

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about the background of the study which will elaborate the reason why the research attempted to conduct and to inform advantages of the study. It will be followed by the scope and limitation which explain what the researcher focuses on and what the limitation of the study. The last part is the definition of key terms that provide the reader with the content of study

### **1.1 Background of The Study**

Vocabulary is the most important component that must be taught first in English language teaching. Teachers are required to be creative in choosing and simplifying materials that can attract students' interest and interest in mastering vocabulary. Mastering a lot of vocabulary will help students understand and convey their feelings using the target language. By mastering vocabulary, students can communicate with others effectively and can also express their ideas in oral and written form. Mastering vocabulary is also not an easy thing, let alone other aspects of language, namely sound and structure. One cannot communicate without language and language does not exist without vocabulary. It can be interpreted that the first thing to do in learning English is the ability to master vocabulary, because we learn English as a foreign language, then we must master and understand many skills. According to Jumariati (2010), in learning a foreign language, learning English is a very important aspect.

Richard and Renandya (2006), say that without a broad vocabulary understanding and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, students often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from taking advantage of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, reading or watching television. In other words, by having a wide vocabulary students can use English easily. There are still many problems in learning and teaching English in schools, because English is very different from Indonesian in terms of structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation. For example, students tend to forget the meaning of words that have been taught or practiced in previous lessons. In general, vocabulary is taught by memorization. For teachers, creating effective and efficient English learning is not easy. Therefore, English teachers must be able to organize teaching and learning

activities. they must present the material using the right teaching techniques or strategies. Good teaching techniques make students able to understand and master classroom learning. As with other lessons that require appropriate techniques and strategies, teaching English teaching also requires appropriate techniques and strategies. In fact, when learning English, especially when memorizing vocabulary is a boring thing for some students. The techniques used in teaching vocabulary are monotonous, and make students feel uninterested. Students only memorize verb changes, words related to nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.

According to Nufus (2019), the problem of vocabulary acquisition at the primary school level can stem from several factors, namely: (1) Limited Exposure and Practice. Many primary schools may not prioritize vocabulary teaching as much as other subjects such as reading and mathematics. As a result, students may not get enough exposure to a wide variety of words or enough practice in using them. (2) Lack of contextualized learning. Vocabulary learning is most effective when words are taught in context, showing students how they are used in everyday sentences and situations. If vocabulary teaching is too detached or abstract, students may have difficulty understanding and remembering the meaning of the words. (3) Vocabulary Teaching Techniques. Teachers may not always use the most effective techniques for teaching vocabulary, such as explicit instruction, using visuals, providing opportunities for practice, and ensuring meaningful engagement with words. Home Environment: The level of vocabulary acquisition can also be affected by the home environment. Students who are not exposed to rich language at home may start school with a smaller vocabulary base. (4) Assessment Methods. If assessment of vocabulary acquisition is limited to memorization or simple definitions, students may not develop deeper understanding or the ability to use words in different contexts. (5) Teacher Training and Support. Some teachers may not have received adequate training or ongoing support in effective vocabulary teaching methods, leading to inconsistent or ineffective teaching practices. To address this issue, a comprehensive approach is needed that includes improving teaching methods, providing professional development for teachers, fostering a vocabulary-rich environment both at school and at home, and assessing vocabulary skills in meaningful and varied ways.

In this study, the researcher found problems in vocabulary writing in fifth grade students. Many of the students are still wrong in writing English vocabulary, not only in writing sometimes students are also still wrong in mentioning vocabulary in English. To overcome the above problems, teachers must be able to use technical strategies in the

classroom learning process to improve students' vocabulary understanding. The teacher's effort in improving vocabulary comprehension is through effective learning to attract students' attention in increasing students' learning motivation, namely by using chain games in classroom learning. In this study, researchers used word chain games as a learning strategy in the classroom. Word chain game is one of the games that is often used by many researchers in classroom learning. According to Firmansyah (2015), Word chain is a type of vocabulary game that is played by using the last letter of the end of the previous word to become the beginning of the next word. Example: Love, Eat, Tea, Apple, Ear, Room, Monkey. In addition, the purpose of the word chain game is to improve students' ability to master vocabulary.

