

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This part contains background, previous research findings, problem, objective, uses of the research, scope of the research and definition of terms.

### **1.1 Background**

One needs to master language skills in order to communicate in English well; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For that, students should master a number of words to support them. Learning vocabulary is important for those who learn English in order to be able to use it in spoken or written form. Vocabulary is considered to be important as it is hoped that the larger number of vocabulary acquired by the students the bigger chance for success in learning a foreign language will be achieved. It can be said that learning a language cannot be separated from learning its vocabulary.

According to Napa (1991), vocabulary is one of the components of the language and there is no language without words. Words are signs or symbols for ideas. They are means by which people exchange their thoughts. The more words we have learnt, the more ideas we have, and the more actively we can communicate. This statement is supported by Wallace (1998) who states that vocabulary is the vital aspect of the language.

Vocabulary is one of the basic elements in achieving language skills. Students usually have many problems in mastering English words. They have limited vocabulary to comprehend the meaning of a text; they do not know the context of word used in the text; they cannot recognize the meaning of each word; they are not able to hear English words from the speakers; they cannot compose their writing task successfully; and they get difficulties to state some sentences in English.

Vocabulary is the key of communication, especially in writing because it is impossible to speak or write something without using vocabulary. The writer here wants to know the vocabulary use in writing, because the writer thinks that vocabulary mastery hold an important role in developing the writing skill. That is why the writing skill becomes the most difficult and complicated skill. This statement is also supported by Heaton (1991:135) who states that writing skill is complex and sometimes difficult, requiring mastery not only grammatical and rhetorical devices, but also conceptual and judgmental elements.

Teaching vocabulary helps students understand and communicate with others in English. However, students sometimes get difficulties to use or apply the vocabulary. Teacher as a facilitator in the teaching and learning process should design a learning strategy in order to enrich students to master vocabulary effectively. Teacher needs to teach student with their learning needs. Their difficulties in using vocabulary which have been studied can be caused with some reasons. One of those reasons could be in the media which is used by the teacher

in presenting the lesson in the classroom. That is why the appropriate media in delivering the lesson in the classroom should be considered.

Therefore, in teaching vocabulary an English teacher can use several media. The aims of using media are to make the lesson easy and interesting for students to learn and understand. An English teacher must know how to stimulate student's curiosity and must be able to present the lesson, so that the lesson is more interesting and relevant to the need of learning. Harmer (2003:134) states that media can be used to explain language meaning and contraction, engage students in a topic or as a basis of whole activity.

As the writer's experience when conducting her teaching practice at SMPN 1 Gisting, she found that most of students in this school had difficulties in learning English because of their inability in vocabulary, such as the lack of vocabulary that they did not understand the meaning of the word itself and they difficult when they wrote sentences. And also when English teacher in the school taught vocabulary to students, they did not use media as facilitator, so the students were not interested with English lesson and also they felt boring during the lesson.

Teaching and learning should be exciting and satisfying for both teachers and students. The English teachers have to think a suitable way, subject material and how to apply it in classroom. The English teachers are demanded to be teachers who succeed in teaching foreign language especially teaching vocabulary subject. They should be creative to teach this subject in various ways and stimulate students in order to feel comfortable in learning it and they understand the materials because English is not the first language for Indonesian students.

English teachers have to be able to organize teaching language activities, they have materials by using suitable techniques so that the students can master the subject matter. A good technique may make students understand and master the lesson better.

English teacher is expected to help the students better to develop their competence to use foreign language, therefore teacher should have suitable media to present the lesson to the students. This study chooses picture as media because media can make the students more interesting.

There are many ways in teaching English vocabulary as a solution for teacher's problem. The teacher should provide the interesting media in order to help the students' activity in learning vocabulary. One of media in teaching vocabulary is flashcards. Flashcards as visual aids is an interesting media that can help the students memorize the words. The colourful picture can attract the students' attention to learn. It is assumed that if the students are motivated to learn vocabulary, they will enjoy the teaching and learning process. So the students will be easy to communicate with other people in English language. Weaver (1950:5) states that learning through visual material will be better than learning through explanation and description. It means that it is possible that flashcards can give good impression on students. It helps the students enjoy the learning activity.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in analyzing *The Implementation Of Flashcards To Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery In Writing At The First Grade of SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung*. The researcher also wanted to know whether there was an improvement of students' vocabulary use in

writing by using flashcards in teaching vocabulary at the first grade of SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung.

## **1.2 Previous Research Findings**

There have been several studies dealing with teaching vocabulary. First, Sentosa (2007) shows that junior high school students experienced difficulties in their writing task, especially in the terms of vocabulary. This study shows that there were many students who found difficulties in finding the appropriate vocabularies that represent the words on their minds.

Second, Yosephus (2012) had done a research about The Use of Flashcards in Teaching Vocabulary in Elementary school. He used flashcards to see the students' achievement of vocabulary. The finding showed the use of flashcard was effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

Third, Triani (2011) investigated the students vocabulary by using picture. She found that the media used by her in teaching vocabulary could increase the students' vocabulary achievement.

Fourth, Kusniah (2002) investigated the junior high school students' achievement in vocabulary mastery by using flashcard as a media. The result showed that by using flashcard the students could achieve the target vocabulary well.

Based on the previous research findings above, it can be concluded that flashcards is able to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the researcher was

interested in using flashcards to investigate whether there was an improvement of students' vocabulary mastery in writing.

### **1.3 Problem**

In relation to the phenomenon above, the problem in this research is formulated as follow:

1. Is there improvement of students' vocabulary mastery by using flashcards in teaching vocabulary at the first grade at SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung?
2. Is there improvement of students' vocabulary use in writing after being taught through flashcards at first grade at SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung?

### **1.4 Objective**

It is expected that the objective of this research is:

1. To find out whether there is improvement of students' vocabulary mastery by using flashcards in teaching vocabulary at the first grade at SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung?
2. To find out whether there is improvement of students' vocabulary use in writing after being taught through flashcards at first grade at SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung?

### **1.5 Uses of the Research:**

The uses of this research are describes as follows:

#### 1. Theoretically:

- The result of this research can be used to contribute useful information for previous theories.

#### 2. Practically:

- The teacher: The teacher can make some variations of teaching vocabulary by using picture.
- The students: Teaching vocabulary by using picture can increase students' vocabulary mastery as well as their motivation.
- The school: Hopefully, the result of the research can be used as the consideration policy related to the development of teaching English.

### **1.6 Scope of the Research**

The research was conducted at the first grade students of SMPN 18 Bandar Lampung. There are many kinds of media that can be used for teaching vocabulary such as comic strip, song, and flashcards. Beside that, there are also many kinds of flashcards such as animals, flowers, and occupations. But in this research, the researcher focused on the implementation of using flashcards in teaching vocabulary for increasing students' vocabulary mastery in writing and content words related to the kind of occupation as the target language in teaching vocabulary.

## 1.7 Definition of Terms

Some terms are defined in order to give the basic understanding of the related to the concepts, they are stated below:

1. Vocabulary is component of language that contains information about the meaning and using the words in language.
2. Flashcard is set of card with picture and word on one side and its meaning usually in translation on the other.
3. Writing is the activity to arrange the words become sentence and paragraph into a piece of paper or other media as the way to communicate by using grammatical rules in English.
4. Active vocabulary is the words that use in own speaking and writing. People not only understand these words, but they can also call them up from memory and use them accurately.
5. Passive vocabulary is the words that recognize in context when people read or hear them. People understand what these words mean, and can follow what is being written or said.