CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

Vocabulary is one of the English components which has important role in language acquisition. It cannot be neglected in a language without having good vocabulary mastery. Dellar and Hocking in Thornbury (2002: 13) said that if the time is only spent to study grammar, the skills of English will not improve very much. The improvement can be seen if words and expressions are learned more than grammar. In line with that, Adebe and Davidson (2012: 525) also state that having good knowledge of vocabulary is mandatory in order to understand or convey message in communication and to pursue and succeed in one’s learning.

Ideally, the students of junior high school should be able to master basic vocabulary and its aspects, especially meaning. By mastering the meaning of a word, hopefully the students are able to master the other aspects of vocabulary easily and can be use the word both in productive and receptive skills.

On the other hand, based on the pre observation and interview with the English teacher and some of the students of the eight grade of SMP Negeri 1 Purwareja Klampok on December 23th, 2013, it was found that the students were lack vocabulary because the vocabularies taught by the teacher still difficult to be remembered by them. Moreover, the students are less
motivated to learn vocabulary because it is established in their mind that
learning vocabulary is hard and boring activity. Therefore, the skills of
English are difficult to be mastered by them, and getting bad in English is the
consequence.

The problem happen because the teacher still uses conventional way
in teaching vocabulary in which it is used to help the students in receiving the
teacher’s explanation about the new words of the target language and their
meaning, without involving them within the learning process. The strategy is
not too helpful for the student in memorizing and reinforcing the meaning of
the vocabulary taught by the teacher in long term memory. That is because
teaching using word list does not give opportunities to students to get involve
actively within the learning process. Shukla (2012: 1) states that if
vocabulary is taught in an uninteresting way such as by simple repetition and
learning lists, the words are likely to be forgotten. Teacher need to teach
vocabulary innovatively, so that the students may store them in their memory
and use the words appropriately in real contexts. Therefore, the students
should get involve in meaningful vocabulary process which serve them with
good learning strategy or media which attract their attention and help them to
memorize the learning material longer.

According to ELF learning company (2010), Elf card is useful to drill
new words, this media is currently being tested in Japan. Beside that media
can create students’ interest and attention, the cards which has timeless
illustrations, so both teacher and students need to know that an image will not
go out of style anytime soon. With sounds of native speaker on it, it can help the students to pronounce the words well, the students can be helped to remember and reinforce the vocabulary taught during the lesson in long term memory because there will be a connection between the sound produced and the picture seen. Tahmasbi in Shakuori and Mehrgan (2012: 49) argues that providing students with coherent verbal material and well designed visual material and establishing connections between verbal and visual representation can foster better retention of words.

Therefore, this research was conducted with the title “The Effectiveness of Elf Card for Teaching Vocabulary at Seventh Grade of Junior High School (An Experimental Research at Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Purwareja Klampiook in the Academic Year of 2013/2014)”.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The reasons for choosing the topics are as follows:

1. Vocabulary is an urgent component in English which has to be mastered by the students because without having good vocabulary mastery, the skills of English will be difficult to be mastered.

2. The students are difficult to remember the meaning of the vocabulary taught by the teacher because the teacher still uses conventional way in teaching vocabulary.
3. Elf card is one of media which can help the students to memorize the vocabulary given by the teacher in long term memory.

C. Problem of Research

The problem of the Research can be formulated as follows: “Is Elf Card Video effective for teaching vocabulary at seventh grade students of SMP N 1 Purwareja Klampok?”

D. Aim of the Research

This Research is aimed to examine the effectiveness of elf card for teaching vocabulary at seventh grade students.

E. Contribution of the Research

The result of the research is hopefully will give benefit both for the teacher and the students to conduct meaningful vocabulary teaching and learning process.

1. For the teacher

   The teacher will be given informations which can help them to improve his/her performance in teaching vocabulary and find the best solution in solving the problem of vocabulary teaching.

2. For the students

   The students will be given an experience of a new learning atmosphere which can help them to memorize the vocabulary taught in long term memory.
F. Clarification of the Terms

The clarification of the terms based on the title “The Effectiveness of Elf Card for Teaching Vocabulary” are as follows:

1. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is comparison between degrees of goal of attainment with previous arranged planning, or the comparison of the real result with planned of result (Mulyasa, 2010: 173)

2. Elf Card

Elf card is a flash card in video term with printed words, picture and sound on it can help up rapidly, useful for the representation of a single concept, such as an object or in action. (Elf learning)

3. Teaching

In oxford advanced learner dictionary of current English, it is stated that teaching is work of teacher, interaction that which is taught.