CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

Many students who have been learning English for a number of years still have difficulties in expressing themselves fluently. Sometimes, these students have quite a reasonable passive command of the language. Somehow they are often at loss about what to say or how to answer a question when called on. No doubt one of the reasons is that most classes are too big to study a language. The students in one class are too many so that each student cannot have enough turns, while in learning a language a great deal of practice is necessary.

Based on the writer's experience during her PPL in junior high school, most of the students couldn't speak English appropriately. They didn't know how to express their ideas, how to pronounce the English words correctly and how to use the vocabulary to make the communication run smoothly.

Therefore, teaching English as a foreign language to beginners at junior high schools is very interesting inspite of its difficulties, because the teacher obviously has to help students in such a way that they master simple words to express simple ideas in their daily needs.

In spite of all the help that a teacher may give students, the sheer number of words to be learnt in a new language is a burden for most learners (Brown, 1980:12). The students tend to be asked to memorize the words already explained in class. The writer realizes that memorizing vocabulary may cause tiredness, boredom and frustration. Further if it happens continually, the students will hate it and have no attention to study at all. As a result, students fail to master the vocabulary and the teaching-learning process will be disturbed.

Therefore, the teacher should pay more attention to the teaching vocabulary. Mukarto (1989:66) states that teaching refers to the teacher's effort to help students to have clear understanding of what a word denotes or refers to or, to know the meaning of a word. The students, then, know the references of words either in the form of the equivalents of the English words in the students' mother tongue or by direct association between English words and the references in the students' mind.

Saville (1976:87) points out that vocabulary is the most important one for understanding,knowing names for things, actions, and concepts. Someone can understand what other people say (listening skill), he can understand the teacher words (reading skill), he can express his ideas well both orally (speaking skill), and writtenly (writing

skill) by mastering the grammar and the vocabulary. The writer believes that vocabulary plays the most important role in developing the four skills besides grammar.

There are more agreeable ways of practicing a language we are learning than through ordinary exercises, which can be boring. Another way is through playing language games.

In this study, the writer uses language games because they are interesting, enjoyable, spontaneous, and competitive. They need much concentration from the players and they can arise the students to dare to speak in English indirectly if they want to win the game.

Jeftic (1986:39) states that supplementing regular lessons by a large variety of language games activities motivates even the usually non responsive, shy, passive students, and they become active participants in communicating in the foreign language. Through language games, the students who are usually shy and passive are expected to dare themselves to speak in English.

Dobson (1970:9) has found that a good language game is a wonderful way to break the routine of classroom drill, because it provides fun and relaxation, especially in teaching vocabulary.

Young learners, especially, have such a competitive spirit that nearly any types of practice can become a

contest in which the participants learn, almost without realizing what is happening to them. An enterprising teacher can also use planned language games as an enjoyable and profitable form of practice to reinforce what has already been taught in a more formal way (Dorry, 1966:1).

The writer suggests that language games which are done as variation in class can be used as a variation for teaching vocabulary. Language games can arise the students' interest so that they will enjoy themselves while unconsciously learning. They will strengthen the students' power to achieve and to find joy in achieving the target language. They can also prevent the monotony which students often fell.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

This study is aimed at describing language games for the purposes of language teaching. Therefore, it intends to answer these questions:

    1.2.1 How can language games improve the vocabulary of junior high school students?

    1.2.2 What kinds of language games can be used to stimulate junior high school students?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem statements above, the objectives of this proposed study are:

1.3.1 To suggest of how language games can improve the vocabulary of junior high school students.

1.3.2 To propose what kinds of language games can be used to stimulate junior high school students.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Closely related to statements above the writer attempted to suggest and to propose some suggestions that language games improve students´ vocabulary. The writer hopes that this study will give some contributions to the success of English teachers in teaching vocabulary and can give encouragement to junior high school students in learning vocabulary by using language games.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

This study is concerned with the language games for teaching vocabulary to the third year of junior high school students only. The writer presents these language games because they are easy enough for junior high school students and suitable for big classes. These games are

,used to reinforce the teaching of English vocabulary to third year of junior high school students.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

There are several key terms used in this study to clarify the terms used in this study and to avoid misunderstanding on the part of the readers, the following definitions are given:

a. Teaching

Teaching is a process of interaction. Tyson and Carol (1971:6) want to state that there are two ways of traffic communication in the teaching process. It means that both, the teacher and students should be active in the classroom. The teacher teaches something to students and they are expected to give response or do something to the teacher.

b. Vocabulary

Vocabulary according to A.S. Hornby (1989:1425) is a total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language.

Webster (1986:2560) states that vocabulary is a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined.

c. Game

A game is: (M. Webster, 1986:933) (1) An

amusement of past time: diversion, play to while a way tedious hours, (2) a scheme or strategy employed in the pursuit of an object or purpose: method or procedure, (3) a physical or mental competition conducted according to the rules in which the participant plays indirect opposition to each other, each side is striving to win and to keep the other side from doing so.

Thus, a language game in this study is a game which can be used as a scheme or a strategy to obtain the goals of teaching and learning English, and at the same time as a means to create an enjoyable situation.

d. **Interesting**

Interesting according to Webster (1986:1178) is engaging the attention: capable of arousing interest, curiosity, or emotion.

e. **Junior High School Students**

Junior high school students refer to the students on the first, second, and third year. In this study, the writer only focuses on the third year of junior high school students.

In this study, the writer states that the key

to success is knowing how language games can improve the vocabulary of junior high school students and what kinds of language games are best suited to the teaching style and to the students.

1.7 Methodology

In this study, the writer conducts a library research. She collects data about language games of vocabulary from a lot of books, magazines, and dictionaries in the library.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction of the study, discusses the background of the study; the statement of the problems; the objective of the study; the significance of the study; the limitation of the study; the definition of key terms; the methodology; and the organization of the study.

Chapter II concerns with teaching vocabulary in second language setting which discusses the importance of teaching vocabulary in language learning; the importance of motivation in learning vocabulary; and review of related studies.

Chapter III deals with the role of language games in the teaching of vocabulary which discusses the nature

of language games in language teaching; types of language games; the characteristics of language games; the uses of language games; the advantages of using language games in teaching vocabulary; and some considerations in using games for language teaching.

Chapter IV presents with some kinds of suggested language games to teach vocabulary to third year junior high school students.

Chapter V serves with conclusion and suggestion.