CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

One that distinguishes man from beast is verbal language or spoken. Humans can communicate with each other using verbal language, both in the states and receive information that cannot be done by animals. The words that stand alone cannot form a language because in a language, we need to systematically organize several words to produce meaningful utterance.

Wardhaugh stated that language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication.[1] It means that language is systematically arranged and symbolized based on social agreement that is used by humans for communication by producing some meaningful sounds.

According to Ramelan, language is said to be social, because it is only used in social group which involves at least two persons, the speaker and the hearer.[2] With language we can express their feelings, and communicate and interact with the environment wherever we are. Through language, human can convey ideas, express opinions, and even develop other sciences that he has. In communication, there are several objectives that vary in it, such as to get information, to socialize, or to trade, as in today's era. It is necessary to understand

---

[1] Ronald Wardhaugh, *Introduction to Linguistics*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1977), p.3

[2] Ramelan, *An Introduction to Linguistic Analysis*, (Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press, 1991), p.14

and be able to communicate using the language. Without language it is hard to imagine how people can cooperate and get along with one another.

We all know that Allah creates languages as a tool for communication in order to make people know and understand each other. Allah sated in verse Ar-Ruum 22:

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْعَٰلِمِينَ ۝

"and of His signs are the creation of heaven and earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors. Surely there are signs in this for all mankind". (Ar-Ruum: 22)[3]

One language is agreed to be the international language is English. In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language which has played important roles in the development of Indonesia. English is also the first foreign language which is taught in most of schools. The Indonesian government has chosen English as the first foreign language to be taught in schools because English is the most widely used language in political, business, trade, and diplomatic circle.[4]

Mastering vocabulary is the basic need in learning languages included English and vocabulary is one of the three aspects besides grammar and pronunciation, which has to be mastered and acquired by the students in learning new language. With the limited vocabulary, students will have difficulties in learning and understanding the

---

[3] Mahmud Y. Zayid, *The Quran*, (Lebanon: Dar Al Choura, 1980), p. 297
[4] Ramelan, *An Introduction to Linguistic Analysis*,…p.1-3

foreign language. So, the students who want to communicate in English well must have a wide range of vocabulary.

Whenever we want to communicate with other people, we should have mastered a stock of words related to the topic. It is true, however, that whenever we think of language learning, we usually think of mastering vocabulary. Without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.[5] Vocabulary is also one of the most obvious components of language and one of the first things applied linguists turned their attention too.[6]

Teaching English to elementary school students means that the teacher introduces English as the first foreign language. In elementary school, English is taught as an additional subject. The students just learn the basic vocabulary. Vocabulary is major concern in elementary schools materials because vocabulary is an essential means in conducting communication. For that reason, learning vocabulary is very crucial. Here, the teacher has an important role in delivering the material and making them understand. Unfortunately, the researcher found that the English language teacher of the fifth grade of MI NU 68 Leban Boja still used lecturing method. He introduced the vocabulary then translated it directly. The students tend to sit down and listen to the teacher. No media were used in the teaching learning process and the method used is monotonous. It obviously made the

---

[5] Scott Thornbury, *How to Teach Vocabulary*, (London: Longman, 2007), p.11

[6] Jack C. Richard, *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 4

students bored, low motivated and passive. Some of them were busy talking to the other students when the teacher explained the material. It is not surprising the score of the students is low.

Many ways and efforts are being made to be able to master the English language, from formal education, non-formal or institution offering learning services and learning with adequate facilities using methods of learning different languages.

Teaching learning process should be varied to make students feel fun during the process. In language learning, the students need more than instruction from their teacher. This is challenge for the teacher to be able to motivate the students to pay attention. The teacher also has to provide a variety of activities and teach vocabulary through enjoyable and interesting activities. Kasihani said that children love game.[7] This is why using game in language learning is recommended. By applying a game that is suitable with children's needs, characteristic, and interest, teacher will get the students motivated in the teaching learning process.

There are various games in English language learning. One of them is *Word Squares* game. It is an interesting word game for vocabulary learning. In this study, the researcher used Word Squares game to teach common noun. It can help teacher draw students' interest and arouse their motivation in the teaching learning process. Besides, it can train students' spelling and accuracy.

---

[7] Kasihani K.E Suyanto, *English for Young Learners*, (Jakarta: PT. Bumi Aksara, 2010), p. 17.

For those reasons, the researcher is would like to propose the thesis entitled "THE USE OF WORD SQUARES GAME TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING ON ENGLISH COMMON NOUN (A Classroom Action Research at the Fifth Grade Students of MI NU 68 Leban Boja Kendal in the Academic Year of 2014/2015)".

B.   Questions of Research

This study is intended to answer the following questions:

1.   How is the implementation of *Word Squares* game improving students' understanding on English common noun?

2.   How is the improvement of students' achievement of common noun after being taught through *Word Squares* game?

3.   How is the students' engagement in teaching learning process using *Word Squares* game?

C.   Objectives of Study

The objectives of the study are as follow:

1.   To describe the implementation of *Word Squares* game to improve their understanding on English common nouns

2.   To describe the students' achievement of common noun after being taught *Word Squares* game

3.   To describe the students' engagement in teaching learning process by using *Word Squares*

D. Scope of the Study

To limit the scope of the study, the researcher only discussed such as follow:

1. This study was done at the fifth graders of MI NU 68 Leban Boja Kendal in the academic year of 2014/2015.

2. This study talked about the implementation of *Word Squares* to improve students' achievement on English common noun. It is done to find out the effectiveness of the game.

E. Significance of Study

By conducting this study, the researcher hopes it will give valuable significances for:

1. Researcher

The result of the study can answer the questions of the research which are the basic of research.

2. English teacher

The researcher expects that the result of this study shows teachers that *Word Squares* and many other literary works can be used as a technique in teaching vocabulary. It is also hoped that this study can give teachers inspiration in varying their teaching method so that they will be able to attract students' interest and will finally improve the students' mastery of the material that they deliver.

3. Students

   It is expected that the students learn English especially vocabulary more effectively through *Word Squares*. As a result, they can achieve better score.

4. School

   The result of this study is expected to give reference in improving teaching learning process.

5. Reader

   The reader will be able to know the implementation of using *Word Squares* game to improve students' understanding especially on common nouns at the fifth grade students of MI NU 68 Leban Boja Kendal in the Academic Year of 2014/2015.