

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of The Research

One of the most widely used languages for international communication is English. “Language is system of human communication by means of a structured arrangement of sound (or their written representation) to form larger unit, e.g. morphemes, words, sentences”(Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the four skills involved in learning English. These four competencies are demanded of pupils when they study English. In order to help students become proficient in the English language, vocabulary must be mastered first. Language skills are involving reception such as listening and reading and production such as speaking and writing. To support those skills, students need to master in component skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Chiriana, 2015). One of the most crucial elements of learning English and being able to comprehend the content being taught in the language is having a solid vocabulary. A lack of familiarity with the vocabulary required to comprehend the subject matter will present a significant challenge for students. "Vocabulary is a center segment of language capability and gives a large part of the premise to how well students talk, tune in, read, and compose" (Kartikasari, 2020).

Because vocabulary can reflect a learner's comprehension of the language, mastery of vocabulary is essential to learning a second language. It is essential that each student possesses a substantial vocabulary in the target language in order to facilitate the English language learning process within the classroom. It is incumbent upon the teacher to develop a new and innovative plan of action, in addition to selecting the most efficacious pedagogical methodology. Teaching vocabulary needs creative and innovative techniques because it plays an important role in the students' success in mastering vocabulary. It also makes the students able to learn better (Astuti et al., 2018).

Due to a lack of vocabulary awareness, students often struggle to understand the information being taught in English classes. Students who acquire new language are more equipped to offer input on the topics presented. Scott (2002) stated without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. Only with sufficient vocabulary one can express his ideas effectively, can understand the language task and foreign language conversation. Both mother tongue and foreign language, vocabulary plays an important role when learning a language. According to Kamil & Hiebert (2007) they broadly define vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings.

In the reality of daily activities, the researcher observed that only humans are able to use verbal communication and learn it (Dewi et al., 2014). Thus, a person will not be able to communicate in the target language if the vocabulary mastery is poor. Students who have good ability in vocabulary are easier to communicate in daily life. If students lack vocabulary knowledge, they will struggle to produce utterances in both speaking and writing. In contrast, if students have a rich vocabulary, they will find it easier to organize and arrange words into sentences.

According to the results of observations made by researchers while carrying out internship activities at SMP Negeri 7 Medan, there are still many students who were unable to achieve the Standard Minimum Score. The minimum score required to pass at SMPN 7 Medan is 70. However, according to the school's English teacher, there are still many students who have not yet reached the required standard. This is evidenced by the examination results for Semester 1, which indicate that a significant proportion of students performed poorly in the English examination. Nevertheless, there are still students who have achieved scores below 60. The reasons for this phenomenon are manifold. Firstly, the learning of English is less diversified than that of other languages, which causes students to be sluggish and appear boring. Secondly, students' vocabulary skills remain low. Thirdly, students lack confidence in creating and speaking English. One of the factors contributing to the relatively low results in the English language proficiency tests is the limited vocabulary of the test-takers. Students who lack English vocabulary proficiency struggle to articulate their opinions, feelings, thoughts, suggestions, inquiries, and replies. As a result, individuals prefer to remain mute rather than express their emotions and thoughts in the classroom when learning English.

Based on the above problems, the researchers used the game method to teach in improving students' vocabulary. One of the game methods that is relevant and in accordance with the material used by researchers in teaching students is a chain card game. According to Kuzu and Ural (2010), "when games and education are combined, it can be educative and education environments can be entertaining." The learners who learned with the use of games, gain positive attitudes and can be more motivated while learning. The researchers chose to use chain card games based on the needs or problems found by the researchers, where using chain card games can improve students' vocabulary by arranging word by word to form a sentence. Hornby (2000: 203), chain can be defined as a series of connected things or people. While the definition of card is thick of paper of piece of stiff or plastic with information on it (Hornby, 2000: 187). Chain cards game is a free translation from "Permainan Kartu Berantai" (Carrier, 2009: 2). Buzan & Buzan (1994:210) also advocate the use of Chain card game in various daily activities, including vocabulary, as it can develop students' creativity vocabulary skills and help remove memorizer's block. The characteristic of chain card game which generates ideas from general to specific can help the students to generate their ideas into vocabulary.

Not only that, Buzan, T. (2009:60) also stated that chain card game can stimulate our both brains by using pictures, color, imagination (right brain) with the words, numbers, and logic (left brain). It will be good for the students. In addition, Tony Buzan is credited with the invention of mind mapping in 1960. This learning method is designed to enhance the brain's capacity for creative thinking. A learning method that facilitates the optimal functioning of the brain in order to enhance the capacity for brilliant thinking. The use of lines, colors, letters, numbers, symbols, images, photographs, or keywords, among others, to correlate and integrate, visualize the acquired concept, and optimize brain capacity is known as mind mapping.

Chain Card Game is a game that helps students quickly construct sentences. The participants play just like they would with cards. In this game, players are tasked with arranging the cards in a sentence or playing cards to continue an incomplete sentence against rival players, which can be at the beginning or end of the card arrangement. Before the game begins, participants get five minutes to inspect all of the cards containing words. They also have the right to use a dictionary to determine the meaning of any words that they do not understand.

## **1.2 Research Problems**

According to the background of study above, the researchers need to find the answer of the problems, as bellows:

1. How do the students' vocabulary mastery before using chain card game?
2. How do the students' vocabulary mastery after using chain card game ?

## **1.3 Objective of The Reaserch**

1. To describe the students' vocabulary mastery before using chain card game.
2. To describe the students' vocabulary mastery after using chain card game.

## **1.4 Limitation of The Reasearch**

The scope of this study is limited to VIII grade students in SMP Negeri 7 Medan, with a focus on vocabulary enhancement through a chain card game strategy. This research examines the specific context of language learning difficulties related to lack of vocabulary acquisition in the classroom.

## **1.5 Significance of The Research**

The value of this research stems from its potential to provide significant insights, both theoretically and practically, that can benefit both students and fellow researchers.

### **a. Theoretical Significance**

The objective of this study was to assess the efficacy of the chain card game strategy in enhancing English vocabulary among junior secondary school students. In addition to the existing knowledge on teaching methodology, this study aimed to contribute a new perspective by exploring the distinctive impact

of the chain card game strategy on vocabulary enhancement.

b. Practical Significance

1. For The Students

The findings of this study offer students a practical approach to vocabulary improvement. By evaluating the effectiveness of the chain card game strategy, students can gain insights that will enhance their confidence and fluency in English learning.

2. For Educators and Researchers

Educators and researchers might profit from the findings of this study as they seek creative methods to enhance English vocabulary in educational settings. The results of this study can inspire the integration of the chain card game strategy into teaching practice and serve as a basis for further exploration of effective strategies to improve English vocabulary