CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some aspects related to the topic of the research. They are background of the research, research problem, objective of the research, research hypothesis, significant of the research, scope and limitation of the research, and definition of key term.

A.   Background of the Research

Language is the essence tool for communication thus people can adapt in society. It is used to give meaningful communication among human being (Nurhayati, 2016: 207). Producing language does not mean producing words or sound only, but also other understandable signs, gestures, or marks. As long as those sign, gestures, marks, sounds, words, have certain meaning which can be understood and interpreted, it is regarded as language. It is because the definition of language is systematic means of communication ideas or feelings (Brown, 2007), which is not limited by its form.

There are some languages used internationally and widely which is called international language. Based on United Nation, one of international language is English. There are five reasons English used as international language (Huda (2000: 68) in Lauder (2008: 12). They are due to its internal linguistic feature, its big numbers of sepeaker around the world,

its large geographical spreading of its use, and because of its significant role in many fields of life. According to Bharathi (2015: 2), English is not only used for academic purpose but also in trade, technology, medical, entertainment, and many more. English is used in over two-third of the world scientific writing. Almost 80% of information around the world is filed in English. English is also learnt by more than 150 million children at primary level as their additional language. Moreover, it is also learnt by over 80 million those who study at secondary level. In Indonesian formal education, English is used as local content or extracuriculair in 2013 curriculum, that teachers are expected to develop their innovation (Nurhayati, 2014). Therefore learning English is very important.

To have good ability in English, learners need to mastery four skills: writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Besides that, learners are required to have proficiency in some components such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Nurhayati, 2020: 382). One of the most important components is vocabulary. Vocabulary can be defined simply as a list of words which have meaning. Vocabulary is used to construct meaningful phrases or sentences. However, not all words combined from some letters are called vocabulary. Only the words known to person are considered as vocabulary (Hornby, 1995). Mastering vocabulary will help people to communicate in oral and written form because it maintains all information related with word meaning and word in use.

Vocabulary may be a center component of language skills and gives much of the premise for how well learners speak, write, read, and listen. It implies without great mastery of vocabulary, it is impossible for us to have great mastery in four language skills. In addition, Riyanto (2009) as cited from Robiatussolikah (2009), stated that more vocabulary someone can master, more fluently they can express their idea. It is hard for people to be fluent speaker if they do not have rich vocabulary list. Moreover, according to Murcia (2001: 285), learner must learn vocabulary if they want to learn language, no matter it is first, second, or foreign language. Thus, people need to enrich their vocabulary when they learn English language.

However, learning English vocabulary is not easy, especially for students who do not use English in their daily communication. Students have an environment that brings little support for students to be exposed with English and apply vocabularies they already have from schools since Indoneisan learners are mostly Non-Native Speaker (NNS). It means they do not use English in daily communication (Nurhayati, 2008: 207). Other difficulties such as students' limited knowledge in understanding the meaning and pronunciation of new words, and students' lack capability to memorize new words and recall them, (Sari & Wardani, 2009: 188-189)

The difficulty of learning English vocabulary is getting more during this pandemic era. Teaching and learning activities in school utilize online platform to alternate activities in the classroom which normally

include face to face interaction between teachers and students. This new compulsion is in order to decrease the spread of COVID-19 virus. Currently, the world has suffered from this new virus which caused pandemic with million death cases around the globe. Most of schools are closed, forced sudden changes in the way learning activities run. Teachers and students need to adapt to the "new normal" for their daily life and school activities. One of the adaptations is by using online learning to cover teaching-learning process. Most of school activities turned virtualy. According to Hidayat & Noerida (2020) as cited by Rachmat (2020), the disadvantage of online learning is that it is unable to build students' learning motivation because of the limitation in two-way communication. It allows the students and teacher may have misunderstanding communication. In addition, poor of signal, difficulties in operating online applications, and high cost are also some issues faced during online learning. The unfamiliarity of students and teacher about online learning also happens in some cases because there was no habbit in using onlie application (Nizar, 2020: 8). Moreover, in study conducting by Nurhayati (2019: 26) found that mostly students have lack interest to learn through onine text or material. They prefer to use paper text.

However, according to Syarifuddin (2020) in Rachmat (2020), online learning cannot be avoided as it can be considered as the only learning choice that can be done by educators to improve the quality of learning in Indonesia. Having skill to operate technology and instructional

media is a need especially in this 4.0 industrial era and E-learning is one of alternative choice used to teach English (Nurhayati, 2019: 14). In E-learning, teacher can use additional media in order to avoid the boredom during online class.

