CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the problems and the reasons in choosing the topic. In this chapter the writer presents formulation of the problem, the objective and the uses of the research conducted. The writer also explains the scope of the research and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Problem

English is an international language and in Indonesia it is the first foreign language taught from low level like kindergarten to high level like university. Language skills like reading, speaking, listening, and writing as well as language element such as vocabulary and structure must be taught to students. In this case, after learning English the students are expected to be able to use the language for communication both in spoken and written forms.

A basic unit of language which has meaning is vocabulary by which we convey some information, ideas, express feelings to others in both spoken and written forms. The mastery of vocabulary is essential in order to construct sentences that

contain some massages for social interaction. By mastering as many vocabularies as they can, the students are able to express their intention freely without thinking of words too long and successfully. However, most students of SMPN 4 Bukitkemuning faced problems of how to use, to remember, and to practice the words in real situations. It was hard for them to understand, to pronounce, to spell, and to get meaning of words. The problems above made the students feel bored and unmotivated to learn English vocabulary.

Based on the interview with the teacher, it was found that the students failed to learn English because of the failure in learning the vocabulary. Murcia (1987:253) states that students often claim that their primary problem in acquiring English is lack of vocabulary. Based on the opinion above, it can be infered that vocabulary is very important to be learned by students, it would be a must for students to master sufficient amount of vocabularies. Through learning vocabulary, students will become more capable in using English.

Based on this condition, the English teachers are suggested to complement any suitable media to make students master sufficient amount of vocabulary. As stated by Wilkin (1983:14) that teachers have to find out any technique or media that is relevant to the students' interest. Suitable technique or media can raise students' interest and motivate them to pay more attention and more active in teaching-learning process.

Ellis as cited in Hasan (1991:1) states there are some factors which influenced the students' ability in learning language, one of which is motivation. In learning English, students should have motivation by which the students are able to participate in learning English. Students will be interested in the subject matter that will be discussed in teaching-learning process. Motivation is important to get students engaged in learning English. Motivation is the energy that drives the whole process, without it, learners will feel like swimming against the current, and learners will give up eventually. Motivation can help learners set goals and achieve them. It means that by motivation, learners will get the goals in learning English.

Motivation is also one of the important points that must be considered by the students in learning vocabulary because it will be easy for them to keep in mind the words. This was supported by George (2011) who says that there is relation between learning vocabulary and motivation because if we want to learn a language, we need motivation to focus, to keep going when nothing seem to be going in, and to learn grammar and vocabulary. So motivation is an essential thing in learning English especially in learning vocabulary.

Based on the observation at SMPN 4 Bukitkemuning, in general the students had difficulty in learning vocabulary. There were many reasons that cause the problem, one of them was teacher did not use the media for them so that the students got difficulties to understand what the teacher explained and students

likely got bored during the lessons, and they were likely to lose their concentration upon learning vocabulary.

In relation to the statement above, the teacher should find media for presenting the available material in the class that keep the students' motivation in learning English especially in learning vocabulary. By having good motivation, the students can increase their vocabulary mastery.

Based the problems stated above, this research dealt with the implementation of flashcards to increase the students' vocabulary mastery. The writer believed that flashcards could motivate students in learning vocabulary because the teacher of SMPN 4 Bukitkemuning has not used this media for teaching vocabulary.

Flashcard is one of the aids that contains vocabulary or word so it is easy for students to learn vocabulary. First, Lado (1983) states that flashcards can be very helpful in teaching and studying the language. Second, Mortogi's research (1997:29) proved that flashcards can be interesting technique both for the students and the teacher. This made students enjoy the learning activity. Third, Rakoczy (2010) said that the use of flashcards is a wonderful tool for all people not just children. It means that by using flashcards, the teachers help their students to transfer their knowledge in practicing their vocabulary. It is assumed that if the students have been already motivated in learning vocabulary, they will like and

enjoy learning English. Therefore, if they enjoy learning vocabulary, it will be easy to them to communicate with other people.

In this research, the writer wanted to find out whether flashcards can motivate the students in learning vocabulary or not. The writer is interested to know whether flashcards can be an alternative solution to motivate the students in learning vocabulary or not. Hopefully, the students' attitude in learning vocabulary can be more interactive.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Referring to the background above, the writer formulate of reseacrh problem are:

1. Is there any significant increase of the students' motivation in learning English vocabulary by using flashcards at SMPN 4 Bukitkemuning?
2. Is there any significant inprovement of students' vocabulary achievement after being taught by using flashcards?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Adjusted to formulation of the problem, the objectives of this research were:

1. To find out whether teaching English vocabulary using flashcards can improve students' motivation in learning vocabulary.

2. To know is there any significant improvement score of students'
   vocabulary achievement gain better after being taught by using flashcards.

1.4 Uses of the Research

This research is useful both practically and theoretically,

1. Theoretically, the result of the research may contribute useful information
   to the English teachers in teaching vocabulary through flashcards.

2. Practically, it may inform English teachers in choosing the alternative
   technique in teaching vocabulary that can motivate the students.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research was quantitative research which was conducted at the first year students of SMPN 4 Bukitkemuning. It focused on the improvement of the students' motivation in learning vocabulary through flashcards. The material given was based on KTSP curriculum of SMP. The writer focused on the students' score of motivation and the sudents vocabulary achievement is only as supporting data. The subject of this research was one class as the experimental class. The treatment was given in three times in which the experimental class followed the teaching learning process through Flashcards. Moreover, the writer

evaluated the improvement of students' motivation in learning vocabulary in order to see whether there was any improvement of students' motivation by giving the class pretest and postest. To measure the improvement of students' motivation, the writer used questionnaire. The writer calculated the mean score of students' motivation before and after the treatment because the writer want to know whether there was a change of students' motivation after the treatment in order to know whether the technique could be used to improve students' motivation in learning process. To see the effectiveness of flashcards in improving the students' achievement in learning vocabulary, an experimental group pre-test post test design was applied by using t-test.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are some terms that were used in this reseach and to make them clearly, some definitions of terms are clarified:

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a component of language containing information about the meaning and the using of word in language.

Flashcards

It refer to the card with the picture that contain vocabulary or word including spelling and pronounce it makes the students easy to learn vocabulary.

Motivation

It refer to the students' attitude or behavior toward their learning vocabulary to be more interests and interactive. While motivation is an inner power reinforcing someone to do something.