

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

God created human being in His image as in Genesis 1:26, God said “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ...”. Being created in God’s image makes us find likeness with Him. There are some implications of this likeness. First, God is able to speak and use language, so does human. God has created human being with certain capacities, that reflects capacities in God Himself (Poythress, 2009). Second, this likeness also invites human to be a communicative being. The word “us” in Genesis 1:26 implies that there are more than one person in Triune God and also means that there is communication between the persons of Trinity.

Poythress (2009) said “Trinity function as members of a language community among themselves,” (Poythress, 2009, p. 18). This fact shows that language is created by God. He uses language to communicate with the other persons of Triune God. Language is given by God as a communication tool. People need language to be able to communicate with their God and also others as a social being. Thus, it is important to learn language.

There are so many countries in this world with a lot of mother tongues as well. In this multilingual world, people need a tool called lingua franca to bridge this difference in order to be able to communicate across the nation. According to UNESCO, a lingua franca is “a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them,” (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 59).

Nowadays, in its development, English becomes an international language that is used by many countries in the world. Crystal (2001) said that “English is now spoken by more people (as a first, second, or foreign language) than any other language and is recognized by more countries as a desirable lingua franca than any other language,” (Crystal, 2001, p. 54 as cited in Nicholson, 2015, p. 13). Thus, students need to understand English. Vocabulary mastery is important in learning English.

Vocabulary is a key area in learning language. Wilkins (1972) said “without grammar, very little can be conveyed, [but] without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed,” (Milton, Wade, & Hopkins, 2010). This statement is supported by Azabdaftari and Mozaheb (2012) by saying that the more vocabulary that acquired by English learners, the better communication he/she will have. Nation (2001) stated that there are three knowledge that is required in knowing a word which are knowledge of form (spelling and pronunciation), knowledge of meaning (translation), and knowledge of use (link a word with other words) (Milton, 2009). Students are demanded to have these three knowledge to understand a word. They are expected to be able to spell words correctly, translate words from English into Indonesian and vice versa, and use words to make or complete sentences.

After teaching and observing VII A, the researcher found that the students have limited vocabulary caused by the lack of English exposure. Some of the students also get English lesson for the first time in grade VII. They could not understand some instructions that were given by the teacher. They also did not know a lot of English words. It was proved by their vocabulary test result. More than 50% of total number of students in the classroom did not pass passing grade. 9 out of 16 students

could not pass the passing grade set by the school. The students often misspelled words and found difficulty in translating words from Indonesian to English and vice versa correctly. These two problems affect their ability in making sentences. Based on the facts that were found in the class, researcher identified that the problem is students' vocabulary mastery.

In this research, the use of flashcards is chosen by the researcher as the solution of this problem. The purpose of flashcards is to help students to remember the words and the letters, also give motivation to students in learning English (Marpaung & Zainuddin, 2012). Moreover, flashcards can be used to enhance vocabulary, also practicing structure and word order (Haycraft, 1983 as cited in Insaniyah, 2008). This significance shows that flashcards can help students to improve their vocabulary mastery.

Based on the description of the background that have been explained before, the researcher conducts a research with the title of **“THE USE OF FLASHCARDS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY IN CLASS VII A AT ONE OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS IN SANGIHE”**

## 1.2 Research Questions

According to the background of the problem that have been explained by the researcher, the formulation of the problem are:

1. Does the use of flashcards affect students' vocabulary mastery in class VII A at one of Christian schools in Sangihe?
2. How does the use of flashcards affect students' vocabulary mastery in class VII A at one of Christian schools in Sangihe?

### 1.3 Research Purposes

1. To know whether the use of flashcards affect students' vocabulary mastery in class VII A at one of Christian schools in Sangihe.
2. To know how the use of flashcards affect students' vocabulary mastery in class VII A at one of Christian schools in Sangihe.

### 1.4 Explanation of Terms

#### 1.4.1 Vocabulary Mastery

By knowing a lot of vocabularies, someone can have better communication. He could convey things in his mind easily (Azabdaftari & Mozaheb, 2012), so vocabulary mastery is needed in learning English. Vocabulary mastery involves three knowledge: form, meaning, and use. Someone who understand a word means he knows what the word looks like, and what it sounds like (form). Vocabulary mastery involves forming link between a word of a foreign language and its translation in the native language (meaning). Furthermore, vocabulary mastery also requires knowledge to link a word with other words properly in sentences (use) (Milton, 2009). Someone who masters vocabularies should have these three knowledge.

#### 1.4.2 Flashcards

“It is defined by Webster (1972) that flashcard is any set of cards with words, number, etc on them, which are flashed one by one before a class for a quick response in drill,” (Insaniyah, 2008, p. 161). Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2011) said that “A flashcard is a cardboard consisting of a word, a sentence, or a simple picture on it,” (Azabdaftari & Mozaheb, 2012, p. 50). It can be concluded that flashcard is a set of cards consisting of words, numbers, sentences, or simple pictures on it,

which are flashed one by one for a quick response in drill. Flashcards can help students to memorize new English words easily by providing visualization.