Word chain game can be a great and interesting learning method to improve vocabulary comprehension in various ways. The word chain game was invented around the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Carroll, L. Carroll (2007) mentioned that this word chain game aims to improve the player's ability to master vocabulary. According to some experts, there are several benefits of using word chain game in vocabulary acquisition learning.

First, as Abbas (2014) states that word chain game can help student to strategize. Word chain game can be an invaluable tool to help the students develop their skills in strategic thinking. By requiring players to connect word based on certain criteria, such as beginning and ending letters or related themes, the game encourages them to think critically, make plans, and consider various options before taking action. This process of strategy development helps students their problem-solving skill, expand their vocabulary and enhance their linguistic creativity. Moreover, the competitive aspect of the game motivate students to actively engage and think strategically to outsmart their opponents, foster a positive learning environment, and encourages collaboration and healthy competition among peers. Overall, incorporating word chain games into educational settings can effectively improve strategic thinking skills while also making learning fun and interactive. Abbas also said that word chain games can provide a fun learning experience. Incorporating games into the learning process makes it more fun and less intimidating. These positive experiences can contribute to more effective and lasting learning outcomes.

According to Gultom (2018), word chain game can help the students to improve their memory. Word chain games can also be useful learning method to improve students memory. In this game, students will take turns saying words that start with the last letter of the previous word. This game also requires students to remember word quickly, which

can train students memory ability. In addition, students also have to remember the order of the words to ensure that the word they mentioned is not mentioned again. By implementing or using the word chain game more often, student will be able to strengthen their memories and improve their memory skills. It can also help improve student cognitive abilities related to remembering and associating words.

According to Amaliyah (2020), word chain games can help students to learn from their mistakes. Word chain games can be an invaluable learning method for students, as they encourage students to actively engage with vocabulary and spelling while learning from their mistakes. As explained above, word chain games have players taking turns saying words that start with the last letter of the previous word. When a player makes a mistake or repeats a word, it provides an opportunity for discussion and correction. This process helps reinforce correct spelling, expand vocabulary, and develop problem-solving skills as students work to discover new words and avoid mistakes. Additionally, the collaborative nature of this word chain game encourages communication and teamwork, creating a supportive environment for learning from mistakes.

According to Sतालistya (2018), word chain games can help students to think quickly, and adapt. In addition to helping students to strategize, chain games can also help students to think fast. Word chain games are one of the learning methods that can improve students' quick thinking skills. In this game, participants take turns saying a word that starts with the last letter of the previous word. It requires a quick vocabulary memory to choose the right words and the ability to adapt to changing contexts. Playing these games regularly can improve students' ability to think quickly and improve cognitive flexibility, all of which are valuable skills for academic and real-life situations.

Incorporating the Word Chain game into students' vocabulary comprehension development activities can make the learning process interactive, fun and effective. The game offers a holistic approach to language development, which includes vocabulary, creativity, associative thinking, and communication skills. Not only that, using word chain games as a learning method in the classroom can help students to work cooperatively, think differently, work with a team, and be able to learn from their mistakes. So that it will be very effective and help students in learning in the classroom.

Several studies have been conducted by previous researchers related to the use of word chain games in English language learning. The first research conducted by Medina (2021) stated that the use of word chain games can help students in improving vocabulary mastery. This is evident from the results of the experimental group trials that are better

than the control group. The second study was conducted by (Nufus 2019) There was a significant influence between the vocabulary value of students who used vocabulary games and those who did not use vocabulary games in grade VII students of SMP Negeri 13 South Tangerang. Amaliyah (2020) in her research stated that word chain games are very helpful for students in learning English, especially in vocabulary mastery. This is evidenced by the results of the experimental class getting an average score of 87.86, while the control class got an average score of 80.95. So it can be concluded that the purpose of the word chain game used by previous researchers in classroom learning is to improve students' vocabulary understanding, improve students' writing and speaking skills, attract students' attention, make students more active in class, increase student grades, and this word chain game is able to change the learning atmosphere in the classroom more fun and by using word chain games can have a good impact on student.

On the other hand, the researcher conducted a short interview with an English teacher at the school that will be the site of the study. Based on the results of an interview conducted by the researcher with the English teacher as a grade V English teacher, The English teacher stated that grade V students at SDN 88 Gresik have difficulties in learning English, especially in understanding vocabulary, students sometimes leave one word in the vocabulary, they feel bored quickly and lack interest in learning in class, Many of the students easily forget the meaning of the words that have been taught, students feel embarrassed and afraid of making mistakes in pronouncing and writing English words. Not only that, the grades produced by students are also quite low, there are still many students who get grades with average or even below average. In the assessment that has been shown by English teachers, there are many students who are still low in writing vocabulary in English.

