

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English has become one of the bridges to communicate between each other and has been used by people in almost every country in the world. Therefore, English is known as an international language. Imam Faisal (2018) stated that English has become a part of education curriculum since 1967 in Indonesia. English is taught from primary level up to university level students. One basic element in English language is vocabulary.

As a teacher, it is a common knowledge that vocabulary is one of the important skills to be taught in schools. People would not be able to express their opinion, ideas, and thoughts in English without knowing vocabulary. Cahyono and Kusumaningrum (2011) stated that vocabulary was one of the language components needed to be mastered when students were learning English. Without having enough vocabulary, the students would have some difficulties to know the meaning of what they listen and read as well as to express their purpose in communicate with people. Thus, students need to learn vocabulary to develop their language skills. Many students still lack in vocabulary that resulted in low English scores because of inability to listen, read, speak and write efficiently.

Allen (1983) stated that teaching vocabulary could be meaningful if the teacher could conduct the teaching process by combining the available technique of teaching. It is hoped that a good teaching technique would be more enjoyable, interesting and motivating so that the students would not be bored in the teaching and learning process.

Based on that, the researchers have found an enjoyable, interesting, motivating and creative strategy to solve the problems happened on students' mastery in vocabulary. It is crossword puzzle teaching strategy. Hornby (1987) stated that crossword puzzle is a puzzle or a word play where the words have to be written related to numbered clues vertically or horizontally in blank spaces in the squares formed. According to Karim and Hasbullah (1986), one of interesting techniques in teaching language would be crossword puzzle.

By applying crossword puzzle teaching strategy in teaching vocabulary, students will be entertained and stimulated to think of the words those could be appropriate to fill the blank spaces. It makes the learning process more enjoyable, entertaining, interesting, and challenging.

There had been several relevant studies done related to this research. One of the researches was conducted by Neneng Ratnawati (2013). The research design that she used

was Pre-experimental research using Non Equivalent Group Post-test Only research design that focused on the significant effect of using crossword puzzle in students' vocabulary achievement. She conducted her research at SMPN 5 Jember and finally found that there was a significant effect in using crossword puzzle towards vocabulary achievement of the students in SMP Negeri 5 Jember.

Another research was conducted by Lizzani Kurnia Pratiwi (2016). The research data used were qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data's form were vignettes and interview transcripts while the quantitative data's form were the scores of pre-test and post-test. Her research was focused in improving the vocabulary mastery of grade VIII C students through contextual crossword puzzle at SMPN 7 Yogyakarta. The result of the research showed that some improvements happened on students' vocabulary mastery by using contextual crossword puzzle.

Based on the previous relevant studies above, since most research were conducted at junior high school level and none has ever been conducted at SMA Amir Hamzah Medan, the researchers decided to conduct a research entitled "The Effect of Crossword Puzzle Teaching Strategy Towards Student's Vocabulary Mastery in SMA Amir Hamzah Medan". The research question was formulated as "Is there any significant effect in students' vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by using crossword puzzle teaching strategy in SMA Amir Hamzah Medan?". To answer the research question, hypothesis is needed. According to Bambang Prasetyo & Lina Miftahul Jannah (2014) hypothesis is a temporary answer of a research question. The researchers formulated the hypothesis as follow:

1. Null Hypothesis (H₀): "There is no significant effect in students' vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by using crossword puzzle teaching strategy in SMA Amir Hamzah Medan."
2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): "There is significant effect in students' vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by using crossword puzzle teaching strategy in SMA Amir Hamzah Medan."