

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

The basic function of language is to communicate, so language means as a tool of communication in human life. It is important to be learned in order to improve the quality of the social life. In Indonesia, English has been determined as the foreign language as stated in the 1994 national curriculum. The purpose of learning English in Indonesia according to the National curriculum is to enable learners to speak and written in English.

The latest Curriculum in National Curriculum is The Educational Unit Curriculum (KTSP or Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan). In order to enable students to communicate well in English, they must be able to speak very well. They are also required to read and write well in English. To achieve these aims, student must master a large number of vocabularies. They will be able to conceive what they have heard and read. (Resha, 2010:1)

Teaching vocabulary is one of the basic elements in achieving all four language skills. Similarly, Jordan (1997:149) in Resha (2010:1) also states that teaching vocabulary is such an important task in teaching English because vocabulary achievement is related to all language learning and it is of concern to all four language skills.

Vocabulary is very essential for success to comprehend the language well, speak better, or composed a good writing; it is expected that learners have to increase their vocabulary by around 1000 words a year (National: 1990:22).

Similarity, based on the competency Based Curriculum, the students are required to increase their vocabulary 1000-1500 word every year so that in three years students have mastered their vocabulary around 4000 words (Clark, D.M, & Fairburn C.G. 1997).

Based on the writer's experience in teaching training practice, most of the students have many problems in mastering English words and this situation makes them lazy to study English. Learners usually have many problems in mastering English words. They have limited vocabulary to comprehend the meaning of the words in the text; they do not know the context of word usage, cannot recognize the meaning of each word, not able to listen the English words from speakers, cannot compose their writing task successfully, and get difficulty to communicate effectively in English.

Teaching English for Junior High School needs appropriate strategy in order that they do not feel bored and they become active in the classroom. One of the strategies is Word Walls. A word wall is a group of words that are displayed on a wall, bulletin board, chalkboard, or whiteboard in a classroom. The words are printed in a large font so that they are easily visible from all student seating areas.

According Erin (2011), Interactive word walls showcase well-selected words; they help teachers build a foundation for student content vocabulary comprehension. They also support word-learning strategies by highlighting root words, suffixes, prefixes, and their meanings. This helps students decode meaning in text. Additionally, when students use the word walls they become more

conscious of words and definitions. This supports content comprehension. It also helps students become aware of vocabulary in the world around them.

In reference to the explanation above and the strong desire of finding the solution of these problems, the writer has motivation to do the research improving the students' achievement on vocabulary through Word Walls.

There were some researches that used the Word Walls strategy to improve the students' vocabulary achievement. One of researchers was Maria Marshinta Aritonang (2010) academic year student of State University of Medan had done a research by using word walls in vocabulary. She conducted an action research; It focused on improving students' achievement on vocabulary through word walls. Word walls is an effective, enjoyable, and interesting way to each vocabulary because it can help the students to recognize, promote independence, develop a growing core of words, and provide reference support for students during their reading and writing.

In this research, the Word Walls strategy was applied in teaching vocabulary provided by games especially alphabet games. It will make students more interested in learning process. Hopefully that the students' vocabulary achievement will be improved. Of course by using games help the students to memorize the words and help the teacher to increase students' interest and to motivate them to learn vocabulary.

Because in learning English includes four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing also grammar. It is impossible that one master one of the skill without mastering vocabulary. Gough (2001:3) says that "vocabulary

and grammar are both important”. With a bigger vocabulary, the learner will be able to talk them fluently and more accurately. In this case, vocabulary is important than grammar, because it is a word, which carries the content of what want to say. The more words you know, the more, you will be able to communicate. You can say a lot of words. Vocabulary is an obligation for students to comprehend English well, without adequate vocabularies, it is impossible for students to understand English well. Therefore, vocabulary is one of the most important things that should be mastered in English because vocabulary is fundamental skill to support the others skills in English.

#### **B. The Problem of Study**

Based on the background of the study, this research problem is formulated as the following: “is the students’ vocabulary achievement significantly improved through the use of Word Walls strategy?”

#### **C. The Objective of Study**

The objective of this study is to find out whether the application of Word Walls strategy significantly improves the students’ vocabulary achievement.

#### **D. The Scope of Study**

The scope of the study is focused on the application of Word Walls strategy on students’ achievement in vocabulary. The students in this case are the first year students in SMP Negeri 1 PagarMerbau.

### **E. The Significant of Study**

The study is expected to be useful for:

1. The students in learning English in the class and enlarging their vocabulary easily because word walls strategy is fun and interesting way to use in learning vocabulary.
2. The English teachers in increasing the quality of teaching and learning vocabulary in the future.
3. Others researchers can apply the application of word walls strategy to improve the students' vocabulary.