

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the writer presents the general introduction of the research. It includes the research background, research problem, the aim of the study, and the research significance that consist of implication and application.

1.1. Background

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of teaching a foreign language such as English. Vocabulary plays an important role in developing students' communication skills and their ability to understand spoken and written language. Harmer (1991:135) says that if the grammar or structure of a language plays a role in building the framework of a language, then vocabulary is the component that provides the essential organs and flesh. This means that vocabulary is something that must be mastered in learning English because no one can speak if they do not know of it. No matter how well someone learns grammar, without vocabulary or words to express something or have a broader meaning, communication with each other in a foreign language will not be meaningful.

Vocabulary is something that is very difficult for students to learn and requires a long process and a lot of time. Many students have difficulty learning new vocabulary, which can hinder their overall language proficiency. According to Thornbury (2002:27), there are several factors that cause vocabulary difficulties, namely pronunciation, spelling, length and complexity, grammar, and meaning. According to him, previous research shows that words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn

because they contain sounds that are still unfamiliar to learners. Spelling is difficult to learn because of the mismatch of sound and spelling, causing errors. Learners often have problems with grammar if the grammar they learn is different from their first language equivalent. And meaning often makes learners confused, it is because there are two words that overlap in meaning.

Ninth grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sabu Barat almost experienced the same thing one of them is that students often mispronounce words in English according to the result of initial interview. The researcher conducted an interview with an English teacher who had taught for three years, he said that he experienced several challenges in teaching English, including students who were more dominant in speaking the local language because parents did not accustom their children to using Indonesian and a lack of English literacy because at their previous school or when they were still in elementary school, there were no lessons and no introduction to English, those things that cause students' lack of knowledge of vocabulary. In addition, he said that there were several mistakes that were often made by students, including that students often mispronounce vocabulary in English, write vocabulary based on what the teacher pronounces.

Based on the problems experienced by students, the teacher must find a way to get students out of the problems they face when learning vocabulary and make them enjoy learning it. Basically the main problem when learning vocabulary is the teaching and learning process which is not interesting and fun for students. One of the current innovative techniques that researcher found that can be applied to teaching English vocabulary is using games.

The game is one of the techniques that can be used in teaching, especially in learning vocabulary. Hadfield (1987:3) states that a game is an activity that has rules, goals, and an element of fun. Games are a good way to practice language because they model how students will use it in real life in the future. Hadfield's (1987:7) suggestions for choosing games in English language teaching are as follows: A game should be more than just fun; a game should involve 'friendly' competition; a game should keep all students involved and interested; a game should encourage students to focus on language use and not on the language itself; a game should provide opportunities for students to learn, practice, or review specific language materials. Thornbury (2002:102) says that useful games are those that encourage learners to remember words, preferably quickly or consistently. Based on these statements, the teacher as a facilitator needs to choose good games that can support the teaching and learning process and are following the conditions of students because games can help teachers make the classroom atmosphere fun and students active in learning. The researcher proposes one of the games that can be used to teach vocabulary, it is Scattergories game.

The Scattergories game is an educational game that encourages students to expand their vocabulary, and teachers could use it as a technique for teaching vocabulary. This game involves identifying words from different categories that start with a specific letter. The game challenges players' or students' creativity and critical thinking skills, and the Scattergories game is a great way to help students learn new words and develop their language skills.

Based on the referalls above, the researcher is interested in conducted a research under the title **"Increasing Students' Vocabulary Through Scattergories Game to Ninth-Grade SMP Negeri 1 Sabu Barat."**

1.2. Research Problem(s)

Based on the research background described above, the research problem of this study is : Does the Scattergories Game increase students' English vocabulary to the ninth-grade SMP Negeri 1 Sabu Barat?

1.3. Aim (s) of Study

Based on the problem formulation above, the aim of this study is to determine whether the Scattergories Game increases the students' English vocabulary to the ninth-grade SMP Negeri 1 Sabu Barat.

1.4. Significance of Study

1.4.1. Implication

The results of this study was support Ahmad & Tahir's theory (2021: 137) which says that through the Scattergories game, if players or students manage to categorize words properly based on the specified categories, they will automatically remember them and increase their knowledge of vocabulary. From this research, the researcher also hopes to be able to provide extensive information and knowledge for readers, especially about Scattergories games in increasing students' vocabulary.

1.4.2. Application

This study would give practical benefits towards stakeholder of this study, as follows :

1. English teachers have sufficient knowledge and are motivated to carry out creative and interesting learning in teaching vocabulary, one of which is by using Scattergories Game.
2. Students can increase their vocabulary knowledge through Scattergories Game.

The results of this study are expected to provide some valuable input to increase the researcher's knowledge about the Scattergories game.