

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the problem of the study, the objectives of study, the significance of study, the scope and limitation of study, and the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Vocabulary is a very important aspect in learning a foreign language. According to Ur (1996), Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as words that we teach in foreign languages. However, new vocabulary items may be more than one word: for example, the post office and mother-in-law, consisting of two or three words but expressing one idea. Freeman (2000:29), in Anwar & Efransyah (2018) said that vocabulary is emphasized over grammar although work on all four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) occurs from the start oral communication is seen as a basic. In addition, Meyer & Schmitt (2002) state that the mechanism of vocabulary learning is still a mystery, but one thing we can be sure of is that words are not obtained instantly, at least not for adult second language learners. This means that we cannot get or know vocabulary instantly without the effort of learning to understand vocabulary.

Hornby (2020) in Hasibuan et al., (2018) says “Mastery is great knowledge about understanding of a particular thing”. By understanding English words students can easily exchange information in English, understanding English words in reading texts can even easily do English assignments. However, students' difficulty in learning even remembering English vocabulary becomes a problem for students to achieve the teaching and learning targets they want.

Vocabulary is one of crucial aspects to support those skills. As stated by Richards and Renandya (2002), vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis of how well learners speak, listen, and write. In Indonesia, English is one of foreign languages which is taught in Elementary School, Junior High School, and Senior High School. Beside, some students unable to speak English because they are lack of vocabulary.

To overcome these difficulties, the teacher's job at school is that teachers must find ways to make teaching and learning in class fun so that students do not feel bored to learn English. The teacher must teach students by providing new vocabulary for each English learning; the teacher must provide an introduction to daily vocabulary with the aim of increasing students' vocabulary mastery. When researchers conducted research at one of the Junior High Schools in Kediri, the problem of seventh grade students in Junior High Schools was that it was very difficult for students to understand English texts because they did not understand the meaning of words in English.

This study aims to improve students' vocabulary using crossword puzzles in Junior High Schools. In this study, researchers taught vocabulary by using crosswords with images and phrases or sentences as instructions. Vocabulary has an important role in language. We must know the vocabulary when we communicate or share ideas with others.

Some students in SMP 1 Mojo Kediri still have less vocabulary. Most of students did not understand what the teacher said in English, students still have difficult to translate a word when asked by the teacher and they are difficult to remember new vocabularies that they have learned. Moreover, the students are still difficult to communicate using English. It can make the students lazy to learn English. The students do not give attention when the teacher is explaining the material in the class. Furthermore, they just keep silent if the teacher

asked them in English. So, most of students just acquire a few vocabularies. The researcher needs to implement a method that can make students interested in learning.

Games can be used as a teaching strategy to make learning more enjoyable for students in the classroom. To improve students' vocabulary mastery, researchers use word games in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Because crosswords are a type of game that is tied to the production and discovery of words, they can help students recall words and their meanings. Crossword puzzles are one strategy that can be utilized to improve students' vocabulary mastery when studying English. Muzdalifah (2018), in Zaini, Munthe, and Aryani (2008: 71) claim that the Crossword Puzzle technique is an appropriate learning strategy without sacrificing the ongoing learning essence. This method might also include active participation of students in class. By applying crossword puzzles to the teaching and learning process students can learn and can add insights into English vocabulary little by little.

In improving the student's achievement in teaching learning process, the teachers have an important role. Teachers are in constant search of essential activities that allow students to improve their learning abilities of foreign language. The teachers must know the condition of the students. In the other hand, method has an important role in teaching learning process. Method which is used by the teacher can make students enjoy in learning. The teacher must use the appropriate method in teaching learning process that can make students is easy to acquire the new vocabulary. Game is one of method that can make students feel enjoy in learning. The students can do both of learning new vocabulary and play game. In addition, games are helpful because they can make students feel that certain words are important and necessary. Without those words, the students can not finish the game. There are many games which can be used in teaching learning process.

One kind of game is crossword puzzle, by using this game the students can get new vocabularies and improve their vocabulary. According to Edward there are some of activities that will help build vocabulary that are using words in conversation and doing crossword puzzle. Therefore, the researcher suggests Crossword Puzzle in teaching vocabulary. Crossword Puzzle can train the student's brain to recall the new words. Moreover the students will learn English by sharing with their friends to finish the crossword puzzle. All of above explanation create inspiration to the writer to make an action research, So the writer makes an action research with the title is "IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY BY USING CROSSWORD PUZZLE AT SMPN 1 MOJO KEDIRI".

B. Statement of the Problem

Based on the research background above, the research problem is “How can crossword puzzles improve the students’ vocabulary mastery at the seven grade students of SMP 1 Mojo Kediri?”.

C. The Objective of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem above, this study is aimed to improve the vocabulary mastery through the use of Crossword Puzzle at the seven grade students of SMP 1 Mojo Kediri on academic year of 2021/2022.

D. Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is the use of Crossword Puzzle to improve the students’ vocabulary mastery. This study is conducted to the seven grade students of SMP 1 Mojo Kediri on academic year of 2021/2022.

E. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is addressed to teacher, student, and future researchers.

1. Teacher

For the English Teacher, The result of this study with the existence of this research, it is expected to be able to help teachers, especially English teachers, to be able to increase their teaching ability using crossword puzzles.

2. Student

For the student, The result of this study hopefully with this research students can improve their vocabulary skills to be better.

3. Other Researchers

For the other researcher, The result of this study hopefully with this research can be used as a reference for future researchers for teaching vocabulary using the medium of crossword puzzles in Junior High School.

F. Definition of Key Terms

The writer wants to clarify and explain the terms of the title to make understandable meaning, they are following:

1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is part of language component and list of words that have been used by people to communicate. Vocabulary is the main content of language. People use vocabulary to construct a sentence to express the idea. By having a lot of vocabularies, people can express more ideas.

2. Teaching Vocabulary

Teaching vocabulary is about context and repetition– what they need to know about the words they're using, and using them multiple times.

3. Crossword Puzzle

Crossword Puzzle can be used in teaching and learning as other media. Teacher may wish to highlight keywords of a short story or teachers may also decide to provide students with key words of a short story in Crossword Puzzle and students are required to provide the clues.¹