

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of several sub-chapters, namely, background, research problems, research objectives, scope and limitations, hypotheses, significance, variables, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

In this world, there are many languages, and each country has its own unique language. English is one of the international languages, and English has an important role in our daily life. Not only as a medium of communication but also as a language of knowledge. English is very easy to find in various forms such as films, books, articles, TV programs and job vacancies. As a result, without having proficiency in English, a person may face challenges in communicating effectively with others around the world, which has the potential to cause a loss in science, education, and employment opportunities.

In Indonesia, English is taught from elementary school and continues to be taught until university, in contrast to the mother tongue or the national language. To achieve proficiency in English, it is important to improve your vocabulary and engage in regular speaking practice. English is included as one of the subjects in the curriculum at the junior high school level. To become proficient in English, students must acquire skills in all English skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing because all four of these skills are important.

At the junior high school level, students are expected to master listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. To master English, students need a broad vocabulary to be able to communicate. However, many students face challenges due to a lack of vocabulary. This is influenced by several factors, one of the contributing factors is that teachers at school often provide monotonous learning methods, so students feel bored and uninterested. They rely on tasks such as writing word lists or simply instructing students to read module books and dictionaries. In addition, the teacher may focus on books instead of actively teaching English vocabulary using some method.

Teaching vocabulary to junior high school students requires a different approach compared to adults. Junior high school students have unique characteristics and motivations, so it is necessary to apply creative learning strategies to increase the enthusiasm for learning. If teachers do not teach students effectively and creatively, it can lead to a lack of fun in their learning process. To ensure successful teaching, teachers must make the learning experience enjoyable and engaging for students. Taking notes on words from a thick book or dictionary can be boring for students, and giving questions in worksheets without proper guidance can result in confusion as students may have difficulty answering them in English.

According to Allen (1993) claimed that there are many students who are late in learning foreign vocabulary for objects around their environment. The teacher should see vocabulary from students' understanding. So that students can easily learn and apply vocabulary from their closest objects.

Having a wide vocabulary is very important for success in language learning because it can enhance the other four language skills. Vocabulary teaching in high school should be approached in an engaging and engaging way. There are many fun ways to learn vocabulary, one effective method is to incorporate games into the vocabulary teaching process. Currently, there are various kinds of games that can be applied in the learning process. Games provide an interesting and fun experience with set rules, and can be played individually or in groups.

Games that are applied in learning activities, can make the learning process fun for students. If students are comfortable while studying, then the learning material can be easily understood. That is the reason why researchers choose games to teach vocabulary. Because this allows students to learn happily and comfortably. One of the games chosen here is the Word Search Puzzle.

The Word Search puzzle game is a puzzle game where students have to look for hidden words listed in various directions, such as horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forward and backward. By playing this game, students can discover new methods of expanding their vocabulary. They can find many new words in an entertaining way, thereby increasing their understanding of vocabulary. Therefore, the researcher tries to use this puzzle as a means of teaching vocabulary to seventh graders through an experimental study. This research was conducted because seventh grade students need vocabulary knowledge as a first step in learning English at the high school level, and Word Search Puzzles can make the learning process more fun.

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the study's background, the research problem statement is as follows: Is there any significant difference between students who are taught using word search puzzle and students who are taught by using textbook in seventh grade students of MTsN 3 Kota Kediri?

C. Objective of the Study

Based on the research problem mentioned above, the researcher had the following research objective: To investigate whether the use of word search puzzle is effective or not as media for teaching students' vocabulary mastery, especially in seventh grade students at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.

D. Scope and Limitation

In this research, the researcher decided to limit the problem to only the seventh grade students' mastery of English vocabulary using word search puzzle for the students of MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.

E. Hypotheses of this Study

A formal statement about a predictable relationship between two or more variables that can be tested through experimentation is a hypothesis. It is divided into two aspects, namely the Null Hypothesis and the Alternative Hypothesis.

1. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is significant difference between students who are taught by using word search puzzle and textbook to improve vocabulary mastery at seventh grade students of MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.

2. Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant difference between students who are taught by using word search puzzle and textbook to improve vocabulary mastery at seventh grade students of MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.

F. The Significance of The Study

This research is intended to provide a contribution in teaching English theoretically and practically.

- a. Theoretically:

By presenting theoretical information to all readers that word search puzzle are effective in seventh grade students' vocabulary learning.

- b. Practical:

1. The Students and Teacher.

Especially for those who are studying English, it can provide knowledge about vocabulary and additional knowledge for teachers about learning strategies for teaching vocabulary.

2. The Writer

For the researcher, a lot of knowledge about Word Search Puzzle in vocabulary teaching can be gained.

3. Further Researcher

The research can be used as additional information to conduct other research in education, especially concerning vocabulary.

G. Study Variables

The object of study of the problems emphasized in a study are variables. There are two main types of variables which are independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variable is an antecedent to the dependent variable and is hypothesized to influence the dependent variable which is the outcome. In accordance with the research objectives, and the questions in this study, the research variables are as follows:

1. Variable X or as an independent variable is the use of word search puzzle as a method of teaching English vocabulary at MTsN 3 Kota Kediri.
2. Variable Y or as the Dependent Variable is the result of students' assessment of teaching English vocabulary.

H. Definition of Key Terms

1. Vocabulary; is all the words used in a language in general or in a particular field. The word vocabulary itself comes from the Latin word *vocabulum* which means "to name", or "to call".
2. Word search puzzle; The form of game word play composed of the letters of words placed in a box. Generally rectangular or square in shape are called Word Search Puzzles. The goal of this puzzle is to find out and mark all the words hidden in the box