



**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AESOP’S FABLES TO IMPROVE  
STUDENTS’ VOCABULARY MASTERY  
( A Quasi-Experimental Study of the Sixth Graders Student of SDI Darul  
Huda in the Academic Year of 2017/2018 )**

**A final project**

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in English

by

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Wisnu Widagdo, hereby declare that this final project entitled The Effectiveness of Aesop's Fable Story to Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery (A Quasi-Experimental Study of the Sixth Graders Students of SDI Darul Huda in the Academic Year of 2017/2018) is my work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institutes of tertiary education. Information derived from the published and unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given in the bibliography.

Semarang, 15 February 2020



Wisnu Widagdo

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Finally, I have a great expectation that my study will be beneficial and useful for anyone interested in reading this final project.

## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

*“Someone who never does a mistake is  
someone who never tries something new ”*

*To:*

*My beloved parents*

*My teachers and lectures*

*My friends*

*My spirit lifters*

## ABSTRACT

**Widagdo, Wisnu.** 2019. *The Use of Aesop's Fable Stories to Improve Student's Vocabulary (A Quasi-Experimental Study of the Sixth<sup>Graders</sup> Students of SDN Bangetayu Kulon 01 in the Academic Year of 2017/2018). The final project, English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Semarang State University. First Advisor: Dra. C. Murni Wahyanti, M.A, Second Advisor: Dra. Sri Suprpti, M.Pd.*

**Keywords:** *Action research, Aesop's fable stories, Vocabulary, sixth-grade of junior highschool*

This final project is about using Aesop's Fable stories in improving student's vocabulary. The research was applied to the sixth-graders student of SDI Darul Huda Semarang in the academic year of 2017/2018. The objective of this study is to find out what extent the use of Aesop's Fable stories can improve the vocabulary mastery of elementary school students. The techniques used for obtaining data were tests and questionnaires.

The data were taken by administering a pretest and a posttest. This research was conducted in four meetings; one meeting was for the pretest, two meetings were for the treatments, and the last one was for the posttest.

The result of this research showed that the mean scores of the pretest from the two groups were nearly similar. The mean score of the experimental group was 68,6 and the control group was 68,0. After the treatments, the mean score of both groups increased. The mean score result of the post-test in the experimental group was 80.4 which was higher than the control group that was 74,1. Further, the t-test result of the difference of two means was 2,732 in which it was higher than the t-table (1,998) for  $\alpha = 5\%$  and  $df = 62$ .

Based on the test result above, it can be concluded that Aesop's Fable stories "improved the vocabulary of the sixth graders of SDI Darul Huda Semarang in the academic year of 2017/2018. Finally, I suggest "Aesop's Fable stories" should be used as an alternative technique to improve the vocabulary of the elementary students.

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the introduction of the study, which consists of background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significances of the study, limitation of the study, and outline of the report.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

English as an international language plays an important role in international communication. People make an effort to master this language with other people from different nations. Moreover, in the middle of globalization, mastering English is a must if we want actively participating in international society. Therefore, English has been learned by most people in the world and the learning process has developed rapidly among the nations including Indonesia.

Some regions in Indonesia have English to be taught since Elementary School from fourth to sixth grade. Besides, it has a purpose to make elementary school students realize the importance of English as an international language in the middle of the globalization era. Here, students learn how to listen, to speak, to read, and to write very simple materials in English so that they have a strong base for their next English learning in High School.

In order to master those four skills, students also need to learn four English elements. They are structure, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation. Yet,

McCarthy (1990:VIII) said, “No matter how well the students learn grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.” From that statement, it is clear that vocabulary takes an important role in communication.

Vocabulary itself, cited from Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary (2005:1645), is “all the words that a person knows or uses or a list of words with their meanings, especially in a book for learning a foreign language.” Thereby, in order to learn English as a foreign language, students need to learn English vocabulary first. Moreover, Thornbury (2012:13) said that “without grammar very little to be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed’ and Laufer (1997:1490) also stated that learning vocabulary is one of the most important elements without which neither comprehension nor production of language is possible. Without having enough vocabulary, students will find difficulties in learning a foreign language, even worse, in communication using English.

From those statements, it clear that learning vocabulary is a must, especially in the basic level of English learning. Cody and Huckin (1998:5) say that vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to language learning for young learners. Vocabulary knowledge is as a foundation to build up the building of all English skills. Although learning another aspect of English like grammar and pronunciation are also important, in my opinion, learning vocabulary is more essential for young learners because it brings the students to meaningful English communication.