Because of the important and the big threat of vocabulary mastery as stated above, especially in online learning during COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and students need to do adaptation. One of ways they can choose is by using attractive aid learning media. Learning media is learning aid which has purpose to deliver material to make the students understand it easier. This media is used to attract students' interest in order to achieve learning objectives. Learning media can be in the form of many things such as game, song, puppet, film, and so on. The media used must be easy to use, can be applied through online learning, build student's motivation, and effective to mastery vocabulary.

Language teacher needs to build creative situation which can encourage vocabulary mastery, and weel-chosen is able to help learners acquire English vocabulary (Nurhayati, 2008: 25). There are some kinds of games and one of them is word game. Word game can be in the form of word search puzzle, a game contains some letters arranged in a grid and has listed hidden meaning. It persuades the players to give suggestion for the puzzle clues in any direction, can be horizontally or vertically, diagonally, forward or backward. The instruction of this game lets the students study words spelling letter by letter. Word search puzzle is kind

of word game which is easy to make and can be customized based on the teachers and students need. Based on Goumas (2020), it can build students motivation and help student's vocabulary recall. In addition, puzzle game will build fun atmosphere among students in order to develop their word and pattern recognition, learn spelling, introduce and review vocabulary.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher wants to test the theories about the effectiveness of word search puzzle. The researcher wants to apply this game through online learning for students' vocabulary form, use, and meaning. In conducting this research, the researcher also includes some previous studies related with mastering vocabulary through word search puzzle. Those previous studies are used as additional guidance for the researcher during this research. There are significant similarities among those studies that state word search puzzle is effective to help students' vocabulary mastery.

There are some differences among those previous studies which distinguish the researcher's study with the previous studies. The first difference lies on the design used during the experiment. In the studies conducted by Ratih (2019), Chesy (2018), Rahmawati (2017), Rahmah (2016), and Damayanti (2013) used pre-experimental research design while Goumas (2019) used descriptive qualitative as the design of study. Meanwhile, the researcher used quasi-experimental in conducting this research. The researcher chose this design because it is the development of

true-experimental design which is difficult to be applied especially in research conducted in formal schools. Moreover, quasi-experimental is better than pre-experimental (Sugiyono, 2010: 77).

The second difference is on the subject of the resarch. The subject of studies held by Ratih (2019) is students at the sixth grade of SDN Kolpajung II, by Damayanti (2013) is students at the fifth grade of SDN 01 Ngaglik Blitar, by Rahmawati (2017) is students at the seventh grade of MTS Muhammadiyah 4 Sambungmacan, by Rahmah (2016) is students at the seventh grade of SMP Muhammadiyah Buntok, by Chesy (2018) is students at the tenth grade of SMK PGRI Pontianak, and by Hossein and Marzieh is students at Language Institute of Semnan, Iran, by Keshta and Faleet (2013) is Palestinian students at the tenth grade. Meanwhile, the researcher conducts the research to the eight grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

The third difference between those previous studies and the researchers study lays on the focus of the study. Those previous studies only focus applying word search puzzle to measure its effectiveness to mastery vocabulary in general. In contrary, this research has focus on trying to analyze the effectiveness of word search puzzle towards more specific vocabulary form, use, and meaning. It is important to consider how this media can specifically affect students' vocabulary form, use, and meaning mastery because this is called learning burden of a word and distinguish from word to word based on the way in which the word applies

to knowledge of the first language and current knowledge of the first language (Paul Nation, 2005: 48).

The last difference between this research with the related previous studies is that the researcher conducted the treatment through online learning, not by face-to-face like all those researchers in previous studies did. Online learning cannot be ignored as it is the step to increase the improvement in our education. The researcher uses technology to give word search puzzle game which can be played by the students during online class. Based on Chuang (2007) as cited by Goumas et al., (2020) digital game is expected to give a media to help students understand the material from the teacher, especially enriching their vocabulary, although currently teaching-learning activity with face-to face interaction must be avoided. Digital game has positive impact on the knowledge retrieval process if it is compared with traditional teaching. Besides that, digital games also brings 'pleasant mood' for the students and cultivate their motivation by stimulating their interest. Currently, the use of digital game which is able to cultivate students' interest in learning language seems to be a need.

The word puzzle game online which the researcher uses during online class is expected to be one of alternative ways or as additional media which is effective, cheap, and easy to make and play. Besides that, this research hopes to generalize the theory related to mastery vocabulary through word search puzzle, thus it can be the previous study for the next

researcher if he or she has interest in testing the effectiveness of this game to another subject.

