CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief description about the content of the research including background, research questions, aims of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, hypothesis, research method, clarification of terms, and paper organization.

1.1 Background

In language learning, especially in learning English, vocabulary plays an important role in communication. Without mastering many vocabularies, it would be impossible for people to communicate to the others fluently. In line with that, there are so many findings which state that at least vocabulary becomes one of the factors of failure in communication (Iriyana, 2007; Lestariningsih, 2008; and Rahman, 2008). It is proven by some evidence that by knowing only little vocabularies, it will be difficult for people to say and to remember the word, get bad score in English test, feel stressful, and forget many words. Furthermore, people who know only little vocabularies will be difficult to improve listening, speaking, reading and writing skills (Purbasari, 2009).

On the other hand, vocabulary is also important in order to support the mastery of four basic skills of language. By mastering vocabulary, people can easily communicate with each other and they can also improve their ability in listening, speaking, reading and writing (Nurhasanah, 2007). When practicing

listening, speaking, reading and writing, people will produce vocabularies. However, at this time traditional method in teaching and learning vocabularies still can be found. Teachers usually use vocabulary lists, definitions, written and oral drills, and flash cards that do not make students enjoy participating (Brown, 2001:375).

Writing, as one of four basic skills of English, is often reported as the most difficult skill to be mastered and to be improved. It happens, as stated by Nopiranti (2004), because it is difficult for students to generate, develop, and organize the ideas into a good writing. In line with that, Nurgiyantoro (2000:308) in Martini (2005) also states that writing is the most difficult skill to be improved compared to the other three skills. It happens because in mastering writing skill, there should be any other elements of language and another element besides elements of language that will be the content of writing product. Both elements should be set in a line. Therefore, writing product will be in a row and fused. Syamsudin (1994:6-7) in Martini (2005) also explains the difficulty of writing faced by people especially students, those are: students feel so afraid if their writing product will not be interesting because people have known it before, students feel so afraid if their writing is too wide and it will be boring, too much critical thinking, and students do not know how to put their idea in writing product.

Nowadays, there is an alternative way that is commonly used by teacher in teaching English. As also stated by some researchers such as Sweet (1993), Moras (2001), and Barrett (2003), this alternative way is portfolio. It is proven by some

evidence which showed by Martini (2005), Nursuhayati (2005), Resmiati (2007) and Kaswanti (2010) on their research project. They applied portfolio in order to help their students in improving their reading and writing skills. Portfolio that has been used by the teacher focused on either writing or reading skill. However, the result of previous research shows that the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery also increase along with the improvement of reading and writing skills (Sweet, 1993; Moras, 2001; Barret, 2003; Resmiati, 2007; and Kaswanti, 2010). It is a proof that vocabulary can not be separated from four basic skills of English; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. On the other hand, mastering vocabulary is getting more and more important because vocabulary is the basic of basic skills of language. That is why the use of portfolio in improving students' vocabulary mastery especially in writing skill is needed and important to be applied.

As stated before that portfolio, nowadays, is usually used to improve students' writing skill. In fact, written material that is produced by students consists of range of words or vocabularies. When producing their writing by using portfolio, students enjoy participating. It happens because portfolio is a kind of on going process assessment in which the students can get peer correction and feedback from the teacher. Research about the use of portfolio in improving students' vocabulary mastery has not been specifically conducted. However, based on previous research, it is stated that portfolio was effective in improving students' writing and reading skills. In addition, portfolio was also effective in helping students to improve their vocabulary mastery because they produced more vocabularies when they were writing (Resmiati, 2007 and Kaswanti, 2010). In this

case, to help the students in improving their vocabulary mastery especially in writing skill and to help the teachers in developing various ways or methods, portfolio can also be applied. The research about the use of portfolio in improving students' vocabulary mastery especially in writing skill has been conducted. It was done, hopefully, to make the process of teaching and learning vocabulary mastery become more effective and interesting.

This study focuses on applying portfolio in order to improve students' vocabulary mastery in writing skill to the students of tenth grade of one of senior high schools in Bandung. The portfolio consists of evidences or documents that are collected by students such as students' works or assignments during teaching and learning process, learning journal, self-assessment, participation list, name tag, list of document content, and students' best work.

1.2 Research Questions

This study tries to prove and treat into several questions:

1. Can portfolio improve students' vocabulary mastery?
2. How is the use of portfolio perceived by students?

1.3 Aims of the Research

In conducting research, the aims of the research are able to help in gaining the objective of the research. The aims of this study are:

1. To find out whether portfolio can improve students' vocabulary mastery;

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2. To know how the use of portfolio is perceived by students in improving their vocabulary mastery.

1.4 Significance of the Research

Hopefully, this study will be beneficial in order to give contribution in teaching and learning process, especially help the students, teachers and other researchers.

