

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the present study, the formulation of problem, aims of the study, the limitation of study, the significance of study, the hypothesis, research methodology, the procedure of study, the definition of terms, and the organization of study.

1.1. Background

English as a foreign language has been taught in Indonesia from primary school to university. However, such a fact does not still guarantee that the students have mastered English. There are some skills that students have to master in English, namely, speaking, listening, reading and writing. The English Curriculum 2006 states that there are four language skills that should be mastered by the students: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The language components are grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (BSNP 2006).

According to Wilkin in Thornbury (2004:13) “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary *nothing* can be conveyed.” This statement appears vocabulary is an important thing that should be mastered by students in learning English as a foreign language. Pinter (2006) says that vocabulary is one of the language systems that is important to be learnt. Students will communicate

successfully with other people in a foreign language if they acquire a number of words and know how to use them accurately (Huyen & Nga, 2003).

Indonesian students prefer their first language in daily activities to English because of a lack of vocabulary mastery. In addition, the lack of vocabulary influences the students' understanding to achieve a learning purpose. Even though students know how important it is vocabulary in learning a language to communicate, they still learn vocabulary passively due to several factors. These factors has been investigated by Daryanti (2008) which states that teachers usually use a traditional way in teaching vocabulary that is by using a dictionary.

Accordingly, Huyen and Nga (2003) state that most students usually only acquire new vocabulary through their textbooks or receive it during classroom activities that require them to open up the dictionary to search the meaning of a word. To solve these problems, English teachers have to provide a practical technique in teaching vocabulary. A study conducted by Tino (2011) suggests teachers have to use various techniques in teaching vocabulary to make the students active in a teaching learning process.

There are many ways that can be used to enhance students' vocabulary mastery. One of them is by using games. Kavalianuskiene in Ratnasari (2010) also states that the use of games provides a unique opportunity for students to self-asses their progress in learning professional vocabulary. Then, for teachers, games are beneficial to assess students' progress informally without causing stress and anxiety.

The statement above accentuates that games can be useful in teaching vocabulary, and help students increase their vocabulary without feeling bored and unhappy. Uberman (1998) conducted a study about the use of games for vocabulary presentation and revision. The result suggests that the use of games for presenting new vocabulary is effective and enjoyable for students.

There are many kinds of games which can be used in teaching English. It is better if the students are familiar with games. This study attempts to present one of the games that can be applied by English teachers in teaching vocabulary, namely, crossword puzzle. According to Hornby (2010:351) “a crossword puzzle is a game in which words have to be fitted across and downwards into spaces with numbers in a square diagram. The words are found by solving clues”. In addition, Jones (2007) states that a crossword puzzle always covers several skills in learning English such as vocabulary, reasoning, spelling, and word attack skills. It is reaffirmed by Paul (2003) says that crossword puzzles can be used at any level and they are a wonderful way to teach vocabulary from many different lessons. A previous study conducted by Yulidesti (2010) shows that crossword puzzles improved the fourth graders’ vocabulary mastery in English at SDN 1 Tapen, Bondowoso.

From the explanation above, this study uses a similar method by using a crossword puzzle, but there is a little difference from the previous studies. Most of the previous studies were undertaken in big cities such as Bandung which proved to be successful. Otherwise this study uses a sample of students in the countryside.

Therefore, this study specifically attempts to investigate whether crossword puzzle can improve students' vocabulary mastery.

A crossword puzzle technique is expected to influence eighth grade students of Junior high schools' vocabulary mastery. Students' responses toward the use of crossword puzzles in learning English were also analyzed. This study was undertaken in one of Junior High Schools in Siak Regency, Riau.

1.2. Statement of the Problems

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Can Crossword Puzzle improve students' vocabulary mastery?
2. What are students' responses toward the use of Crossword Puzzles in learning English vocabulary?

1.3. Aims of the Study

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using crossword puzzle in improving students' vocabulary mastery and students' responses toward the use of crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary.

