CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

The era of globalization has been affecting various aspects of human life particularly in aspects of English language proficiency as a medium of communication (Crystal, 2003: 2). Harmer (2007) stated that people learn the language because of the school curriculum, personal advancement and other various reasons such as for fun, tourism and expanding the network in economics.

Indonesia is one of the developing countries that uses English as a second language in areas like economics, politics and education. For example where the researcher did the internship students were accustomed to use English in both speaking and writing. However based on the researcher's observation during the two months internships while teaching English, students found it difficult to memorize new words and define new vocabulary words that they learned in the English lessons. The students were given opportunity to read serial books that have been provided by the teacher and even books from the school library. But in reality the student still find difficulty in understanding what the word means that they find in the book. Therefore the researcher discussed with mentor to find another method that students are more attractive with visual aids such as pictures and paper cards. So the researcher and researchers' mentor came up with an idea of using flashcards to help understand and memorize vocabulary words. The vocabulary words that were used to teach were the high frequency words which were the words that most frequently found in the written materials such as in the weekly reading catalogue,

reading and comprehension and exercises. The teaching methods used were introducing and high frequency words using flashcards, playing games and storytelling but still could not improve students' cognitive achievements to learn and master the English vocabulary.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the researcher would like to apply flashcard as the media in teaching learning process as one of ways in improving students' cognitive achievement in English vocabulary. A flash card is part of a set of cards which are written items to be studied. They are "flashed" (shown quickly) one by one to a learner to elicit a quick response. Vocabulary flashcards are great tools for studying. They can be fun, colorful, and creative ways to aid in memory and retention of vocabulary words. By using the flash card, the students can remember the letter, it also help the teacher to increase students' interest and motivation to learn vocabulary at the result. It will make the students to feel joyful and fun during the teaching learning process. It is expected that students" achievement in vocabulary will be improved if the students are taught by using flashcard as the media.

Learning the second language have to give positive contributions to their development because five to seven (5-7) years old children use language skills long before they are aware of them (Scoot & Yterberg, 1990:1).

1.2   Research Question

Based on the observation the researcher identified a particular problem which happened in the class and the researcher came up with the following research question:

1. Do flashcards increase students' cognitive achievement in learning English vocabulary?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

1. To find out whether flashcards help increase in student' cognitive achievements in English vocabulary

1.4 Benefits of the Research

The benefits that are expected in these research is to identify "do flashcards increase students cognitive achievements in learning vocabulary words.

For researcher

Teachers could identify what should be considered important in teaching vocabulary words using flashcards so that it could be used more effectively in the learning process especially in learning vocabulary words.

. For students

The research could be effective to identify students' interest and to facilitate students with visual learning media

1.5 Definitions of the Terms.

1.5.1 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a collection of words that are owned by a language and gives meaning when we use that language (Suyanto, 2008, p. 43).

1.5.2 Flashcards

Wagner and Bond (1992) defined the opaque flashcards as still pictures which has a two-dimensional visual representation of person, places, or things are called flashcards.

1.5.3 Students' Cognitive Achievements

David McClelland, 1953 as cited Shaffer (1989) defined need for cognitive achievement as a learned motive to compete and to strive for success in situations where students' performance can be evaluated against some standard of excellence.