays an important role in the class because the success of teaching and learning process depends on her.

¹ Nila Balton Smith & H. Alan Robinson, *Reading Instruction for Today's Children*. (USA: Prentice-Hall inc, 1980), 209.

English has four basic skills; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To master the four basic skills, the students have to learn some important aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. We must learn to master those points.

One of the important components in studying English is vocabulary. Vocabulary plays very important role in developing a language skill. Vocabulary is one of the keys to be successful in mastering English. Mastering a large amount of vocabulary is very important for the students to study English because it will make the students understand and master English easily, because if we do not understand about vocabulary, we will get a problem. The students must learn more about vocabulary.

Learning English vocabulary in junior high school is to make students fun in learning English. There are many problems arising during the teaching learning process because English is foreign language and the students seldom use it outside the class to practice. The other problem is the techniques or methods used to present the material are not suitable with the students.

MTs NU Mojosari is a school located in Mojosari-Loceret-Nganjuk. Based on the first observation that was done by the researcher, the achievement of the students especially in English subject is not good. They become less motivated to study English. They also get difficulties in remembering vocabularies given by the teacher. When the researcher invited them to make an English conversation, they could not understand, they could not understand and said "*Saya tidak tahu artinya, Bu.*" In the mid semester test, especially for vocabulary test the students

in VII C got average score 61, 65 it is far from the minimum standard value in this school that is 75.

One technique for teaching English vocabulary is using games. Games are the stuff of life in the primary classroom as well as providing stimulation, variety, interest and motivation. It can help to promote positive attitudes toward learning English. It also encourages active participation children's confidence². Games can be used as one of the educational techniques in teaching and learning process of English. Through games, vocabulary can be practiced and emphasized, in other words, the students can get more knowledge especially in learning English vocabulary. In short, games can break the tension and help the students to avoid the bored in learning English.

There are many strategies in learning vocabulary that can be used by the teacher to make the students interested that is Memory Challenge's Games in teaching learning process. Memory Challenge's Games is a game to remember or memorize some words or sentence, and work collaboratively in groups. The game develops a person's capacity to observe and remember details.

Based on the explanation above the researcher becomes interested to write the thesis about **"Using Memory Challenge's Games to Improve Vocabulary Mastery of the First Grade Students at MTs NU Mojosari."**

² Carol read, *500 Activity for the Primary Classroom*, (New York: Michigan Publishing Company, 2001), 150.

B. Identification of Problem

Based on the condition stated above, the identification of the problems is as follows:

1. English is not the students' mother tongue.
2. The students' motivation in learning English is very weak.
3. The teacher has not found an appropriate method or media to optimize the vocabulary learning in English teaching process.
4. The teacher only uses drilling method to intensify students' vocabulary mastery. In which the students' vocabulary mastery just last for a short time and sometimes give pressure and stress to the students.
5. The students have poor vocabulary mastery, so that they feel difficult to absorb the material conveyed.

C. Research Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the Problem of the research is formulated as follows: "How can technique of Memory Challenge's games improve vocabulary mastery of the first grade students at MTs NU MOJOSARI?"

D. Problem Solving

The kind of technique which is used in this CAR is Memory Challenge's games. Through this technique, it is expected result of study in mastering vocabulary can improved than before.

E. Hypothesis of Action

This is planned to be conducted in two cycles which divided into four steps for each cycle. The steps are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Here, through the cycles we can see the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the research hypothesis is that using Memory Challenge's game as teaching technique can improve students' vocabulary mastery.

F. The Purposes of Classroom Action Research

The purposes of conducting this classroom action research in which using Memory Challenge's game as vocabulary teaching and learning media to improve students' vocabulary mastery are:

1. To discover an appropriate way of the implementation of improving vocabulary mastery using Memory Challenge's game.
2. The students can improve their vocabulary mastery using Memory Challenge's game.

G. The Significances of Classroom Action Research

This classroom action research is hopefully accomplished these significances:

1. Vocabulary teaching and learning process is no longer monotonous and boring.
2. Simplify students' efforts in learning or even memorizing new words.
3. Improving the quality of teaching and learning in classroom.
4. Improving students' vocabulary mastery.