1.4. The Limitation of The Study

The study focuses on using crossword puzzles in improving students' vocabulary mastery and students' responses toward the use of crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the teaching of vocabulary. More specifically, these findings are expected to provide solution for problems often encountered in vocabulary teaching, in terms of theory, profession and practice.

From theoretical perspective, the outcomes of this study can enrich theories and can be one reference for future studies related to the use of crossword puzzles in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

In addition, this study could encourage English teacher to improve their techniques in teaching vocabulary. As a consequence, teachers will improve their professionalism.

Furthermore, practically, this study can prompt English teachers to build the classroom activities more appealing for students through improving their professionalism. Therefore, students will get more opportunities to express their ideas during teaching learning processes.

1.6. The Hypothesis

According to Sugiyono (2010) a quantitative method uses a hypothesis to make a tentative statement about the outcome of study. The hypothesis is stated as follows:

H_0 = There is no difference of mastery between the students in vocabulary before and after being taught by using crossword puzzles.

H_a = There is significant difference on mastery between the students in vocabulary before and after being taught by using crossword puzzles.

1.7. Research Methodology

This study uses a quasi-experimental method. It is concerned with two variables, namely, crosswords puzzle as an independent variable and vocabulary as a dependent variable. This study was intended to analyze and interpret a data by examining the differences between the teaching vocabulary by using crossword puzzles and teaching vocabulary without crossword puzzle. The design of this research is indicated in the following Table:

Table 1.
Research design

<u>GI</u>	<u>TI</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>T2</u>
G2	T1		T2

(Hatch and Farhady, 1982:22)

Where:

G1 = experimental group

TI = Pre-test

T2 = posttest

G2 = control group

X= Treatment by using crossword puzzle

1.7.1. Population and Sample

The population of this study was eighth graders of junior high school in Siak, Riau. It was divided into two classes, an experimental group that was given a treatment of using crossword puzzles and a control group without using crossword puzzles. Both the experimental and control groups were a sample in this study.

1.7.2. Instrument

This study employed a pre-test, a post-test as the research instruments to answer the first research question. Questionnaires were used to answer students' responses on the use of crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary.

1.7.3. Data Collection

In this study, the data were collected by administering a pre-test, a post-test, and questionnaires. In the first meeting, the experimental and control groups received a pre test to explore their ability before getting a treatment. After the experimental group was given a treatment, all the students had a post-test and the results of the post-test from both groups were compared. Finally, the experimental group received questionnaires to investigate their responses toward the use of crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary.

1.7.4. Data analysis

The data were analyzed statistically to examine the effectiveness of using crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary to improve students' vocabulary

mastery. The data were analyzed by using a t-test. The results of both groups were compared to examine the effectiveness of this method. SPSS 16 for Windows Program was used for computing the data.

Finally, the questionnaires were distributed to investigate the students' responses toward the use of crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary. The questionnaires were analyzed by using a Likert scale.

1.8. Research Procedure

The procedures of this study were divided into some steps that should follow by the writer. First, a pre-test was administered to experimental and control groups. Then, the experimental group received a treatment by using crossword puzzles while the control group received a different treatment. After getting the treatment, both the experimental and control groups received a post-test. The results were analyzed and the mean of both groups were compared. At the end of the study, the writer distributed questionnaires to investigate the students' responses toward the use of crossword puzzles in learning English vocabulary.

1.9. Organization of the study

Chapter one introduces the description of study. It covers the background of the study, the formulation of the problem, the aims of study, the limitation of the study, the significance of the study, the hypothesis, research methodology, research procedures and organization of the study.

Chapter two presents the theoretical foundation which delineates some theories that support this study.

Chapter three describes the research methodology. It explains the research method used in this study in a more detailed description.

Chapter four discusses all findings and discussion from the study by using statistical formulas.

Chapter five presents the conclusions and suggestions of the study.

