CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

In English, vocabulary is one important aspect in learning a foreign language. Without proportional number of vocabulary, everyone will get trouble in speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Vocabulary will help people in gaining, understanding and also enhancing the process of knowledge transferred for a better life.

For Junior High Schools, vocabulary mastery was a basic competence. Vocabulary mastery was one of the success keys in learning English. Because of the importance of vocabulary in our life, it must be learned from the easy to difficult one. Learning vocabulary could helped students to make a sentence in English, and also could helped the students communicate well in English as foreign language. Vocabulary would support the students’ ability in sharing their ideas and opinion or make a simple conversation. In short, the students should master vocabulary well.

Based on syllabus, most of the material was about specific of vocabularies. For example, students have to know about kinds of the difficult words. Commonly, most of teaching learning vocabulary, the teacher translates the new words directly or ask the students to open their dictionary. Students often open their dictionary and ask the teacher when
the difficult words found, but after that the students cannot remember it. Bintz (2011: 46) stated that the definitions in dictionary were not very helpful and the students did not use them productively. Due to these conditions, it was difficult for students memorize new words. In short, the students will get some difficulty to memorize the words if the teacher only gives students the meaning and does not have another way.

Based on discussed with the teacher at the first grade students in SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto there were several problems that related with the students limited vocabulary. The teacher said that, many students did not understand the meaning of words which make them passive in the class. Then, students often forget the meaning of the English vocabulary that the teacher gives. So that, they still get difficulties in memorizing words. And also, students were confused and often made mistakes in spelling and pronouncing the word, it makes them unconfident, shy, and hesitant to mention new words.

From several problems above, it was clear that teaching of vocabulary needs improvement, not only on the activities but also the technique of teaching used by teacher in classroom.

According to Mastropieri in M. Wyra et al. (2007: 360) keyword is a mnemonic device that uses both auditory and visual cues to enhance the learning of information about the word meanings.

Keyword Technique is technique that is used to increase memory which uses visualization to organize and recall information. This technique
needs students to think another word in keyword that teacher gives to the students. Furthermore, it will be easier for students to memorize many words while studying in the class. Then, students will be easier to construct a sentence by finding another words, from the keyword that teacher gives.

From the explanation above, Keyword Technique was selected as technique of teaching in this research; this technique was expected to improve students’ vocabulary mastery in learning English.

B. Reason for Choosing The Topic

There were several reasons why “Keyword Technique” was selected as a technique in improving students’ vocabulary mastery. The reasons were:

1. Vocabulary was important to support the four language skills there were speaking, listening, writing, and reading. By having enough vocabulary, it could improve language skill.

2. Students have difficulties in understanding text because lack of vocabulary.

3. The teacher has not variation technique to help students enrich their vocabulary.

Therefore, Keyword Technique was an appropriate technique which is selected to solve those problems in improving students’ vocabulary mastery at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto. Because, by using
Keyword Technique the students can enlarge their vocabulary by think another words in one key word that teacher gives. Then, it also facilitates them to memorize words given before easily and in a fun way.

C. Problem of Research

The problem of this research was stated by the question “Could Keyword Technique improves students’ vocabulary mastery at first grade students in class D of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto?”

D. Aim of Research

From the problem above, the aim of the research was to know whether or not Keyword Technique could improve students’ vocabulary mastery at first grade students in class D of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto.

E. Clarification of The Terms

The clarifications of the terms based on the title “Improving Students’ Vocabulary Mastery by Using Keyword Technique” were as follows:

1. Improving

(Arikunto, 2006: 3) states that improving means to make something better.
2. Vocabulary

Wu (2009: 5) states that vocabulary is a list of words, usually in alphabetical order and with explanations of their meanings.

3. Keyword Technique

Mastropieri in M. Wyra et al. (2007: 360) states that keyword is a mnemonic device that uses both auditory and visual clues to enhance the learning of information about the word meanings.

F. Contribution of Research

This research expected to give significant advantages in improving vocabulary for students; they could improve their vocabulary and English achievement. Then, for the teacher; this research could give alternative technique of teaching vocabulary.