

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Learning English requires a good understanding of vocabulary, which is crucial for building sentences and developing language skills. Having a strong vocabulary makes it easier for students, especially those in junior high school, to listen, read, write, and speak in English. These language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) are interconnected in the learning process Nurdini and Marlina (2017: 273). Vocabulary plays a significant role in influencing these skills. Unfortunately, English classrooms often do not specifically focus on teaching vocabulary, which leads to a lack of word knowledge among students and negatively impacting their overall language abilities.

Vocabulary mastery is a person's ability to understand, remember, and recognize a large number of words. Vocabulary mastery involves the extent of a person's knowledge of words, extending beyond mere recognition of meanings. Proficiency in vocabulary is a key factor in mastering English as a foreign language, indicating a student's capacity to comprehend and apply words and their meanings. The greater the mastery of vocabulary, the more proficiently students can perform in language-related tasks. Limited vocabulary poses challenges in acquiring English skills; hence, students need to excel in the four essential language skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing to facilitate effective English learning.

In preparing for mastery of the 4 aspects of vocabulary, namely meaning, word use, spelling and pronunciation, students must understand a lot of vocabulary first. Word meaning refers to the concept or idea that a word represents, conveys or signifies. Harmer (1991:158) A single word can have multiple meanings, and the interpretation of a word relies on the context in which it is used. Word use is how words are use to express meaning. Harmer (1991:158) proposed that Students should be able to identify word collocation,

understanding which words naturally go together. It includes literal, metaphorical, and idiomatic word use. Metaphorical language uses words to describe something other than their literal meaning. For instance, "hiss" might mean snake sounds or threatening speech. Idiomatic words are phrases that have become part of the language and have a meaning beyond their literal meaning. "A snake in the grass" refers to a dangerous person. "Raining cats and dogs," "my home is my castle," and others are idioms. Finally, word usage includes literal, metaphorical, and idiomatic uses of words to express meaning. Spelling involves the act of writing a word or words with the correct letters and diacritics, adhering to an accepted standard order and arrangement of letters to form a word or part of a word. According to Ur (1996:60), when teaching vocabulary, it is crucial to consider the form, which encompasses pronunciation and spelling. Learners should be familiar with both how a word sounds (its pronunciation) and its visual representation (its spelling). Pronunciation can be defined as the manner in which words or a language are spoken, encompassing the accurate articulation of sounds, stress patterns, intonation, and rhythm. This ensures the clear and comprehensible production of words and phrases. As outlined by Hewings (2004:3), pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of speech, incorporating various components that come together. These components range from individual sounds constituting speech to the use of pitch—the rise and fall of the voice conveying meaning. Pronunciation is closely connected to phonetic transcription, which consistently represents speech sounds and serves as a dependable guide for mastering spoken language. The primary elements of pronunciation include sounds, syllables, and words.

Based on pre-observations at SMP Negeri 02 Sungai Kakap, Kubu Raya Regency, the writer found a problem, namely the lack of knowledge or mastery of English vocabulary in students, which may occur because there are no English lessons in elementary schools so that students have difficulty or are new to English vocabulary, so that students have not been taught about the 4 aspects of vocabulary mastery. From these pre-observations, the writer

concluded that in teaching students to use media it can influence students to accept the learning that is conveyed by the teacher. The cause of the problem is due to the lack or limitations of media in learning. Media is very important in the teaching and learning process because it can facilitate teachers in conveying the learning to be taught.

Based on the explanation above about the importance of media in learning, this research uses flashcard media. One of the learning media is flashcard media. Flashcards are very helpful in reminding students of numbers, letters, colors, symbols, vocabulary, and so on. A research by Colbran S, *et al* (2015: 4) examines the efficacy of flashcards, which concludes that flashcards facilitate active recall, spaced repetition, metacognition, self-directed study, and enable students to assess their own progress. Flashcard might be used to motivate students in learning, besides it helps students to remember vocabulary easier. Students are very happy to learn by not being too fixated on books, so the teachers as much as possible to be creative in delivering lessons so that students can be interested and enjoy in the lesson so that the teachers get more attention when teaching when students are interested in the way the teacher delivers learning. Nuryani and Fadloeli in Muhyiddin (2019:157) also states that Flashcard media not only improves the ability to listen, speak, read and write but flashcards can also train students' abilities in vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, spelling. Based on this opinion, it can be explained that the size of the flashcards can be adjusted to the situation of students faced, if the number of students is large then the flashcard is made with a larger size, and if the number of students is small then the flashcards is made with a small size. With the pictures used in the card the images can be adjusted to what material will be conveyed by the teacher to students.

