

I. INTRODUCTION

This part contains backgrounds of the problem, formulation of problem, objective of the research, scope of the research and definition of terms.

1.1 Backgrounds of the Problem

Language is a crucial means for human communication. It is used to make an interaction with other people in society and also it is used to express emotion, feeling, and opinion within the language. Vocabulary has an important role in all aspects of language skills. It is the flesh of the language. Someone cannot express his idea without has enough vocabulary.

There are four language skills that should be achieved in the study of English as a foreign language. These four language skills are developed from four language components: structure, vocabulary, pronunciations and spelling. In this research the researcher's attention focused on the vocabulary as one of the English component.

The vocabulary as one of the elements of language is important to study, because without enough vocabulary mastery, the ability to communicate and convey cannot be established. Therefore, English teachers must have responsibility to use the material in teaching a foreign language.

Tarigan (1986:2) says that the quality of one's language depends upon the quantity of his or her knowledge of vocabulary, the richer one's vocabulary is the more one masters a language. Relevant to this case, Rivers (1970:462) states that it would be impossible to learn a language without vocabulary, learning a language means learning its vocabulary. It shows that vocabulary is one of language components that cannot be separated in learning language.

It can be inferred that vocabulary refers to parts of speech used to communicate effectively. Vocabulary is the content of language. When we have to construct a sentence to express our idea, we need to know adequate vocabularies that are able to represent our idea. If we do not have any vocabularies in a certain language, of course we will not be able to write that language.

The English teachers are suggested to implement any suitable technique in teaching. Wilkin (1983:14) states that teachers have to find out any technique that is relevant to the students' interest and then it will motivate them to pay more attention in teaching learning process.

Naturally, learning vocabulary is very complex. It is because a lot of cases where the learners have to understand certain elements, such as, spelling, word classes, such as, noun, verb, adverb, adjective, conjunction, article, etc. This also shows that learning vocabulary is very difficult to master. Appropriately, learning vocabulary requires a lot of time, efforts and the like.

Based on the 2006 curriculum, the students of junior high school are expected to master approximately 600 to 1500 words and able to use them in their daily

communication. But in fact, according to the researcher's experience while teaching first grade in SMA Gajah Mada Bandar Lampung during teaching practice program (PPL) July-October 2010, the students were only able to gain about 200 vocabularies after were graduated from their junior high school.

When the researcher was attending teaching practice program (PPL), she found that the students of SMA Gajah Mada Bandar Lampung experienced difficulties in using vocabulary in their class, because most of them had lack of vocabulary. They are not interested to learn English, as they think English was difficult to study like Mathematics. This situation appeared because they felt bored and there was no fun in the learning process. Their English teacher tended to use traditional technique in teaching vocabulary. In this technique, the teaching learning process as the main role was only dominated by the teacher. The students were not given chance to be active to develop their vocabulary.

The trouble that might come up is how to make the students able to increase their vocabulary. Nation (1990:64) says that if the teacher's aim is to get the learners to remember the word form and its meaning, then it is useful to find ways of holding the learners' attention and encouraging them to make an effort. This means that the teacher should make use of any kind of technique to motivate the students to develop their own vocabulary.

Sitorus (2009) in his research found that Senior High School students feel hard to memorize certain vocabularies because they hardly ever practiced and used them in daily activity. So they are not able to use their vocabularies for communication in English correctly.

This study was focus on using clustering technique to increase students' vocabulary mastery. The main role on the teaching learning process is to give chances to the students to develop their vocabulary and to use their vocabularies correctly. They are actively involved in the teaching learning process. Logically, this technique can be used as alternative for teachers. Macdonald and Macdonald (1996:34) states that Clustering is a good way to generate general unifying categories (abstractions) as well as a way to come up with specific support (details). This is true because the word clue is developed from the most general (the core) until the most specific (the branch). The students' task is only to develop sentences from the clues that are already made before.

Another reason why the researcher tends to use clustering technique is that it will be easier for the students to figure the meaning of the target word, to memorize it, and to use it when they find the right situation based on the context clues they have known. It is also fun so that the students will find that learning language is enjoyable. Thus, this technique can effectively be used in teaching vocabulary.

To conduct her research, the writer has chosen SMA Gajah Mada Bandar Lampung because the school has implemented School Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan). This curriculum demands the students to be active learners because they have to be able to have the competency. In line with the curriculum, clustering technique is expected to stimulate the students to be active and motivate the students to make connection between knowledge and its application in their lives.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Referring to the background above, the researcher formulates the research problem as follows:

“ Is there any significant increase of students’ vocabulary achievement after being taught through clustering technique especially in terms of single word?”

1.3 Objective of the Research

The objective of the research is to find out whether there is a significant increase of students’ vocabulary achievement after being taught through clustering technique especially in terms of single word.

1.4 Uses of the Research

The research is expected to give the following benefits:

1. Theoretically, the result of the research may contribute useful information to the English teacher of teaching vocabulary through clustering technique.
2. Practically, the result of the research can help the English teacher choosing the alternative technique in teaching vocabulary for their students.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research is quantitative research. The research was conducted at the first year of SMA Gajah Mada Bandar Lampung. It focused on increasing students’ vocabulary achievement through clustering technique. The subject of the research was one class as the experimental class. The treatment was conducted three times

in which the experimental class follows the teaching learning process through clustering technique. Moreover the researcher evaluated the improvement of student's vocabulary by giving the class pretest and posttest. The researcher used objective test. It was multiple choice (MP) tests where items consisted of four options (A, B, C, and D), since it was easy to correct and to give the score. The material is about sport. The researcher used 20 items for pretest and 20 items for posttest.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are some terms that will be used in this research and to make clearer ideas of them, some definitions of terms are presented as follows:

- **Vocabulary** is a set of lexeme include a single word, compound word, and idioms. Richards et al. (1985)
- **Single word** are thought of as the smallest meaningful unit of speech that can stand by themselves, consisting of noun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, pronoun, and preposition. Katamba (2005)
- **Clustering** is a form of bubbles diagram that is used to show the relationships or the connection between words. 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.
- **Noun** is a word used to name a person, animal, place, thing, and abstract idea.
- **Verb** is the word which expresses an action or help to make a statement.
- **Adjective** is the word used to qualify noun or pronoun. An **adjective** modifies a noun or a pronoun by describing, identifying, or quantifying words.