

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

English is very important for life to make an easy communication with other people who used other languages. According to Okselina and Anwar (2018:57), learning language including English, vocabulary is one of the essential aspects that should be considered before learning the other skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Vocabulary mastery is one of the important aspects in learning foreign languages. In order to communicate well in a foreign language, one should have enough vocabulary and knows how to use them correctly. Vocabulary is one of the elements that cannot be separated from language learning as it links the four language skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Vocabulary has also been important issue both for teachers and students in learning a foreign language. One's comprehension on a text either written or spoken will be highly depended on his/her level of vocabulary mastery. If he has sufficient numbers of vocabulary, he will easily comprehend the points either what writer delivers in a written text or messages delivered in spoken texts. Otherwise, s/he will not understand anything. Allen (1999:1) states that we know what we want to say but often struggle to find just the right words. Therefore, vocabulary mastery has become one of the indications to measure one's depth of knowledge.

As stated by Wilkins (1972:111), without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. This statement also in line with Krashen who comments that learners do not carry grammar books in their pockets, but they carry dictionaries. Conventionally, vocabulary teaching is conducted by introducing students to new words found in a text by giving them list of new words provided by the meaning in their native language. Teachers then give students time to memorize the words. After a while, teachers check their understanding by asking them to perform the vocabulary again or by asking the meaning of the vocabulary they have just learnt.

However, vocabulary is not a specific subject taught in the class. Vocabulary teaching is not included in the curriculum. Thornburry (2002:13) has commented that vocabulary teaching has not always been very responsive and teachers have not fully recognized the tremendous communicative advantage in developing an extensive vocabulary. In the teaching and learning process, vocabulary teaching is usually inserted in the teaching of language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading or writing. During the teaching, teachers usually introduce students to new words they might find in text then they give the meaning of the words in the students' native language. Therefore, many students think that studying vocabulary is studying list of new words which accompanied by their meaning in the native language. They lack of knowledge how to use the words in the real contexts.

In fact, most of students have realized the importance of vocabulary in learning a foreign language. They also have strategies and ways to enhance the number of vocabulary they have. Usually, they carry a bilingual dictionary anywhere they go. As soon as they meet unfamiliar words, they will look up the new meaning of those words from the dictionary and write them on their notebooks. But after a while, they soon realize that this is not an effective way to improve the number of their vocabulary mastery. Most of the time, students feel bored and frustrated learning this way because they often forget the words as soon as they write them. Sometimes this condition might lead them to the conclusion that they have bad memorizations and this condition is concern to lead them to lose motivation. Allen (1999:2) commented that teaching vocabulary in the traditional way which is often assumed as assign, define and test do not increase students' speaking, reading and writing language anymore than looking words up in the dictionary.

Students seldom gain enough in-depth word knowledge which resulting difficulty in integrating the words into their spoken or written language. Thus, it can be concluded that dictionary and memorization are not a recommended way to learn vocabulary.

The practice of teaching vocabulary which typically done in many schools also make students do not have creativity and initiatives. Mostly, Students only ask teachers to provide the meaning of unfamiliar words found in a text. They wait for teachers to control the lesson by providing

the meaning of the words and write them on their notebooks or to use them to complete their exercises. As a result, students can only use the word in the exact form they have taught and not knowing how to use them in different contexts in the real life communication.

Moreover, Bromley (2008:81) emphasizes the important of enhancing vocabulary by relating to school achievement. He states that inadequacy of vocabulary knowledge is the main cause of students' failure in language learning.

The researcher has conducted the observation in English learning at SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, there have been many problems which students confronted in gaining knowledge of English, especially in vocabulary. Based on the results of interviews with English teachers at SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, in their daily learning English, students often fall silent when the teacher is asked the meaning of an English word. English teacher sometimes ask to read books, but students do not understand the meaning of what they read. Consisting of problem of students who are not acquainted with English vocabulary, the researcher located that many students did no longer understand the meaning of English words and can not answer about English question Students quickly forget the words that the teacher has just revealed the meaning of or after they have looked up the meaning in a dictionary. The Minimum Completeness Criteria score at the school is 70. However, many students are below the Minimum Completeness Criteria. And the data that the

researcher found, the students' English scores were 30 % able to achieve the Minimum Completeness Criteria and 70 % were still incomplete. Consequently, we need a way to conquer this trouble .

Cooperative Learning comes from two words namely Cooperative and Learning. Cooperative means collaboration and Learning means learning. So, Cooperative Learning is learning through joint activities. Cooperative Learning is a learning model with a learning community, namely by forming learning communities or study groups (Saptono,2003:32). During the collaboration process, of course there are discussions, exchanging ideas, those who are good at teaching the weak, from individuals or groups who don't know to know.

Certainly, one of teaching method that may be used to educate them is the use of problem plane game method. According to Syifa Siti Mukrima (2014) this method applies group gaining knowledge of which demands independence and the capability of students to resolve the issues given. The problem plane game method trains students' social sense, cooperation and the potential to present judgments. It is able to make students memorizing vocabulary easier and store in long-term reminiscence. Problem plane game deviding students into a few agencies such as students, solving hassle by way of each group and checking end result. The usage of problem plane game method hoped that students will enjoy, amusing and simpler studying English Vocabulary so the students will improve their vocabulary.

The learning process by applying problem plane game method can make students more active in learning because students are in playing conditions that dominate learning activities so as to create a fun and not stressful learning atmosphere during the learning process. The teacher only acts as a facilitator in the learning process. Hisyam Aini (2008) states that active learning is learning that invites students to learn actively, meaning that when students learn actively it means they dominate learning activities and students are also invited to participate in all learning processes, not only mentally but also physically involved so that the learning atmosphere becomes more enjoyable.

Based on all the reasons above, the researcher interested in conducting research with the title **“Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery By Using Problem Plane Game Method at The Eighth Grade of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan”**.

1.2. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of study, the problem of the research are formulated as follow "How does problem plane game method improve students' vocabulary mastery at the eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan?"

1.3. The Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of the research is to find out whether problem plane game method can improve students' vocabulary mastery at the eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

There are many methods that can be used for the purpose of improving students' vocabulary mastery. In this study, the researcher only focused on improving students' vocabulary mastery using problem plane game method. So the researcher focus on students vocabulary mastery in verb and adjective vocabularies.

1.5. The Significances of the Study

Every research must have its own meaning to find out why this research is made. The results of this study are expected to be useful both theoretically and practically.

1.5.1. Theoretically

The research results are expected to be useful for readers about problem plane game method and vocabulary mastery. And this research can make the reader know the using of problem plane game method on vocabulary mastery at the eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan.

1.5.2. Practically

Practically, this research is expected giving contribute on English teachers in knowing the using of problem plane game method on students' vocabulary mastery in the classroom during teaching and learning process. And for students, this research can give them different information, In order to improve their vocabulary mastery by applying problem plane game method.

For future researchers, the result of the research is expected to be useful as a reference to conduct the same research design concerned with improving students' vocabulary or other English ability by using problem plane game method.