CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with background of the problems, formulation of the problem, objective of the research, significances of the research, scope of the research, and definition of the terms.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Vocabulary is one of the aspects that are presented in the classroom during the process of language teaching. As Wallace (1986) states “vocabulary is the vital element of the language”, the existence of vocabulary has been considered important since it is term that should be acquired to learn four skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A small number of words can be used effectively to express an enormous number of ideas as in the case with speaking, it is important to get learners be able to make the best use of a small productive vocabulary. An adequate vocabulary is also needed if learners are going to generate, develop, and present ideas in their writing. The process of writing can be a contributor to vocabulary acquisition by making learners grapple with the meaning of words as they write.

Based on the Guidelines of SMP Curriculum of English (KTSP for English), graduates of Junior High School are supposed to master vocabulary in order to be
able to communicate whether in spoken or written form. The first year students of Junior High School are expected to master 1000 words after finishing their study. But in fact, after having an observation in SMP N 1 KIBANG, it seems difficult to be reached since the students often discouraged and lost interest when they found that foreign language study is just like other subject, learning on the book only without any practice. Sometime, the teacher taught vocabulary the same as they teach reading, structure, writing, speaking or listening without using certain method or technique. So it made the students lack of vocabulary. And as the result, they got a difficulty in comprehending the meaning of sentences and to express their idea whether in spoken or written form.

In this research, the researcher chose vocabulary as the topic of this research because vocabulary is an important part of learning a language, especially English as a foreign language at school. Vocabulary is one of the important aspects that should be acquired in learning four language skills. Vocabulary is divided into four types, these are content words, function words, substitute words and distributed words. From these types of English vocabulary, the content words (noun, verb and adjective) are taken as the material in English teaching vocabulary since it is appropriate with Junior High School Students. Besides, based on Junior High School National Final Examination (Depdiknas, 2006) that vocabulary earned the highest score (4 of 10 points) in speaking and writing test, 40 percent in listening test score, and 30 percent in reading test score.

Beside four skills that should be considered in scoring, one of the terms that also earns in the scoring is vocabulary. Thus, vocabulary teaching that encourages the
student’s attention and motivation in learning should be taken into consideration, in order to get better result of students’ score.

Based on the researcher’s interview with the English teacher of SMP NEGERI 1 KIBANG, it was found out that most students of SMP NEGERI 1 KIBANG at the first year of 2011-2012 could not achieve the curriculum target. Most of the students did not pass the standard score of the school (KKM-that is 64). Their score of MID test is low, the average score is 41, 21.

The researcher assumed that it is also partly caused by the teacher teaching strategy. In Teaching learning process the teacher should consider the way of teaching in order to get better result of students score. It is the teacher’s responsibility to determine an appropriate way of teaching which is easier and more useful for teaching, so that the students will be interested in learning English. An interesting way in teaching will encourage the students to learn easily.

Furthermore, based on the researcher’s observation at junior high school where the researcher conducted the research, most of the students especially the first grades at the second semester of class VII had limited vocabulary. The students had problems to understand the reading texts, such as, paragraph, sentences and meaning of words. In speaking class, the students could not express their idea clearly. When the teacher asked them to do a short conversation about asking and giving information in front of the class, they were confused and could not tell their idea clearly. The students also thought that English is a very difficult and boring subject. They seemed to be not interested in learning English vocabulary. So they
did not have adequate vocabulary. The researcher also noted that the lack of students’ vocabulary is also caused by the lack of strategy to encourage their attention and motivation to study. Sometime the teacher asked the students to memorize the list of vocabulary without training them well in developing their vocabularies. So they were bored in learning English. Therefore, based on the problem above, the writer tried to find a way out of how to make students easily in learning vocabularies and can memorize, understand and use them quickly. After searching for several techniques, finally, the writer had decided to use “Jumbled Letter” technique to be applied in the classroom.

“Jumbled Letter” is a type of activity where the students are allowed to arrange letters of words that are jumbled into the correct order. This technique is one of language games that will give easiness for students in remembering each word they have arranged and stimulate students’ eagerness to think, imagine, and express their idea in enjoyable situation.

This technique is an effective way for students in first year because this technique can help students to overcome their difficulties in understanding and memorizing the words. In this technique, the writer presented words in sentences to help students to remember the words and understand the sentences. For example teacher gave sentence to students in which one word is jumbled on the board. Then teacher starts to hang one index card which is the initial of the word to the hanger and asks several students to continue to arrange the rest of the letters in the correct order and hang them on the hanger.
By using this technique, students who have less vocabulary got the chance to put their knowledge of the new word into practice without being afraid of getting correction from the teacher. Instead of being dependent on the teacher, students get used to help and learn from each other. Meanwhile, the teacher is left free to discreetly monitor the progress and give advice, help and encouragement when it is needed.

In short, due to the problem faced by the first year students in learning English vocabulary, the writer was interested in conducting a research entitled, “The Use of Jumbled Letters Technique to Increase the First Year Students’ Vocabulary Achievement at SMP N 1 Kibang Lampung Timur”.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Referring to the background above, the problems of the research are as follows:

1. Is there any significant increase of the first year student’s vocabulary achievement at SMP N 1 Kibang Lampung Timur after being taught through Jumbled Letter Technique?

2. Is there any improvement of students’ activity during the learning process by the implementation of Jumbled Letters Technique?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Concerning the problem above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To find out whether there is any significant increase of the first year student’s vocabulary achievement at SMP N 1 Kibang Lampung Timur after being taught through Jumbled Letters Technique.
2. To find out whether there is any improvement of students’ activity during the learning process by the implementation of Jumbled Letters Technique.

1.4 Significances of the Research

The significances of this research are:

1. Practically, the result of this research can be used by English teacher as information in order to select suitable technique or method in teaching vocabulary in junior high school.

2. Theoretically, as the information whether the result of this research is relevant or not to the theory. Moreover it can be used to verify the previous theories dealing with the theories in this research and also as a reference for further research.

1.5 Scope of the research

Since the topic discussed in this research is quite large, the writer thought that it was needed by him to limit the problem. This research was conducted to the first year students of SMPN 1 Kibang Lampung Timur. The researcher took one class as the sample in SMPN 1 Kibang Lampung Timur. The focus of this study was increasing students’ vocabulary achievement by using Jumbled Letter Technique. There were three time treatments in this research that focused on vocabulary of occupation, activities and describing condition related to content words (noun, verb and adjective). The materials were based on the 2006 curriculum of English for Junior High School.
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
   
   It refers to a set of words known to a person or entity, or that are part of a specific language which will make the language meaningful. Vocabulary is a list of collection of words and phrases that are usually alphabetically arranged or defined (Longman, 1987).

2. Jumbled Letter Technique
   
   It refers to one of Language Games. It is an activity that allows students to arrange letters of words that are jumbled from the wrong and meaningless order into the correct order (Roth, 2006).

3. Vocabulary Achievement
   
   It refers to students’ achievement of vocabulary test in terms of score as their basic knowledge.