

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Vocabulary is a common word that is known and used by someone in language or in communication. Without vocabulary, we would not be able to communicate easily without knowing the words we want to use. So vocabulary can develop four skills in English, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Vocabulary plays an important role in learning a foreign language. Especially in learning English vocabulary is an activity where researchers must have the ability to arrange and master vocabulary properly and correctly, so that readers can easily understand it.

Vocabulary requires language skills, beginners should master as much vocabulary as possible because they are constantly using words in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Vocabulary is also very important for students about what they pay attention to and learn in school and to communicate well with other people. The purpose of learning this vocabulary is for students to be able to speak both orally and in writing, students are required to have vocabulary knowledge so that one day they are able to speak well in various contexts. So they can use vocabulary in everyday life to talk with other people and students can write sentences based on the vocabulary they have.

Students use vocabulary texts, in English to communicate accordingly with the situation, purpose, and reader. Students use English to discuss and convey wishes/feelings. Students use English language skills to explore a variety of texts on a wide variety of topics contextual. They produce spoken and written texts as well as visuals in English that are structured with vocabulary more diverse words. Students produce a variety of texts written and visual, fiction and non-fiction with awareness to the purpose and target reader.

In learning English, there are several things that must be considered, namely being able to master vocabulary and arrange it in good sentences. besides that vocabulary can be used to speak in learning new words. Vocabulary is important in learning English. Learning vocabulary helps students to understand English, for vocational high school students, learning vocabulary means they have to understand the meaning of a word. In the context of education, vocabulary is a very important ability to learn, because it is an extraordinary ability that students must master well, but it is not always easy to master it. Vocabulary ability is the most difficult skill that must be understood by beginners, the difficulty is not only in learning vocabulary and expressing ideas, but also in speaking directly to other people. The difficulty becomes greater if the language skills are weak..

Table 1. Students' score of Vocabulary Mastery at the Eleventh Grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro

No.	Category	Score	Students Frequency	Percentage
1.	High	80-85	2	6%
2.	Average	70-75	9	28%
3.	Low	10-65	21	65%
	Total		32	100%

Source; The data from English Teacher of SMKN 3 METRO on December 1st 2022

In the preliminary study, the researcher conducted a pre-survey and the researcher asked the English teacher for a list of values regarding vocabulary material in eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro on December 1, 2022. Based on the pre-survey above, it can be seen that 2 students scored 80-85 in the high category and received a percentage of 6%, then there were 9 students who scored 70-75 in the average category and received a percentage of 28%, and there were 21 students who received the value of 10-65 is in the low category and gets a percentage of 65%. So, the total students are still lacking in vocabulary mastery.

In addition, the researcher also conducted interviews with English teachers and students to find out students' difficulties in learning English, especially in mastering English Vocabulary. From the results of the interviews it can be seen that the students' problems in mastering English vocabulary were that students have a little amount of English vocabulary, students also had difficulty interpreting each vocabulary and students also had difficulty speaking in English. The teacher explained that students also had difficulties in pronouncing vocabulary and had very low learning motivation, especially in English lessons. This as a whole shows that most of the students have a very low ability in vocabulary mastery.

As a result of the problems above, the teacher must find a solution to facilitate the learning process in the classroom. Therefore, the researcher provides a word square as a medium to improve the vocabulary mastery of eleventh grade students at SMK Negeri 3 Metro.

As said by (Lestari et al., 2013) Word Square is a learning model that combines the ability to answer questions with carefulness in matching answers to the answer boxes. It's similar to filling in a crossword puzzle, but the difference is that the answer is already there, but it's disguised by adding additional boxes with any disguised letters or distractors.

Same with the other learning methods, the word square media also has some strength and weakness. It can be explained as follows; According to (Malik, 2020) The strength of word square media are: (a) Word square method is good to test the result of learning about general knowledge of terms and definitions. (b) Word square method activities encourage students' understanding of subject matter. (c) Make the students to be discipline in answering

the question of worksheet with the rules. (d) Can exercise the students to be careful and critical attitude. (e) Stimulate students to think effectively before answering the questions. (f) To help the students master the material easier. Because they will get a guide to look for the answer that put in the square. The weakness of word square strategy are: (a). Making the various squares needs the highest creativity from the teacher. (b). Always found the same squares are not suitable with questions itself. (c). Making the question needs the answer with the highest capability from the teacher

Word Square can be used to encourage students' understanding of the subject matter, can make students become active because this game is always followed by a teacher's discussion or explanation. Besides that, it can make students independent because they are required to be disciplined in doing assignments, they can better understand the material because they can remember and understand the teacher's concepts easily, this learning model can also train accuracy and accuracy in answering and looking for answers in worksheets and can provide motivation to students to study harder.

Therefore, with the problems and solutions above, the researcher conducted research on using word square media to improve students' vocabulary mastery with the aim that this research could be carried out as a solution to alleviate students' problems in vocabulary mastery. The researcher conducted a study entitled "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using Word Square Media at Eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro".

B. Problem Identification

In relation to background of the problem above, the following problem can be identified :

1. Students have very little English vocabulary
2. Students have very difficulty in interpreting each vocabulary
3. Students have difficulty speaking English
4. Students have difficulty in pronunciation vocabulary
5. Students have very low learning motivation

C. Problem Limitation

Based on the background of the problem identification above, the researcher limits the students' problems about English Vocabulary mastery. In this research, the researcher intends to improve the students' English Vocabulary mastery by using word square media at eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro

D. Problem Formulation

Based on the background of the study, and the problems of identification above, the researcher formulates the problem as following :

1. Can Word Square media improve students' vocabulary mastery at eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro? If yes, to what extend Its improvement?
2. How do the eleventh grade students of SMK Negeri 3 Metro are response using Word Square media in the vocabulary mastery learning process?

E. Research Objectives

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To find out to what extend using Word Square media can improve students' vocabulary mastery at eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro?
2. To explore the responses of eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro using Word Square media in the vocabulary mastery learning process?

F. Research Benefits

1. For The Teachers

The researcher expected to inspire the teachers to apply various techniques in teaching English vocabulary as one of the ways to improve the students' vocabulary by using Word Square media.

2. For The Students

The researcher expects this study can help the students to enrich their English vocabulary mastery. Moreover, the use of Word Square media made the students easier to understand English material and also practice their ability to learn vocabulary well.

3. For Other Researchers

This research is expected to be useful for other researchers who will develop research on the same topic, namely related to improving vocabulary mastery using word square media, as a suitable reference for teaching English.

G. Research Scope

This research is conducted in the eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro in Academic Years 2023/2024, in one class consisting of 32 students. This research focuses on improving students' vocabulary mastery using word square media.