CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the beginning of the research. It presents an overview of the research explaining the importance of this research and supported by the theories relating to this research. This chapter consists of the background of research, the research questions, the research purposes, the research significances, the rationale, the hypothesis, and the related studies.

A. Background of Research

Learning vocabulary is one of the important things in improving students' English skill. Students can get any elements in using English, such as communication, learning, and thinking. Therefore, learning vocabulary is a basic need to support some materials to master English. In increasing the students' ability in mastering English, the teachers have to think how to make students mastery English for their purposes. There are so many approaches, methods, and techniques that can be used by the teacher.

In English language teaching, students are not only expected to master the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – but also to master the components such as English grammar and vocabulary (Harmer, 2007:102). Vocabulary has a primary element in learning English. For listening, by having many vocabularies, they can understand what other people talk. For speaking, by having many vocabularies, they will be fluently in speaking what they want to say and to speak. For reading, by having many vocabularies, the students will be comfortable to comprehend

the text and reading sources. And for writing, by having many vocabularies, they can write everything they want.

The ability of the students to master grammatical features and vocabulary contributes much to their efforts in mastering the four language skills. In other words, the lesser the vocabulary, the more difficult students will have in comprehending oral and written texts in English (Komariah, 2011:13). In Indonesia, according to Depdiknas (2006), "Junior High School students are expected to master 1500 words to help them understand and use the four language skills".

In reality, junior high school students have some problems with learning vocabulary. The problem comes from the student; they have less enthusiasm for learning English, have a negative mindset that learning English is difficult, and have a lack of English vocabulary. Based on the research observation in MTs Ar-Raudloh Cileunyi Bandung, one of the class in sevent-grade where the students have the difficulties in learning English. The lack of ability in vocabulary affects students' ability in learning English.

The concept of word game refers to the ability of a reader to match spoken words to written words. Students with a concept of word game understand that each word is separated and that space separates words within each sentence. The research conducted by Morris (1981) cited in Alqahtani (2015), using strategies to build the concept of the word game in

the classroom can also strengthen a child's developing awareness and improve their motivation for learning.

Based on the observation, the researcher tried to apply Vocabulary "A" Word strategy to enrich students' vocabulary mastery. Previously, it was applied by Alemi (2007) to international journals, and international conferences, Tehran, Iran (2010) showed educational games as a vehicle to teaching vocabulary to the private school in Iran. The data was taken from the participants that selected randomly from a male and female group of the ninth-grade junior high school students who are learning at a private school. First, a test was arranged for 100 students who 60 students were randomly selected. The control group taught words by using traditional method; and the experimental group taught by using word game as the treatment. The result is a vocabulary test administered to both groups to determine the differences between control and experimental group. The previous research focuses on the use of word game in teaching vocabulary in a private school in Tehran, Iran. In this study, the researcher would apply the strategy to investigate students' learning by using "A" word games in Junior High School.

Therefore, the researcher is going to conduct one research and the title **"A" WORD GAMES AS A STUDENTS' ACTIVITY TO ENRICH STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL.**

B. Research Questions

Based on the problem above, the writer focuses on the three main question of the research. The questions are:

1. What is the students' vocabulary learning before using Vocabulary "A" Word Games?

2. What is the students' vocabulary learning after using Vocabulary "A" Word Games?

3. How significant is the improvement of students' vocabulary learning before and after using Vocabulary "A" Word Games?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research questions above; thus, the purposes of research are:

1. To know the students' ability in learning vocabulary before using vocabulary "A" word games.

2. To know the students' ability in learning vocabulary after using vocabulary "A" word games.

3. To know the improvement of learning vocabulary before and after using vocabulary "A" word games.

D. Research Significance

The result of this research is expected to give benefits and contributions to the students, the teachers, and the school to know more about Vocabulary "A" Word Games.

Theoretically, the result of this research can be useful for an English teacher as a reference to enrich students vocabulary mastery. This research

can increase the basic knowledge about their vocabulary by using Vocabulary "A" Word games.

Practical, this research can give an alternative material that the teacher used for students' mastering vocabulary. Besides, this research can improve students' ability in mastering vocabulary and students will be motivated in learning English by using Vocabulary "A" Word Games.

E. Rationale

Vocabulary learning is an essential part of foreign language learning as the meanings of new words are very often emphasized, whether in a book or the classroom. Vocabulary is central to language teaching and importance to a language learner (Berne, 2008) cited in Alqahtani (2015). Besides, vocabulary is part of a language that underlies the understanding of the language itself as stated by Nunan (1991:101) that vocabulary is more than a list of target language words. Vocabulary is part of the language system.

According to Kim (1994:21), stated that "there are many advantages of using games in the classroom. They are as follows: first, games are icebreaking from the usual routine of the language class. Second, they are motivating and challenging. Third, learning a language requires a great deal of effort. Games help students to make and sustain the effort of learning. Fourth, games provide language practice in various skills, speaking, and reading. Fifth, they encourage students to interact and communicate. The last, they create a meaningful context for language".

Besides, to understand vocabulary games, you must have some idea of what they are. The purpose is to create some limitation for ideas and phenomena that you can better know what is being discussed. Avedon & Sutton-Smith (1971) cited in Waern (2012), say that there have many attempts to define games; such as look at the previous definition, find common elements, discern problems, and provide a synthesis that complete the problems.