For students, they will find that the use of portfolio is a fun way where they can collect all the things that they have produced, for example learning journal, note, self-assessment, participation list, name tag, list of document content, students' vocabulary record, students' best work, and any kinds of tasks or exercises during teaching and learning process. In line with that, while collecting their works, students are also able to review their works and improve them to be the best work before submitting to the teacher. On the other hands, students can also choose one of their best works to be assessed by their friends and teacher. Hopefully, making learning journal, note, self-assessment, participation list, name tag, list of document content, students' best work, and any kinds of tasks or exercises during teaching and learning process can stimulate the students to like writing and to apply vocabularies during writing process. In addition, students will get feedback from teacher and they will improve their works based on the feedback and teacher's help. The feedback which is given by teacher is expected to be a motivation for students to have the best work. Therefore, in arranging their portfolio, students will have motivation to make the

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best writing by using appropriate vocabularies they got during teaching and learning process. Through this study, students will have memorable experience in making portfolio and they can use vocabularies when they produce their writing in appropriate way to be applied in their real life.

For English teachers, portfolio can be used as a way to assess teaching and learning process. Teachers can make the students be the active learners by producing works, doing self assessment, doing peer correction, reviewing their works, and improving their English skills especially in mastering vocabulary. Teacher can keep track students' improvement in their English skills by using portfolio because the assessments are done on going process. In portfolio, where students correct and improve their works, teachers are also able to assess them regularly. While making their works, teachers can assess the students, give correction, and give feedback for their improvements in mastering English especially in mastering vocabulary. Therefore, teachers are able to know how they assess their students through portfolio, how to make tests or exercises for portfolio, and the teachers will also get accustomed with processing the data of portfolio.

For other researchers, the result of this study is expected to be one of the references that will help them in conducting their research in the same field. In addition, hopefully this study is expected to enrich the theories of portfolio and also learners' language learning.

1.5 Scope of the Research

To make the research effective, it must be conducted clearly and it should be in a certain scope. This study is limited to examine the use of portfolio in improving students' vocabulary mastery. In addition, this study reveals how the use of portfolio is perceived by students in improving their vocabulary mastery.

There were two classes that were involved as the sample of this study. Each class consists of 30 students. In this study, portfolio was applied to the tenth grade of one of senior high schools in Bandung.

The results were expected to clarify the degree of generalization in that population. It means that there was a tendency which is statistically justified.

1.6 Hypothesis

To measure whether portfolio improves students' vocabulary mastery in writing skill or not, this study uses hypothesis as a base of calculation and assumption.

The hypothesis is: There is no significant difference between the posttest means of experimental and control groups after treatments. The formula is as follow:

$$H_0: \mu \text{ experimental} = \mu \text{ control}$$

1.7 Research Methods

This study used experiment method. It was used because during this study the data were gathered and compared. This study had a procedure. The aim of the

procedure was to bring some information and actual data which would be used to investigate the use of portfolio especially in improving students' vocabulary mastery in writing skill. The use of portfolio that was applied in this study had been practiced to the students of the tenth grade of one of Senior High Schools in Bandung.

1.7.1 Research Design

This study was held in experimental study in order to test the hypothesis served. Due to limited time and cost, random sampling would not be feasible to be held. It would need more steps to be done and it would be the cause of spending more time only in choosing the sample. On the other hand, choosing a small group in a population was thought as way to save the time and as a solution to the limited time and cost. Therefore, quasi-experimental design was used in this study.

In this study, two classes were involved as experimental group and control group. Both classes were tested by pretest and posttest. Posttest was given after giving treatment to experimental group. After taking the data from control and experimental groups, the data were compared and analyzed to find out whether the use of portfolio can improve students' vocabulary mastery.

There were two variables that must be investigated in this study, they were; variable X and Variable Y. Variable X was using portfolio as independent variable and variable Y was the students' vocabulary mastery as dependent variable. This study was designed as follow:

Table 1.1
The Experimental research

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental group	Y_1E	X	Y_2E
Control	Y_1C	-	Y_2C

Where

Y_1E : The pretest of experimental group.

Y_2E : The posttest of experimental group.

X   : The treatments (Using portfolio)

Y_1C : The pretest of control group.

Y_2C : The posttest of control group.

1.7.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study was the students of tenth grade of one of Senior High School in Bandung. However, the sample was two classes, one class as the experimental group and one class as control group.

The sample was chosen by non random sampling technique due to the limited time and cost. Both classes consisted of 30 students in each class.

1.7.3 Data Collection

In collecting the data, some steps had been taken in this study as research procedure through some instruments that had been applied.

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The first step was conducting study of literature. It was done by browsing, survey and studying the previous research in order to resolve appropriate theory and fulfill the need of the research reports and findings.

The second step was determining the hypothesis. It was done by studying the result of research finding from previous research.

The third step was determining an experimental group and a control group that were chosen as sample. The samples were from the tenth grade of a senior high school in Bandung.

The forth step was giving try-out test to some students in a class besides experimental and control groups to find out the validity and reliability of try-out test questions.

