

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, significance of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

English is one of the important languages in the world that should be learned. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that should be taught and learned. Nowadays, parents expect their children to learn and master English well. They are aware that learning English will be beneficial for their children. In order to learn English, learners should learn vocabulary at the beginning because vocabulary is the basic component in the English language learning. In other words, vocabulary is the main component in learning English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation, 2001).

In addition, Harmer (2007) states that some learners need to learn English for certain purposes; to be able to access general English, academic purposes, or business. In order to get appropriate English learning, the learners should learn English based on their need and purpose. However, learners would not be able to apply English skills well without learning vocabulary. By learning vocabulary, learners will be provided with the basic component for learning English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Harmer, 2007).

In this case, young learners are children that have curiosity and imagination, and they are also playful (Slattery and Willis, 2001). In order to learn vocabulary, children should be facilitated with various activities that are enjoyable and meaningful. They should be learned and taught vocabulary to enable them to communicate with others and understand the instruction given to them. Because learning vocabulary is not just about knowing words' meaning but also understanding and applying vocabulary into their daily life.

Nowadays, more enjoyable vocabulary teaching techniques are applied to teach vocabulary to children such as teaching vocabulary using songs, story-telling, games and so on. Because learning vocabulary must be fun, enjoyable, and meaningful for children, the vocabulary teachers must be able to find the students' interest while learning English vocabulary (Cameron, 2001). In other words, the teacher should be able to facilitate the students with communicative activities and they should be able to create a pleasant learning atmosphere in the classroom.

Recently, many researchers conducted their study about the use of games to teach vocabulary to young learners. They conducted the study with different subjects and settings. Some of them conducted a study to know whether games can be used to improve the students' vocabulary achievement, to find out the effect of using games to teach vocabulary to young learners, or to compare the effectiveness of using games to teach vocabulary to young learners and the other teaching techniques. Some of the results of the study shows that games can affect the students' vocabulary achievement positively,

but some others are not. According to Lee (1995) games can help the children to involve their English skills. Besides, Zeng (2005) states that games can increase the students' anxiety (as cited in Wang, Shang, and Briody, 2011). This explanation shows that games can affect the students' achievement and the students themselves positively and negatively.

These various research results have made the writer interested to make a study on the analysis of these research results of some previously-conducted studies on using games to teach vocabulary to young learners. To obtain a more comprehensive result on the effects of using games to teach vocabulary to young learners, the writer, therefore, conducts the present study. Analyzing the results of some previously conducted studies about teaching and learning vocabulary using games to elementary students in different schools will, therefore, give insight to English teachers in primary schools in using various games or techniques to teach vocabulary to their students.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

This research is conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What games are recommended to be used to teach vocabulary to young learners?
2. What are the conclusive results of some previously-conducted studies on using games to teach vocabulary to young learners?

3. What are the suggestions given in using games to teach vocabulary to young learners?

### **1.3. Objective of the Study**

The purposes of this study are:

1. to find out the games which are recommended to be used to teach vocabulary to young learners,
2. to find out the results of some previously-conducted studies on using games to teach vocabulary to young learners, and
3. to find out the suggestions given in using games to teach vocabulary to young learners.

### **1.4. Scope and Limitation**

This study is limited to some previously-conducted studies on using games to teach vocabulary to young learners; to be specific, the present study reviews and analyzes these researches to find out the kinds of games recommended to teach vocabulary to elementary school students, the suggestions given in using games to teach vocabulary to elementary school students, and the conclusive results of some previously-conducted studies on using games to teach vocabulary to elementary school students. There are three reasons why the writer interested to do this study.

## **1.5. Theoretical Framework**

According to Lessard-Clouston (2013) vocabulary refers to the words or single word and its meaning of a language. It means that vocabulary is the main component of the English language, so without sufficient vocabulary, students will not be able to understand and use the language (Lessard-Clouston, 2013). However, they need English to communicate, trade, work, and so on, and parents also expect their children to master English as well as they can.

Besides that, mastering vocabulary to young learners is quite difficult because they usually really focus on the teacher's explanation for the first 15 minutes of the learning section. They also easily get bored and low of motivation into the learning vocabulary especially in the classroom. Benson (2003) states that students are motivated to learn if they think and work strategically during the learning. It means that the teacher needs to be aware with the children needs. The teacher also should be patient in examining and understanding the way how their children think and operate the information they have got (Harmer, 2007).

Besides, some researchers conducted their study and claimed that games can be one of the alternatives to teach vocabulary to young learners. The result of their study showed that some of them succeeded in using games to teach vocabulary to young learners. This is also can be supported by Lewis and Bedson theory in 1999 that children are most familiar with game because they all like to play. Some other researchers, however, did not agree that

games were used to teach vocabulary to young learners because of some factors.

### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

This research will be beneficial for:

- English teachers in primary schools so that they are aware of various kinds of games that can be used to teach vocabulary to young learners, and
- other researchers who want to make a similar study.

### **1.7. Definition of Key Terms**

There are some key terms used in this study that need to be designed:

#### **Game**

Game is a form of play with rules that can support learning process and meet the young learners' characteristic (Wahyuni, Fauzia, & Syafei, 2018).

#### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary refers to the knowledge about the words and the meaning (Diamond and Gutlohn, 2006). Vocabulary in this study refers to the knowledge about English words and its meaning that is taught to elementary school students

#### **Vocabulary Games**

Vocabulary Games in this study refers to the games used to teach vocabulary to young learners and to improve their vocabulary achievement.

## **Young Learners**

Learners between 4-12 years old who are studying in kindergartens and primary schools.

### **1.8. Organization of the Study**

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one, Introduction, includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, significance of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. Chapter two consists of characteristics of young learners, vocabulary in language learning, teaching vocabulary to young learners, using games to teach vocabulary to young learners, the advantages of using games in the vocabulary learning, and the disadvantages of using games in the vocabulary learning. Chapter three consists of the research method which includes research design, material data of analysis, research instrument, procedure of data collection, and data analysis technique. Chapter four consists of the data analysis, research findings and discussion. Chapter five consists of summary and suggestions.