Teaching and learning English to children, In this case, the elementary school students should be different from the teaching of the adult. . The writer taught elementary school as one of his projects in Community Service Program (*Kuliah Kerja Nyata, KKN*). In curriculum 2013, English subject is treated as local course where the school have the right to choose to give the lesson to the students or not. Apparently, the school where the writer did his *KKN* chose to give English as local course for the students. It is very important for teachers to make students interested in vocabulary learning. According to Harmer (2001:38) Young learners especially those up the ages of nine to ten learn differently from the older learner, adolescents, and adult. They easily get bored, losing interest after ten minutes or so. Therefore, teaching English for children should be enjoyable, interesting and understandable. To make the students enjoying the study process the researcher tries to teach English vocabulary combined with the short stories rather than using a conventional strategy of direct lecturing. It is in line with Nurul (2013) who researched *The Use of Manual Super Text Twist Game to Improve English Vocabulary Mastery of Second Grade Students of Junior High School*. In her research, she found that the students were more enthusiastic to participate in the learning process. Since English is not an obligatory subject for elementary school, there is no syllabus available. Schools that chose to use English as local course use *Buku Sekolah Elektronik* (School Electronic Book) as the parameter of what lesson should be taught to students. In that book, there is a chapter that contained of recount story to help students have more vocabularies.

Short stories can be a good learning material since it is considered to be adequate for the learners from all levels (from beginner to advanced learners) Colin and Slater (1991:196). Besides, short stories are adequate to be used for EFL learners because 1) the length of the story is appropriate for one or two class session; 2) it is not complicated for the students; 3) it has variety of choices; and 4) it can be used for all levels (from beginner to advance) and for all ages (young learners to adults) (Collin and Slatter,1991:196). So, the story is expected to make the students interested in reading it. In this case, I is going to use Fable because fable stories would enlarge the students' knowledge and helped them to improve their understanding of the material, especially for vocabulary. In this research, I would provide some stories which have unfamiliar vocabularies to them. Harper, Douglas. (2017, October 5<sup>th</sup>). *Fable* Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/fable> stated that fable is a short tale to teach a moral lesson, often with animals or inanimate objects as characters. Moreover I will specifically use fable stories that are written by Aesop.

According to Horgan, John.(2017, October 22<sup>nd</sup>). *Aesop's Fable*. Aesop's fables are written by a former Greek slave named Aesop, in the late to mid-6th century BCE, Aesop's Fables are the world's best-known collection of morality tales. The fables, numbering 725, were originally told from person-to-person as much for entertainment purposes but largely as a means for relaying or teaching a moral or lesson. While teaching vocabulary, we can also teach morality. One stone kills two birds.

Many studies have been done in order to find a way to enrich student's vocabulary. For example, Hanifikha (2007) conducted research that focused on comparing the development of children's vocabulary through short stories and rhymes. The result of her analysis showed that the rhyme group got better scores than the short story group. It can be seen by comparing their average score. The rhyme group was 79.60, while the average score of the short story group was 67.08. Asuncion (2010) wrote a journal entitled *How to Use Tales for the Teaching of Vocabulary and Grammar in a Primary Education English Class*. He provided the teacher with several activities based on the Aesop's Fable with which to use meaningful learning. Those were the way to make the students practice vocabulary and grammar in the meaningful context provided with the story. In addition to this, children did the activities autonomously so that cooperation among pupils is promoted and children learn to learn for themselves.

The previous studies above showed that some strategies might be effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. Based on the fact above, I was interested in using short stories to enhance vocabulary.

In brief, I intended to conduct an experimental research to find out the effectiveness of Aesop's Fable Stories to be a way to teach vocabulary. Through this research, I expected the media and technique will give positive effect on students' vocabulary mastery.

## **1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic**

This research needs to be conducted because of the following reasons:

1. Vocabulary is an essential language component which has to be mastered by students in learning English.
2. Most Elementary School students still have the minimum vocabulary and have difficulties in memorizing new words.
3. In comprehending English texts, the students should understand the meanings of the words of the text.
4. I wants to make Elementary School students interested in studying vocabulary through Aesop's fable stories to improve their vocabulary mastery.

## **1.3 Research Question**

Considering the background above, the researcher formulated problem statements as follows :

1. How effective is Aesop's fable stories as teaching media to improve the vocabulary mastery of elementary school students of grade VI students of SDI DARUL HUDA?

## **1.4 Purpose of The Study**

The purposes of this study are:



1. To measure the effectiveness of Aesop's fable stories as teaching media to improve the vocabulary mastery of elementary school students of grade VI students of SDI Darul Huda.

### **1.5 Significance of The Study**

The significance of the study can be stated as follows:

a. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study will provide a new understanding of the effectiveness of Instagram writing for teaching procedure text.

b. Practical Significance

By conducting this research, teachers will have a new understanding on how to motivate students to be interested in English learning. They will realize the effectiveness of Aesop's fables for teaching vocabulary in the learning process.

c. Pedagogical Significance

1. For students :

Teaching English using Aesop's fables attracts students' interest in vocabulary. Moreover, it is possible to improve students' understanding of the material. Additionally, this study will help students to practice vocabulary mastery. It enables students to conduct learning together by giving correction and feedback among students.

