

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Problem

Language is the most important thing for everyone to communicate with the others. It means that without comprehending the language, someone will get many difficulties in her/his life. For instance, one cannot understand what he hears or reads if he does not have any idea about the language which he hears or reads. Then, he cannot express what he wants to say or write as well he has no idea about what correct or proper words to express. Whereas, BSNP (*Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan*, 2006: 123) explains that “*English is a tool to communicate oral and writing*”. From that statement, communicating is the understanding and expressing information, thinking, feeling and growing knowledge, technology, and culture.

English is the language that must be mastered by everyone because English is an international language. In Indonesia, learning English means learning foreign language. Teaching English to young learners is very important because it will serve as the main foundation for students to learn English at the higher level. Teaching a language means teaching how to use that language in communication.

The language has some elements, such as; grammar and vocabulary. One of the most important language items that should be taught to children is vocabulary. Recognizing enough vocabulary will make the students able to communicate and know English at least in a simple way because vocabulary is the core of English. “*Learning a language has to deal with learning the vocabulary. It is a basic to communicate and also important for the acquisition process*” (Krashen, 1981: 12). It means that learning a language cannot be separated from learning its vocabulary. It is important to introduce it as a basic step to children in order to help them understand utterances and to prepare them to learn English in the next level. Vocabulary mastery has significant role in achieving four language skills. Before acquiring four language skills, it is important to understand vocabulary first. Cameron (2001:72) states that “*Building up a useful vocabulary*

*is central to the learning a foreign language at primary level*". From this view, it is clear that vocabulary mastery is vital in language acquisition. Vocabulary as the basic aspect of English supports listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It should be paid an attention in teaching learning process.

Vocabulary is important to be mastered since someone cannot talk without knowing vocabulary. At some Junior High Schools, the students have a low mastery of vocabulary. It is shown that the students need long time to mention a name of a thing, students get a problem in pronouncing the word, and they often mention wrong words in pointing a thing. Teaching vocabulary particularly in Junior High School becomes essential to improve vocabulary. Vocabulary cannot be separated from other elements in English teaching-learning process in Junior High School because vocabulary influences the ability of students in studying English language. The children have some characteristics. Basically, children like playing and doing something while learning. Children take great pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do. They have big curiosity in something they find in the environment.

I make an observation in *Grow English Course* and find fact that Grade 9 students face difficulties in English vocabulary. I decide to choose students of Grade 9 class because after doing Pre-Cycle in *Grow English Course*, I find some problems are caused by several factors. They are: based on score of daily test in English, is found that many students have a low score in mastery of vocabulary, based on the result of interview; I find some reasons from the students. Most of the students feel that English is the most difficult lesson to be learned. Then, the students are not brave to express their idea. They are afraid if they make mistake, their friends will laugh to them. Beside the reason from the students, I find the reason from the teacher also. The teacher conducts less communicative class. The teacher is not able to optimize media and never uses any media.

Like other students, students of *Grow English Course* have difficulties in mastering vocabulary. Remembering vocabulary needs a hard work because the pronunciation and the spelling are different. In order to follow the demand of English skill, teacher tries to find a good technique in teaching vocabulary.

*”Vocabulary holds a crucial position in English learning. Without grammar, it is very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”* says (Wilkins in Thornbury, 2005:13). It is really impossible for us to save our feelings and without enough vocabulary in our mind, means useless in making sentence. Vocabulary is form of word that has its own meaning. It can be more than one. Hatch and Brown (1995:131) state that *“Vocabulary refers to a list or set of words that individual speakers of language might use”*. From that statement we know that it refers to word in a language that is used by the speaker. Vocabulary is a part of language, in the small and simple form.

As for other ways, English learning can be done by using game, especially in improving vocabulary mastery. Game is motivating, challenging and fun and can develop positive attitudes. They can create desire to continue learning. Of course game makes students interested in studying English. Game is enjoyable and can help build up confidence and encourage them to learn more and more. In this case game is really relevant because it is fun and can make their improvement in vocabulary fast.

Using game in improving vocabulary is really effective, because there is repetition of word, it has stated by Thornbury, *“One kind of repetition that is important is repetition of encounters with a word”* (Thornbury, 2005:24). If we teach vocabulary for students by forcing them to remember the word, they will be confused and depressed. It is likely to store it in such a way that they have difficulty finding it when the students want to remember it. Using game is a kind of way to remember the word.

Based on the statement above, I choose Hangman game as a mediation to support students learning vocabulary. I want to make Grade 9 students in *Grow English Course* interested in studying vocabulary through Hangman game because almost all children like to play a game. It can bring much joy and also give the students opportunity to remember the words and understand the sentence easily. So, using Hangman game in mastering English Vocabulary is a new way for *Grow English Course* in learning process especially in improving vocabulary mastery.

From the background above I intent to make a research entitled “*The Use of Hangman Game as a Strategy to Improve Students’ Ability in English Vocabulary: Descriptive Study of Grade 9 Students in Grow English Course*”.

