I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes background of the problem, formulation of the problems, objectives of the research, uses of the research, and scope of the research. In order to avoid misunderstanding, definition of terms are provided in the last part of this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Vocabulary plays an important role in success or failure in learning a language because language itself consists of vocabulary to build the language. Therefore learning language cannot be separated from learning vocabulary. With a limited vocabulary anyone can also has a limited understanding in terms of speaking, reading, listening, and writing. It is true that it might be impossible to learn a language without mastering vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the problems confronted in English language learners. Because of the limited vocabulary, the learners cannot communicate to others clearly. Sometimes it is difficult to group the idea transmitted to them. In learning English as a foreign language at school, the acquisition of a large number of vocabularies can help students reading, speaking, listening, and writing. In the target language a good vocabulary and ability to use words correctly and effectively can help the students make school

work easier and more rewarding, and also many tests that they take in school include vocabulary questions. The more vocabularies they know in English, the better their chance to do well in an English test.

Vocabulary is complicated to be learnt. There are some aspects that should be learnt in mastering vocabulary: they are meaning of the word, form of the words and use of the words, pronunciation of the words and spelling of the words. Besides that in SMA Negeri 1 Natar, there were still many students that had poor achievement in vocabulary, which result in their poor performance in their English language skill. They did not know the meaning of many words in sentences or a text and also forms of the words. In expressing the idea both in written and oral forms, they had difficulty. It was proved when the researcher asked the students to read a text and answer the question based on the text; they still opened dictionary to know most of the words in the text. And also when the writer asked some questions to the students they asked the writer to translate the meaning into first language. In oral form, they produced bad spelling and pronunciation. In the middle of teaching learning process, sometime the students lost concentration and became noisy. Those problems can be made as justification that the students did not master the vocabulary. One may have difficulty to master vocabulary because the learners lost interest. The learners might lose interest and feel bored when they learn vocabulary by memorizing without training in learning vocabulary.

To make the students interested in learning English vocabulary and to be able to communicate in English, it is the teacher's task to create and determine technique that can be used to teach and improve the students' vocabulary. Wilkins (1993) in

Indriani (2007) states that the students' learning depends upon the effectiveness of the teacher's technique.

Technique is a way that is used by the teacher in teaching learning process. There are many ways that can be used to develop students' vocabulary. Vocabulary can be taught by using many different techniques, for example game, translation, text, picture, etc (Napa, 1991). That is the little sneaky tricks we all know and use to get the job done in the classroom. Teachers have systems of rewards or punishments for students who comply, exceed and left behind. If a classroom is becoming distracted a teacher may use the technique of guessing word to try to rope them in again. Then other factor is activity in the teaching learning process. Students' learning activity means any activity done by the students during the teaching learning process. By doing many activities they can gain the knowledge, comprehensions and aspect of behavior to develop their skill that may be meaningful for their social life.

The teacher should be creative to find a good media to help the students enrich their vocabulary; so they can learn easily and actively. There are many techniques that can be used to learn vocabulary; one of them is Clustering Technique. Clustering Technique is listing word in the form of bubble diagram and the list of word is developed from a word which is connected to the relation words. In this case, Clustering Technique is expected to be a way to encourage students' vocabulary and combine the new words they find and remaining words they have.

According to Sitorus (2009) teaching vocabulary through Clustering Technique can increase the students' vocabulary achievement. At SMP Negeri 22 Bandar

Lampung, Sitorus' research shows that there is improvement from the students' average score in pre test (54.27) to the post test (76.86), that is 22.59 points or increase about 41.6 %. Moreover, this technique was able to trigger students' background knowledge to help them memorize, recall and use the new vocabulary based on the situation they face.

Considering these, the researcher conducted Clustering Technique in teaching vocabulary. Clustering technique enable the students to make connection between new words and remaining words they have and they try to develop the core word with other related words. By looking at the vocabulary from the new viewpoint provided by the organizing nature of clustering technique, the learners can deepen their understanding and improve access to the vocabulary (Nation, 1990:100).

Through clustering technique the students are expected to be able to memorize and reproduces the words they have learnt easier than by memorizing through list of words and they can be more interested in learning vocabulary so that their vocabulary skill can increase. In clustering technique, the students hold the main role on teaching learning process, the teacher just lead the students. The students are actively involved in the teaching learning process. Clustering technique uses context clues that makes the students easier in learning vocabularies. Moreover, by using clustering technique, the student can also learn about the meaning of the words, the part of the speech of the words and try to use them in sentences orally. The researcher hopes this technique could help the students of SMA N 1 Natar that have poor achievement in vocabulary that impact to their poor performance in English language skills. Because poor mastery of English vocabulary causes them to find English learning hard and unattractive.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background stated above, the problems were formulated as follow:

1. Is there any significant increase on students' vocabulary achievement through Clustering Technique at the first grade students of SMA N 1 Natar?

2. What is the most interesting topic for teaching learning vocabulary through Clustering Technique at the first grade students of SMA N 1 Natar?

3. What are the problems faced by the students during the teaching learning process?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The objective of this research is:

1. to find out whether there is significant increase on students' vocabulary achievement through Clustering Technique at the first grade students of SMA N 1 Natar?

2. to find out what topic is most topic for teaching learning vocabulary through Clustering Technique at the first grade students of SMA N 1 Natar.

3. to find out the student's problem during the teaching learning process.

1.4 Uses of the Research

1. Practically, as an input to English teachers of Senior High School to help the students learn English especially in learning vocabulary through Clustering Technique.

2. Theoretically, as a confirmation and a clarification of the previous theories about teaching vocabulary through Clustering Technique.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research dealt with technique which is called Clustering Technique. The researcher used quantitative design to answer the research question number 1 and 2. The research question number 3 was answered by using qualitative design. The research was conducted at class X 1, the first year of SMA Negeri 1 Natar, at the second semester of 2012/2013 academic year, which consists of 39 students. The topics of the teaching learning are real objects, occupations and sports. This research focused on the content words, which are noun (the name of the thing), verb (the name of action), adjective (the name of qualities of the thing), and adverb (the way of the action done or modifies the verb). This research was carried out for about 3 weeks. Each meeting consists of 90 minutes and used 1 pre test, 3 treatments, 1 post test and 1 questionnaire to find out what is the best topic and the students' problem during the teaching learning process.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Some terms are defined in order to give basic understanding of the related variables and concepts. These are stated below:

1. Vocabulary is all the words that someone knows and learns. The words that are typically used when talking about particular subject or a list of words with the explanations of their meanings in a book for learning foreign language.

2. Teaching is showing and helping someone learn how to do something providing with knowledge, causing to know, or to understand (Douglas, 1987:7)

3. Macdonald and Macdonald (1996:34) say that clustering technique is a type of free associated listing. It begins with a core word, a word that acts as a mental stimulus to make the writer come up with related terms that branch out from the center term.

4. Content word is the list of words that involves nouns, verbs, adjective, and adverbs.

5. Noun is the name of the thing, it can be functioned as the subject of the sentence or the object of the sentence.

6. Verb is the name of the action or movement that is done by someone or something.

7. Adjective is the quality of the things that can function to explain the noun or modify nouns.

8. Adverb is the way how the action is done by someone (human) or something (other alive creatures).

9. Core word is a word that is used as a mental stimulus to make the reader come up to the related terms.

10. Branches are the words that act as a specific supporting details.