In this study, the researcher will also apply word chain games to find out whether there are any influences or changes before and after the use of word chain games on students' vocabulary writing ability in English learning. In addition, the use of chain games is also used to make students feel active and interested during classroom learning, because elementary school students will get bored quickly. Therefore, teachers need effective learning strategies or methods that attract students' attention in the learning process in the classroom. Many experts also say that games can be attractive to students, and it has been proven by previous researchers that word chain games are also one of the learning strategies or methods to attract students' attention and be able to improve students' grades in several skills in English, especially vocabulary aspect.

Thus, this study is different from the previous research conducted by (Medina, Lestari, and Yulianti (2021), the subjects of this study are junior high school students in grade VIII. In contrast to the study, this research was conducted for 5th grade elementary school students. The purpose of this study is to find out whether word chain games can be used for vocabulary comprehension in fifth-grade students. The researcher wanted to find out whether word chain games can be used as an appropriate learning method in elementary school students. The findings of this study can contribute to the improvement of effective learning strategies and methods in the vocabulary teaching and learning process in the fifth grade students of SD Negeri 88 Gresik. From the above statement, the researcher is interested in carrying out an action that focuses on "The Effect of Using Word Chain Game to Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery of the Fifth Grade at SDN 88 Gresik".

## **1.2 Research Question**

The research question is formulated as follows: "Is there any significant effect of word chain games on students' vocabulary mastery on the fifth grade at SDN 88 Gresik?"

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

Based on the above problems, the purpose of this study is to find out whether word chain games have an effect on students' vocabulary comprehension and show an increase in value for vocabulary comprehension that will be taught using word chain games.

## **1.4 Hypothesis**

The hypothesis are formulated in the following :

H<sub>a</sub> : There is significant effect of using word chain game on the student vocabulary mastery.

H<sub>0</sub> : There is no significant effect of using word chain game on the student vocabulary mastery.

## **1.5 Significant of the Study**

### **1.5.1 Theoretical**

The results of this study are expected to help improve students' understanding and knowledge of vocabulary understanding by using the word chain game method. Word Chain Game is one of the games that can help students remember vocabulary easily. The researcher also hopes that readers, students, teachers or others will get a lot of knowledge about this research such as about the use of various strategies in the teaching and learning process, there are ways to attract students' attention in the classroom, the importance of

the word chain game method in the classroom, especially in teaching vocabulary comprehension.

## **1.5.2 Practical**

### **1.5.2.1 For Teacher**

The results of this study are expected to provide information to teachers about vocabulary learning using game media.

### **1.5.2.2 For Student**

The results of this study are expected to provide information to students on how to improve vocabulary in English. This is very important because the purpose of learning English is for them to be able to use the language. In addition, it can be useful for classroom situations that make the class fun.

### **1.5.2.3 For Future Researcher**

The results of this study are to improve the researcher's knowledge in the use of word chain games in students' vocabulary and can also be used as a reference to conduct further research on vocabulary understanding or other skills.

## **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

Based on the research background described above, this study has research limitations, namely this study only focuses on one variable, namely vocabulary using word chain games in 5th grade students of SDN 88 Gresik.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

Understanding key terms contains terms that are the attraction of the research title. The goal is to reduce misunderstandings about the understanding of terms in research. Therefore, the researcher describes and confirms the title of this study, the following definition is proposed:

### **1. Word Chain Game**

The word chain game is one of the games that requires concentration in arranging words, where students must find words that begin with letters or letters that end with the previous word. This research uses the word chain game as a learning method in improving students' writing skills. After continuing the word from the last letter, students write the word and develop it as a sentence as a learning process in class. The words used in class learning must focus on one theme, for example, such as colors, animals, daily activity, etc. The benefits of playing this game can train focus and

concentration. The benefits of playing this game can train students' focus and speed in choosing word.

## **2. Vocabulary Mastery**

The vocabulary referred to here is the vocabulary about an object. By learning this vocabulary is very important because it will greatly help students to improve their understanding of how to write vocabulary correctly, and pronounce vocabulary accordingly.