B. Formulating Research Problem

By knowing to the reality of current issue and problem in teaching-learning English especially in mastering vocabularies above, the researcher falls the question of this research into one essential question that ''Is there any significant difference score in vocabulary meaning, use, and form of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been taught by using conventional method?''

C. Objective of the Research

The researcher's main purpose in conducting this research is to know whether word search puzzle is effective or not towards students' vocabulary meaning, form, and use at the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

D. Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis is temporary answer to the researcher until it is proved by data gained from further experimentation. There are two kinds of hypotheses in this research. They are Null hypothesis (H_0) and Alternative hypothesis (H_i)

1. H_0 : There is no significant difference score in vocabulary form of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been taught by using conventional method at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

   H_i : There is significant difference score in vocabulary form of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been taught by using conventional method at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

2. H_0 : There is no significant difference score in vocabulary meaning of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been taught by using conventional method at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

   H_i : There is significant difference score in vocabulary meaning of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been taught by using conventional method at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

3. H_0 : There is no significant difference score in vocabulary use of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been taught by using conventional method at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

   H_i : There is no significant difference score in vocabulary use of the students; taught by using word search puzzle and those who been

taught by using conventional method at the eighth grade of SMPN 1 Karangrejo.

E. **The Significant of the Research**

This study is expected to give some contributions or advantages in teaching and mastering vocabulary theoretically and practically:

a. Theoretically

This study can give theoretical data which shows that word search puzzle is effective for teaching learning vocabulary at the eighth grade students.

b. Practically

1. The result of this study is expected to give students and teacher attractive media to overcome the problem they faced during teaching-learning process, especially in mastering vocabulary

2. For teachers, the result of this research can be alternative choice when they need such interesting and effective media to teach their students how to mastery vocabulary easily and enjoyably.

3. For students, the result of this research can help them in mastering vocabulary. The students can remember new vocabularies easier through new and enjoyable atmosphere. Furthermore, the researcher hopes that the result has impact in students' improving ability in speaking, writing, and reading skill.

F. **Scope and Limitation of the Research**

This research is only conducted to the eighth grade students at SMPN 1 Karangrejo in academic year 2020/2021. There are two classes used as the sample in this research. They are VIII-C as experimental class and VIII-D as control class.

Since the material given to the students is about degrees of comparison, so the researcher only use adjective vocabularies. The hidden words on word search puzzle are only adjective in positive degree, comparative degree, and superlative degree.

Due to the pandemic COVID-19, researcher has limitation to ensure that every students done post-test honestly. The test is given through google form where the researcher doesn't have an access to supervise students directly . The possibly way the researcher can do is only giving time-limit for students and allowing students to do test only once by using one e-mail. Thus, this limitation is also a weakness for this study, which is expected to be improved by researcher in the future.

This research only focuses in the effect of word search puzzle as the instructional media towards students' vocabulary form, meaning, and use. To consider the components which must be included in the instrument, the researcher uses guideline from Nation (2001:27) about aspect in vocabulary knowledge. The researcher doesn't use all the components, but only put some of them since it must be adjusted with the

level of the subject of this study. The aspects can be seen in table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1
Aspect in Vocabulary Knowledge of this Research

Aspect	Component	Receptive knowledge	Productive knowledge
Form	Written	What does the word look like?	How does the word written and spelled?
Meaning	Form and meaning	What meaning does the word from signal?	What word forms can be used to express the meaning?
Use	Grammatical functions	In what pattern does the word occur?	In what patterns must people use the words?

(Source: Adapted from Nation (2001: 27)

G.   Definition of Key Term

To avoid misinterpreting, the researcher defines some terms as the key of this study briefly:

1. Effectiveness can be considered as the degree to which something become effective. Based on Cambridge dictionary, the effectiveness is the potential to be successful and achieve the expected outcomes. It is to measure of the match between the stated goal and their achievement.

2. Teaching vocabulary is a way to give understanding of words knowledge involves form, definition, and use to someone in order to be collected as their tool for communication. Through teaching vocabulary, students will understand how to build sentence or utterance for language that might be used.

3. Vocabulary mastery refers to how many words someone knows, understand, and make. The term mastery is not restricted to simply recognize the meaning of certain words, but more precisely defined as 'to know a word'.

4. Word Search Puzzle is a word game that delivers letters of words placed orderly in a grid. The students must find and mark all the words hidden inside the box either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. Mostly word search puzzle has certain theme, like animals, plants, direction, etc. By using this game, the researcher hopes that students will be able to memorize new vocabularies through finding hidden words enjoyably.