Teachers should be conscientious about choosing games if they want to make them profitable for the learning process. If games are to bring desired results, they must correspond to either the student's level, or age, or to the material that is to be introduced or practiced. Not all games are appropriate for all students irrespective of their age (Siek-Piskozub, 1994:37) cited in Alemi (2007). Different age groups require various topics, materials, and modes of games. For example, children benefit most from games which need moving around, imitating a model, competing between groups and the like (Siek-Piskozub, 1994:38) cited in Alemi (2007).

Additionally, structural games that practice or reinforce a specific grammatical aspect of language have to relate to students' abilities and prior knowledge. Games become difficult when the task or the topic is unsuitable or outside the student's experience. Another factor influencing the choice of a game is its length and the time necessary for its completion. Many games have a time limit, but according to Siek-Piskozub, the teacher can either allocate the time depending on the students' position, the number of people

in a group, or the knowledge of the rules of a game, etc. (Siek-Piskozub, 1994:43) cited in Alemi (2007).

F. Hypothesis

According to Creswell (2012), a hypothesis is a statement of quantitative research in which the investigator makes a prediction or conjecture about the outcome of the relationship among attributes or characteristics.

The hypothesis is considered as a principal instrument in research. It is a preposition or assumption for research work to be tested. The primary function is to suggest new experiments and observations (Farooq, 2013). A hypothesis data is divided into two kinds. First, work hypothesis (Ha) that shows a significant difference between X and Y variables. Second, the null hypothesis (Ho) that explains there is no a significant difference between X and Y variables.

According to the explanation above, the hypothesis of this research is:

1. H_a accepted if $t_{count} > t_{table}$: it means that there is a significant improvement using Vocabulary "A" Word games to enrich students' vocabulary mastery.

2. H_o accepted if $t_{count} < t_{table}$: it means that there is no significant improvement using Vocabulary "A" Word games to enrich students' vocabulary mastery.

G. Previous Studies

Several descriptive studies have conducted on Vocabulary "A" Word Games. First, the research conducted by Alemi (2007) to international journals and international conferences, Iran (2010) showed educational games as a vehicle to teaching vocabulary to the private school in Iran. The data was taken from the participants that selected randomly from a male and female group of the 9th-grade junior high school students who are learning at a private school. First, a test was arranged for 100 students who 60 students were randomly selected. The control group taught words by using traditional method; and the experimental group explained by using word game as the treatment. The result is a vocabulary test administered to both groups to determine the differences between control and experimental group. The results of the study like to support the hypothesis formula in the research. The uses of word games have a positive effect on the vocabulary development of third-grade junior high school students.

Second, the research conducted by Alqahtani (2015) to the international journal of teaching and education, showed the importance of vocabulary in language learning. The data was taken from a qualitative method (a case study). The participant was the students' university in Saudi Arabia. The finding was supported by more than one technique in teaching vocabulary; such as using an object, using an illustration or picture, drawing, etc. The researcher concluded that students have been learning since the 4th grade of primary school to the senior high school, but the students do not know the

advantage of learning English. So that, the learning English in Saudi Arabia is a bit slower than others which English is their second language. The result of this research is teaching English still focuses on grammar than vocabulary, whereas vocabulary is a basic need to support English skill. The more vocabulary students have, the better they learn, regardless of students' grammatical knowledge, although it is not to say that students learning should neglect grammar completely.

Third, the research conducted by Kabiri and Ghafoori (2015) to the Journal of Applied Linguistics. The data showed the impact of playing word games on young Iranian EFL learners vocabulary learning and retention. The data was taken from 50 females EFL learners from Irandoostan Language Institute in Tabriz. The participants were randomly assigned into two groups; an experimental (apply word game) and a control group (teacher-centered vocabulary instruction). The statistical analyses showed that there was a significant difference between the two traditional and innovative teaching methods in which the experimental group was taught by playing word games in learning English vocabulary learning and retention. To conclude, learning a new language and its vocabulary through games is one significant and exciting way that can be applied for low-level language learners. The result of this study suggests that games are used not only for having fun in EFL classes, but more importantly, for the user interaction and cooperation among young EFL learners.

Fourth, the research conducted by Silsüpür (2017) to the Journal of Foreign Language Education and Technology, it showed using games affect vocabulary learning in EFL classes in Turkey. The data was taken from randomly selected 47 university students learning English as a foreign language were invited to participate. The participant was 12 females from Uludag University (an experiment and a control group), and 35 participants from the different university in Turkey. The finding was supported by the result of the questionnaire and the vocabulary quiz. The result of the questionnaire was 88,6% prefer learning vocabulary by playing the game, and only 11,4% of the participants said that they prefer the traditional approaches. The result of the vocabulary quiz was 10 points to the control and experimental group. The participants in the experimental group say that the students had a good time and they were no bored while playing the vocabulary game, which can be regarded as a significant qualitative finding to be taken into consideration seriously.

Fifth, the research conducted by Aslanabadi (2013) showed the effect of games on the improvement of Iranian EFL vocabulary knowledge in kindergartens. The data was taken from the participants to 30 in two groups, who were randomly selected from Golriz kindergarten (15 boys and 15 girls; age 6-7) as the experimental group, and Golhayeh Zendeghi kindergarten (15 boys and 15 girls; age 6-7) as the control group. The researcher divided the students into the experimental group (giving an online language teaching game) and the control group (giving regular teaching). The kindergartens

were also randomly selected. The finding indicated that online language teaching game affected in children vocabulary learning and memorizing of the second language vocabularies. The result of the experimental group was excellent more than the control group. Game not only bring fun to the class, but the game also motivates students and build confidence.