**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents and discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, hypothesis, significance of the study and definition of key term.

1. **Background of the Study**

Vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to typical language learner. according Schmite and Mc. Carthy (1997: 6) say vocabulary has an important role in language skills. The more vocabulary that the students have, the easier for them to develop their four language skills. Without sufficient vocabulary, one cannot communicate effectively or express his ideas in both oral and written form. It is undeniable that learning vocabulary grows through incidental learning such as through continuous exposure to comprehensible language in reading, listening, speaking, and writing exercises. In learning English, vocabulary plays important role in the four English language skills.

Teaching English will be better if it is started from children. Children can start to learn simple English from elementary school quickly, effectively and enjoyable. Once they have initial grasp of English in primary school, they will have a strong foundation which will be an advantage in their later studies. According to Setiyadi (2006: 177), children are popularly believed to be better at the learning second language that adults they can learn the second language more easily. Young learners are easy to learn everything because their brains are still developing. Besides, young learners are rather curious about everything surrounding them. They imitate the sounds and pattern, which they hear around them until they form habits of correct language use.

Teaching and learning process will succeed if the teacher knows who the students are. The teacher also should be able to choose and create the appropriate technique in teaching and learning process. Game is one variety of available technique. Teacher can use some games to practice vocabulary. Baker and Westrup (2000: 38), mentioned that there were many games to improve vocabulary, such as: cards game, bingo, cross word, alphabet list, memorizing list, simple scrabble etc. One of those games is cards game. A cards game is one of favorite games for children in teaching and learning process.

There is plenty of ideas in using media to teaching vocabulary. As we know that it’s been a long time since picture was introduced as a media to teaching English for the first time. In its development, picture has been significantly developed into various kinds by the former researchers like flash card, posters, picture series, dominoes, etc. Those media are clearly proven effective to be used as teaching media (Komachali and Khodareza: 2012) . Considering that pictures are effective ones, the researcher wants to implement pictures as teaching media to improve elementary students’ vocabulary. In this case, the researcher is going to use dominoes to increase students’ vocabulary. According to Lebedova (2011) Dominoes are a very useful, easy, and entertaining game to practice any set of vocabulary. This game can be played in groups or in pairs, it has the necessary aspect of competition and forces the learners easy to learn the vocabulary, store it in memory and recall it. The game can be easily modified by practicing parts of the body vocabulary, storing the vocabulary in the memory, and encouraging communication and cooperation.

In this research, the writer uses modified domino cards to make students interested in learning vocabulary since it has the necessary aspect of competition and forces the learners easy to learn the vocabulary, store it in memory and recall it. The researcher believes by using modified domino cards, the students will be more interested in studying English. It gives a way to make teaching vocabulary easy, effective, and enjoyable. According to Baker and Westrup (2000: 38), student could play different matching games with domino cards, for example: They could match words and picture or match the words in their first language to the words in English, or match words to their definitions.

In the teaching process, this game can be used as stimulation and relaxation. Students can enjoy practicing new vocabulary through this game. This game encourages students’ participation and removes the inhibitions of those who feel intimidated by formal classroom situations. This is either especially made up for parts of the world. One of the most important reasons for using games is simply that they are immensely enjoyable for both teacher and student.

Based on the result of preliminary study, 72,23 % the fifth year students of Elementary school Mergayu 1 could not finish the test well. According to the teacher of the class, it caused by at least three reasons (1) the students are still low in vocabulary mastery, (2) they have less motivation in teaching and learning English, (3) the students do not involve actively in teaching and learning process. In addition the reason of those problems are, (1) The teacher still uses traditional technique like memorizing, and (2) The teacher only uses textbook in explaining vocabulary. Because of those problems, they are not interested to teaching and learning process. So, they have difficulties in teaching and learning English especially in vocabulary mastery. Besides, from the interview, it can be concluded that 1) students got low vocabulary mastery, 2) Students got difficulties in memorizing the meaning of words 3) Students were bored with monotonous class atmosphere.

In order to arise the students attention and motivation in learning English, especially in vocabulary. The teacher should be able to choose and create the most appropriate materials and method to the teaching objectives and students’ assessment. So, from the explanation above the writer believes the modified domino cards can make the students interested in teaching learning process. Students can enjoy practicing new vocabulary through this game.

Based on the description above, the writer would like to conduct a research entitled “Improving the fifth year students’ vocabulary mastery through modified domino cards at Elementary School Mergayu 1 in the academic years of 2014/2015”.

1. **Statement of the Problem**

Based on the statement written in the background of the study above, the researcher formulates the problem in this research as follows: How can modified domino cards improve the fifth year students vocabulary mastery at Elementary School Mergayu 1 in the academic years of 2014/2015?

1. **Objective of the Study**

Based on the statement of the problem above, the main objective of this research is to know how modified domino cards can improve the fifth year students’ vocabulary mastery at Elementary school Mergayu 1 in the academic years of 2014/2015”.

1. **Significance of the Study**

The researcher hopes that this research will have some benefits in the teaching and learning process, especially in improving students’ vocabulary through modified domino cards. They are:

1. The English teacher

It is expected to motivate the English teacher to create effective techniques in teaching learning English. It is useful to the teacher as information to find out how to improve the students’ vocabulary achievement through modified domino cards.

2. The Students

It is expected to give the students an experience in learning English to improve their vocabulary mastery by using modified domino cards.

3. The other research

This study as an input and references for those who want to conduct a research dealing and learning process with another games, especially in teaching and learning vocabulary.

1. **Definition of Key Term**

The key term in this study are defined to avoid misunderstanding in this thesis, those are:

1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a total number of words that make up a language or list of words usually in alphabetical order with explanation of their meaningless complete than dictionary (Hornby, 2000:1447).

1. Domino cards ( modified )

According Baker and Wetrup (2000: 38), Domino cards here means matching words and picture, or matching word to their meaning. Lebedova (2011) defines Dominoes as a very useful, easy, and entertaining game to practice any set of vocabulary. This game can be played in groups or in pairs, it has the necessary aspect of competition and forces the learners easy to learn the vocabulary, store it in memory and recall it.

In teaching vocabulary, there are four kinds of vovabulary (1) adjective, (2) noun, (3) verb, (4) adverb.it is difficult, of course, for the researcher tio reach all areas because of a very wide scope. Therefore, in order to be more focused on improving students vocabulary mastery. This research is limited only on noun vocabulary.