2. For the teacher

It will give teachers a better insight that using Aesop's fables is a creative way for teaching vocabulary.

3. For the researchers

This study presents reference for the future research concerning language skills especially in improving students vocabulary mastery.

### **1.6 Definiton of Keyterms**

The Key Term of the title “The use of Short Story as Materials in Reading Comprehension”.

- A short story is fictional work of prose that is shorter in length than a novel. Short story as materials in used to promote the students understanding in reading. It supported by Khatib (2013) argue that SSBLT (Short Story based Language Teaching) is a humanistic the literaturebased language teaching method which aims to promote the learners` personal, cultural and linguistic awareness.

- Vocabulary is one of the most obvious components of language and one of the first things applied linguists turned their attention (Harmer : 2001) vocabulary is one of the important aspects of teaching language.

- Aesop's fables are written by a former Greek slave named Aesop, in the late to mid-6th century BCE, Aesops Fables are the worlds best-known collection of morality tales (Horgan : 2015). The fables, numbering 725, were originally told from person-to-person as much for entertainment purposes but largely as a means for relaying or teaching a moral or lesson.

### **1.7 Outline of the Report**

In general, this study report is organized as follows.

#### **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers the background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, research questions, purposes of the study, significance of the study, and outline of the research report.

## CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter covers review of the previous study, key concepts, and framework of the present study.

## CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This chapter covers of research design, population, sample and sampling technique, research variables, instrument of collecting the data, method of collecting the data, method of analyzing the data.

## CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter covers research findings and discussions.

## CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I gives his conclusions after analyzing data, the implementations for learning, and suggestions.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter provided some theories that encourage this study. It consisted of review of previous studies, review of the theoretical studies, and theoretical framework. In review of the previous study, there are some final projects related to this study that had been conducted by older students. Moreover, there are some opinions or definition from experts of the terms and theories that are used in this study. Theoretical framework presented how the researcher conducted the research.

#### **2.1 Review of the Previous Studies**

In writing and conducting this study, there were many references needed. The first study was a case study at 30 of second-year students of SMPN 2 Bawen entitled *The Use of Manual Super Text Twist Game to Improve English Vocabulary Mastery of Second Grade Students of Junior High School*, Nurul (2013). She did an experimental research and there were five meetings during the experiment. The result of the study proved that the vocabulary mastery significantly improved in post-test. Besides, the subjects gave positive perception, opinion, and interest in the learning process. Participation of the subjects increased after the treatment was given. They were more enthusiastic in participating in the learning process.

Second, An article entitled *How to Use Tales for the Teaching of Vocabulary and Grammar in a Primary Education English Class*, written by Gomez, Asuncion (2010). Its use was important, taking into account the students characteristics at that age and in the formal context of the classroom. It suggested the teacher how to choose tales in terms of students age, materials to work with, the layout of the class and so on. It provided the teacher with a number of activities based on the tale with which to use the meaningful learning. It was the way to make them practice vocabulary and grammar in the meaningful context provided with the story. In addition to this, children did the activities autonomously so that cooperation among pupils is promoted and children learn to learn for themselves

Another study was a case study at third-year students of SDN 2 Bawen entitled "*A Comparative Study in Developing Childrens Vocabulary through Short Stories and rhymes*", conducted by Hanifikha (2007). She did an experimental research and there were four meetings during the experiment. The result of her analysis showed that the rhyme group got better scores than the short story group. It can be seen by comparing their average score. The rhyme group was 79.60, while the average score of the short story group was 67.08. In line with the result, she suggested that the English teacher might apply rhyme as a media in teaching vocabulary, so that the students will be interested in learning English.

The previous studies above showed that using short stories might be effective in improving students vocabulary mastery. Based on the fact above, I was interested in using tales or short stories to enhance vocabulary. The result of

this study was that the use of Aesop's fables effectively enhances students vocabulary mastery.

## **2.2 Review of Related Studies**

In this part, the researcher talked about the review of theoretical studies. It included vocabulary, fable stories, Aesop's fable stories and instrument used in this study.

### **2.2.1 Definition of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is an important aspect of teaching language. As stated by Harmer (2001: 4), vocabulary is one of the most obvious components of language and one of the first things applied linguists turned their attention. Besides, Hornby (1995) defined vocabulary as the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings. While Ur (1998) stated that vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than just a single word: for example, post office, and mother-in-law, which are made up of two or three words but express a single idea. Furthermore, Gulthou (2005) stated that vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings.

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speakers meaning. That is the reason why it is important to learn vocabulary.