In the fifth step, the first instrument was given. Pretest as one of the instruments was given to two classes that consist of 60 students. In this study, pretest was the same for both control and experimental group. Multiple test questions had been given in pretest to the number of students in two groups in order to find out relative variability within a group. The pretest was employed in order to see the initial equivalence of both groups in vocabulary learning before deciding experimental and control group and before the treatment.

After giving pretest, the sixth step was held. It was analyzing the score of pretest from number of students in two groups. When those two groups are homogeny and the score of pretest are distributed normally, *t*-test calculation could be done. Then, they will be chosen as experimental and control groups.

The seventh step was preparing teaching materials. The eighth step was conducting treatments to the students in experimental group by asking them to make portfolio. During class session, the ninth step was also conducted. It was class observation. It was done in order to get additional information about students' interaction during class session and how portfolio works.

The tenth was giving posttest to both classes. Posttest was another type of instrument beside pretest. However, both pretest and posttest were the same for experimental and control groups. Posttest was held in order to see whether or not the treatments in experimental group using portfolio give progress to students' vocabulary mastery in writing skill, cause them to have higher scores than the control group.

The eleventh step was analyzing posttest scores. It was done in order to investigate a significant difference between the two groups under comparison.

The twelfth step was giving the questionnaire to the students in experimental group. It is used to reveal how the use of portfolio is perceived by students in improving their vocabulary mastery in writing skill and as additional information to support the result of posttest calculation. Questionnaires were served in Indonesian to avoid misunderstanding. The research questionnaire items were modified using Likert-type scale.

The thirteenth step was analyzing the result of questionnaire and comparing them to the theory related to the use of portfolio in improving students' vocabulary mastery in writing skill. The fourteenth step was holding interview. The interview was the last instrument in this study. The result of interview was

analyzed as additional information of the questionnaire. The last step was interpreting and discussing the data gained.

1.7.4 Data Analysis

The data of this study were gathered from pretest and posttest score, class observation, questionnaires, and also from interviews. The vocabulary score on test of both experimental and control groups were analyzed by using *t*-test. It is done in order to investigate a significant difference between the two groups under comparison.

The use of the *t*-test would be conducted if the specific assumptions met. They were independent group, normality of dependent variable, and homogeneity of variance. However, if the specific assumptions do not meet, the analyses of pretest and posttest would use chi square.

Moreover, the data gathered by observation represented by field note. Then, it was analyzed by using theory of portfolio proposed by Dellinger (1993).

In addition, the data from questionnaire was analyzed by counting the answer average for each questionnaire items from the respondent (Sugiyono, 2009). The result of questionnaire was interpreted by using descriptive analysis to describe and clarify the data. It would be compared to the theory of portfolio. The data gathered were also analyzed by the theory proposed by Dellinger (1993) which states that portfolios increase the quantity as well as the quality of writing and contribute to students' cognitive development. The theory is also supported by O'Malley and Pierce (1996) which states that portfolio makes use of students'

prior knowledge, experience, and interests and supports active construction of knowledge. It also provides meaning and purpose for learning and engages students in social interaction to develop both oral and written language.

Furthermore, the data gathered from interview will be analyzed as additional information by comparing it with the result of questionnaire and the theory of portfolio.

1.8 Clarification of Terms

In doing research, there is possibility to find something new. To avoid misunderstanding of the meaning and the concept of the research in this study, there should be a clarification about some terms that used. Those are:

1. Assessment is a way to assess students' work. It can be written or spoken test and it also can be traditional or alternative one.

2. Portfolio Assessment is a kind of assessment that is used to improve students' skills in mastering English especially vocabulary mastery. Although it is a kind of assessment but it is held on going process. Therefore, the students will have peer correction and feedback from the teacher. Portfolio Assessment is a collection of student's work. It is written by students as a reflection of materials that they have learnt, some assignments, book report, essays, composition, and journal (Harmer, 2007; Brown, 2001; Cameron, 2005; Pinter, 2006). However, to avoid boredom, Portfolio Assessment will be assessed by the teacher in order to give the feedback to the students' writing and students will also get peer correction. Therefore, teacher can give

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feedback and students are able to do self assessment. In this study, the word that will be focused is verb.

1.9 Paper Organization

Organizing the paper will be useful in order to make the paper arranged systematically. This paper organization is:

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, there are discussions about Background, Research Questions, Aims of the Research, Significance of the Research, Scope of the Research, Hypothesis, Research Methodology, Clarification of Terms, and Paper Organization.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LIERATURE

In this chapter, some theories related to the use of portfolio in improving students' vocabulary mastery will be discussed. It is aimed to match both theories and the fact that is gained from the research conducted.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, there will be discussions about Research Question, Research Design, Hypothesis, Population and Sample, Data Collection and Data Analysis.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSIONS

In this chapter, findings of the research will be highlighted. Besides that, all of the findings will be discussed in order to get more explanation.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, Conclusions and Suggestions will be delivered. After discussing all the findings, it will be summarized and interpreted and it will come to the main and last statement of the research. The result of the finding will be stated and the suggestion will be delivered.