## **B. Identification of the Problem**

There are many ways to support students learning vocabulary. Because of mastering vocabulary is very important, I try to express my idea through this research to collaborate with students in *Grow English Course* especially for Grade 9 students to improve their vocabulary with Hangman game and make learning more fun. This research conducts by applying Classroom Action Research through the Pre-Cycle, First Cycle and until Second Cycle.

## **C. Limitation of the Problem**

In this research, I focus on the use of Hangman game which is used to improve the students’ vocabulary. I do the Hangman game only by using manual with a whiteboard and marker, not using online game. This research is limited to the students in *Grow English Course*. I choose 2 classes of Grade 9 students, one with Senior High School students and the other class with Junior High School students inside the class. It is chosen due to the fact that they are still in the early phase of learning also. To make the research more focused and not too large, I limit the problem by applying Hangman game which is taken from *The Ugly Duckling* short reading and make some test for students to know how they improve their vocabulary through the Classroom Action Research.

## **D. Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the background previously stated, I formulate the problems as follows:

1. How is the process of Classroom Action Research to improve students’ vocabulary?
2. How do the students improve their vocabulary through the Hangman game’s method?
3. How is Hangman game applied in improving vocabulary?

## **E. Objectives of the Research**

The purposes of this study are:

1. To describe the process of Classroom Action Research to improve students' vocabulary.
2. To describe how do the students improve their vocabulary through Hangman game's method.
3. To describe the application of Hangman game.

## **F. Methods of the Research**

According Tuckman in Syahrums' book says "*Research is a systematic attempt to provide an answer to question*". It means, the research is the process of problem solving research.

This research is conducted by applying Classroom Action Research. Classroom Action Research is kind of research which is conducted during the learning process. It is designed to help the teacher to find out what happen in the class and use the information to take action for the future improvement of the teaching-learning process.

This study belongs to Classroom Action Research. Classroom Action Research is utilized because it is aimed at increasing outcomes of teaching and learning. It helps the teacher more understand of the process. Classroom Action Research is portrayed as a cyclical or spiral process involving steps of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting with each of these activities being systematically and self critically implemented and interrelated. According to Wallace, "*Classroom Action Research is a type of classroom research carried out by the teacher in order to solve problems or to find answers toward context-specific issues*". It means that before implementing the Classroom Action Research, the researcher or the teacher needs to identify any problem real found in the classroom before implementing the Classroom Action Research.

From this design of research is expected learning problem can be solved. This research starts based on teacher observation in teaching learning process. Classroom Action Research gives a chance to the teacher to be more creative in

teaching so that can increase their ability in transferred knowledge and to solve the problem.

I make this research in *Grow English Course* Bekasi then I collect the data based on the procedure of Classroom Action Research, namely Cycle I and Cycle II. The Cycle I is carried out in two meetings and The Cycle II is also carried out in two meetings. Each cycle has four steps namely Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection. There is Pre-test before conducting the cycle in order to get the background situation of teaching-learning process in the class and the information of students' basic knowledge in English vocabulary. At the end of teaching- learning process, I also conduct a test and doing Hangman game to know the improvement of students and also make a score as the basic consideration or result for each cycle.

#### **G. Benefits of the Research**

The result of the action research is expected to be able to give some advantages for the students, the teacher, the school, and other writers.

##### **1. For the students**

First, it can motivate students to study English. Through Hangman game, they will get an enjoyable situation, they will not feel bored. The students will get a better learning, they will be able to improve their ability to memorize vocabulary by using games. At last, they can learn English particularly vocabulary easily.

##### **2. For the Teacher**

Second, by understanding the result of this study, the teacher can be careful in selecting teaching technique in their class. It is hoped that the result of this study helps teachers to teach vocabulary properly by using games for Grade 9 students. The teachers can improve their ability to make innovation, effective strategies, and scenario of teaching vocabulary. It also enriches teacher's technique to teach vocabulary so that their problems that faced in classroom can be solved.

##### **3. For other writers**

Third, for other writers the result of the research is able to use some

references to furthermore research in developing teaching vocabulary. It is hoped that the data can open other writers' mind in completing vocabulary field research. Therefore, for other research will get a good result related to teaching vocabulary. The data can be used to improve other research, particularly the difficulties in mastering vocabulary.

## **H. Systematic Organization of the Research**

The systematic of this research contains four chapters. Related to the title of this research, the systematic presentation is written as follows:

### **CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION**

It consists of: Background of The Problem, Identification of the Problem, Limitation of the Problems, Formulation of the Problem, Objectives of the Research, Methods of the Research, Benefits of the Research, and Systematic Organization of the Research.

### **CHAPTER 2 : FRAMEWORK OF THE THEORIES**

It consists of: Definition and Theories of Vocabulary, Vocabulary Mastery, Technique in Teaching Vocabulary, Ways to Improve Vocabulary, Games, Hangman game, and Classroom Action Research..

### **CHAPTER 3 : THE USE OF HANGMAN GAME AS A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN ENGLISH VOCABULARY OF GRADE 9 STUDENTS IN *GROW ENGLISH COURSE***

It consists of: the writer's finding and discussion.

### **CHAPTER 4 : CONCLUSION**

It consists of: The writer's conclusion and suggestion of the research.