To support this research, the writer found findings from previous studies as a comparison with this study. That is, the writer found the previous research that had been *Improving Students' Vocabulary by Using Flash Cards*. That is research conducted by Sholikhah M (2013) *An Improvement of Students' Mastery in Vocabulary by Using Flash Cards Media*. Therefore, the researcher

has drawn the conclusion that employing flashcards is an engaging method, as it captures students' interest and enhances their vocabulary. The writer anticipates that this thesis can serve as an additional reference, encouraging future researchers to explore different discussions and contribute to the ongoing development of flashcards. In this research, the writer used flashcard media, because flashcards are liked by many people because they have an attractive appearance, have pictures and colors in them, and have a small size so they are easy to carry everywhere, besides that the price is affordable, and it is efficient to use as a media in learning according to previous research.

Based on the description above, the writer conduct a research with the title of "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery Using Flashcard Media", to teach English vocabulary to improve student achievement in learning English vocabulary mastery. The writer conduct Classroom Action Research (CAR) by title Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery Using Flashcard Media, where the subjects in this study are class VIII B students of SMP Negeri 02 Sungai Kakap, Kubu Raya Regency, for the 2023/2024.

B. Research Question

Based on the research background above related to the teaching and learning vocabulary, the research question formulated by the teacher was “How well flashcard media can improve students' vocabulary mastery to the Eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Sungai Kakap?”

C. Research Purpose

From the research question above, the research purpose to this research was “To find out how well the flashcard media can improve the students' vocabulary mastery to the Eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Sungai Kakap , Kabupaten Kubu Raya”.

D. Research Significant

In conducting this research, writer hopes that this research might be able to give beneficial contributions to the teaching and learning process in English class, especially in Vocabulary mastery.

1. Theoretical Significance

This research also consists of theoretical references which also can be used as reference and benefits those who teaching vocabulary mastery.

2. Practical Significances

a. For the Writer

By doing this research, the writer also expects this research to help the English teachers to find out the most appropriate strategy in order to improve the students' vocabulary mastery.

b. For the Teachers

Hopefully, this research will also be beneficial for the teachers can apply the result of this research to help the students to improve their English vocabulary mastery.

c. For the Students

The writer expected the result of this research could help the students to increase vocabulary, because the flashcard media can make students feel not bored in learning.

E. Action Hypothesis

Action hypothesis are the expected outcome towards the problems that was being studied. According to Toledo A H (2011:191), The presence of a research hypothesis is crucial for the successful execution of a research study. Without it, essential components of the research process remain unexplored, and the resulting conclusions would have restricted scope. The research idea serves as the precursor to the development of the research hypothesis. Based on the problem the researcher formulates the following hypothesis: "Use the flashcard media to improve the students' vocabulary mastery to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Sungai Kakap, Kubu Raya Regency".

G. Scope of The Research

1. Research Variable

In conducting this research, the writer uses Dependent and Independent variable. The Dependent variable is students' vocabulary and the Independent variable is flashcard media.

2. Research Terminology

The researcher provides the following explanation which are used in this researcher. The term are below:

a. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a word used in a language. Vocabulary is the key or basis of learning English. Students are trying to understand and master vocabulary to be able to understand about English lessons.

b. Vocabulary Mastery

Proficiency in vocabulary is one of the key elements in mastering English as a foreign language. This indicates that students possess the ability to comprehend and utilize word meanings. The aspects covered in this research include meaning, spelling, pronunciation, and word class.

c. Flashcard

Flashcard is a media for teaching students. Flashcards are very helpful in reminding students of numbers, letters, colors, symbols, vocabulary, and so on. Flashcard media is very helpful for teachers in learning vocabulary because flashcards are small cards that are easy to carry anywhere and have colors and pictures that are very attractive to students.

d. Improving

Improve which means to improve or make a change in something so that there is a change for the better. Increasing vocabulary in learning English is the initial task carried out by the teacher in teaching because it is the basis of learning English. If students have mastered vocabulary, learning English will be easy.

e. Classroom Action Research

Classroom Action Research is one of the research methods which applied for improvements, which used in this research to improve the English teaching-learning process in classroom.

- f. The eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 02 Sungai Kakap Kubu Raya Regency are the students who study in Seventh grade in the Academic years of 2023/2024.