

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the background of the problem which includes the reasons for conducting the research, the problems in teaching vocabulary, and the suitable activity which is needed to improve the students' vocabulary achievement. This chapter also describes the formulation of the problem, objective of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Problem**

Language is an important part of communication. To which people are able to communicate with other people from other countries. They are expected to master more than one language, especially English as the international language. To be able to communicate well, people will need selection of English words known as vocabulary. According to Huyen and Nga (cited in Kaosar, 2012), vocabulary plays an important role in the four skills in learning language. Therefore, it is important for the students to learn vocabulary as the basic competence to learn those four skills in English as Cameron (2001:72) states that vocabulary is a base to the learning of a language at initial level.

Nowadays, English is one of the subject that is taught to young learners in

kindergarten. Different techniques are also used by teachers for young learners, such as teaching vocabulary through lists, translation, synonyms, antonyms, contexts, and so on. Unfortunately, some conventional techniques above are not interesting for young learners. Those techniques are too traditional to teach young learners in this globalization era.

Based on the writer's pre-observation in Bunga Mayang Islamic Kindergarten school, it was found that the students got problems in learning English especially vocabulary. First, the students got difficulties to understand the vocabulary that was learned and the class was not fun and enjoyable since the teacher use conventional technique like translation and memorization of vocabulary lists. Second, to teach vocabulary, teacher's creativities, appropriate methods, and the variation of the activities are required especially for young learners. Harmer (2007) states that teachers of young learners need to spend time understanding how their students think and operate. They need to be able to pick up on their students' current interests so that they can use them to motivate the children. Therefore, it is a challenge for teachers of young learners to think creatively in teaching vocabulary to find activities which provide a fun and enjoyable situation. It is agreed that if students are learning in a fun and enjoyable situation, it will be easier for them to understand and catch the material.

Referring to the statements above, the use of alternative activities is needed, and storytelling is one of the activity that can be used in teaching vocabulary to young learners. Cameron (2001: 159) states "Stories offer a full imaginary world, created by the language, which allows learners to enter and enjoy as they learn language". From the statement it can be concluded that storytelling offers an enjoyable

learning situation. In such an enjoyable and fun situation, students may learn better because they will be highly motivated to be involved in teaching learning process.

In line with that, Slatterly and Willis (2001) state “Young learners acquire language unconsciously. The activities you do in class should help this kind of acquisition. Stories are the most valuable resource you have. They offer children a world of supported meaning that they can relate to. Later on you can use stories to help children practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing.”

The reason for selecting kindergarten students as the subject of this research is because of their beginning position which still needs much attention. Besides that, because they are in the very early beginning period in learning English, their vocabulary achievement should be more concern.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, this research was conducted in the level of kindergarten students in order not only to teach vocabulary in different technique start from very early school, but also to find out students’ problem toward the use of storytelling in the teaching of English vocabulary.

## **1.2 Identification of the Problems**

1. Students’ lack of interest when they are learning vocabulary.
2. Students have some difficulties in understanding the vocabulary learned.
3. The improvement of student’s vocabulary achievement is still unsatisfactory.

4. Students, especially young learners, need to have fun and enjoy the learning process.
5. In teaching vocabulary, teachers usually use conventional technique so that the students are not eager to learn.

### **1.3 Limitation of the Problems**

Based on the identification of the problems above, the focus of the research are the students' problems and students' improvement in vocabulary so that the writer wants to offer storytelling technique to teach vocabulary and the writer also wants to find whether the students face any problems or not in learning vocabulary through storytelling technique.

### **1.4 Formulation of the Problems**

Based on the background of the problem mentioned previously, the formulation of the problem is as follow:

1. How is the improvement of students' vocabulary achievement through storytelling?
2. What problems do the students face in learning vocabulary through storytelling?

### **1.5 Objective of the Research**

The objectives of this research are:

1. To analyze the improvement of the students' vocabulary achievement through storytelling.
2. To find out the problems the students face in learning vocabulary through storytelling.

### **1.6 Uses of the Research**

The uses of this research are:

1. Theoretically, the result of this research is expected to give contribution to the theory of teaching as a reference for the next researcher who will concentrate in improving the students' vocabulary achievement through storytelling. In addition, the conclusion of this research can be used as a reflection to improve the students' vocabulary achievement through storytelling.
2. Practically, to inform the readers, English teachers, language researchers, and other practitioners of how to improve students' vocabulary achievement through storytelling.

### **1.7 Scope of the Research**

This research is a quantitative research which was conducted on the kindergarten students of Bunga Mayang Islamic Kindergarten. Since the subjects are very young, this research was conducted by conducting test and interview through personal approach to find out the problem the students face in improving vocabulary achievement through storytelling. This research used one class which

was selected by using simple random sampling and the research focused on vocabulary of content words (noun, verb, adjective and adverb) and the students are just expected to understand the vocabulary without focusing on the pronunciation and written aspect and the story used was narrative story taken from “Roddy meets his friends” story, “Kev gets ready for school” story and “The snake meets his friends” story. The increase of students’ vocabulary achievement will be measured by a set of pre test and post test in form of multiple choice tests.

### **1.8 Definition of Terms**

Definition of terms aims at avoiding misunderstanding about the terms in the research. The definitions of terms are:

#### **Conventional Technique**

Conventional technique in this study refers to old teaching methods, such as translating and vocabulary memorization.

#### **Storytelling**

Storytelling in this study refers to the activity of telling stories through voice and gestures to students by using some story aids, such as realia, pictures and puppets.

#### **Vocabulary**

*Vocabulary* a list of words usually arranged alphabetically and defined, explained, or translated into the range of language, the stock of word a person’s command the word used in particular, the branch of object language (Webster, 1988).

**Young Learners**

Young learners in this study refer to the 5-6 years old kindergarten students.