### 1. The Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a fundamental part and also plays an important role. Vocabulary used in mastering four skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students who are good at mastery vocabulary, they are good in mastery of language. On the other hand, students who lack vocabulary mastery will get difficulty in comprehending the meaning of word, phrase or sentence.

According to the Thornbury (2008), people could say very little with grammar but they could say almost anything with words. It means that more people learn words or vocabulary, their English will improve.

#### **2.2.2 The Mastery of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is a list of words and often phrase, usually arranged alphabetically. Vocabulary is important in case it could help student to enjoy their classes in learning language. Students who master enough vocabulary will face fewer difficulties than those who have less vocabulary. According to Red John (2000:75) vocabulary is knowledge involves knowing the meanings of words and therefore the purpose of a vocabulary test into find out whether the learners can match each word with a synonym, a dictionary-type definition, or an equivalent word in their own language. In learning vocabulary automatically we have to know the meaning of words itself and can use it in sentences. Wilkins (1972:130) states that vocabulary learning is learning discriminate progressing the meaning of words in the target language from the meanings of their nearest 'equivalent' in the

mother tongue. It also learning to make the most appropriate lexical choices for particular linguistic and situational context.

Vocabulary is very important in learning a language because it is great skill or knowledge about the stock of words of a language in alphabetical order. So, it must be mastered well by the learners.

### **2.2.3 Vocabulary Improvement**

Pavicic (2011) in <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/vocabulary-autonomy> [accessed 11/12/2018] divided the strategy in improving English vocabulary mastery into four groups, as follows:

#### 1) Self-initiated independent learning

This strategy involves planned, active and motivated learning and exposure to language outside the classroom (media). The examples of the strategy are word grouping, making notes of vocabulary while reading for pleasure/watching TV, word cards or leafing through a dictionary, planning, recording and listening, and regular revision.

#### 2) Formal practice

This strategy promotes systematic learning and vocabulary practice. The aim is accurate reproduction and is often connected to the tasks of formal instruction. The examples of the strategy are loud repetition, bilingual dictionary, testing oneself, and noting new items in class.



### 3) Functional practice

This strategy includes exposure to language, but without making a conscious effort (incidental learning). The examples of the strategy are remembering words while watching TV/reading, using known words in different contexts, looking for definitions, listening to songs and trying to understand, using words in conversations, and practice with friends.

### 4) Memorizing

This group includes a number of memory strategies based on interlingua, intralingua and visual associations. The examples of the strategy are using pictures or illustrations, associations with L1 (cognates or key word method), looking for similarities between words, visualization.

## **2.3 Fable stories**

According to Harper (2015) fable is a short tale to teach a moral lesson, often with animals or inanimate objects as characters; apologue. Whereas, according to Waren (2013) A fable is a short narrative form that is best known for having non-human beings as main characters and ending with a moral. What makes the animals in fables different from human beings is mainly their physical form, though they may display stereotyped personality traits relating to their animal natures. A fable used animal, plants, inanimate objects, and forces of nature as characters. while a parable uses Human.

From the definition above, I concluded that fable stories differ from a parable, teach universal truth and capture the children's interest, especially to improve students vocabulary.

### **2.3.1 Aesop's fable story**

According to Horgan,. (2015) Aesop's fables are written by a former Greek slave named Aesop, in the late to mid-6th century BCE, Aesops Fables are the worlds best-known collection of morality tales. The fables, numbering 725, were originally told from person-to-person as much for entertainment purposes but largely as a means for relaying or teaching a moral or lesson. These early stories are essentially allegorical myths often portraying animals or insects e.g. foxes, grasshoppers, frogs, cats, dogs, ants, crabs, stags, and monkeys representing humans engaged in human-like situations (a belief known as animism). Ultimately the fables represent one of the oldest characteristics of human life: storytelling.

The fables served as a form of children entertainment beyond being a simple teaching tool. The fables transmitted important life lessons while also describing the "world of childhood." The primary characters often acted in a child-like manner. The stories described the challenges of adulthood thus allowing young readers to engage with the characters and morals of adulthood at an early age.

The stories also provided an opportunity for a measure of self-reflection. At those moments when Greeks suspected their culture or civilization was not living up to expectations, the fables provided an opportunity for a degree of self-reflection. Although humans and animals share similar traits, humans are different

due to their power of reason which allows humans to make different choices about life and living.

### **2.3.2 The advantages of using Aesop's fable stories**

Vocabulary is the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speaker's meaning. The more people learn words or vocabulary, the more they improve their English will. To improve children's English, I used Aesop's fable stories that teach universal truth and capture the children's interest, especially to improve students' vocabulary.

Aesop's fables story served as a form of children's entertainment beyond being a simple teaching tool. The fables transmitted important life lessons while also describing the "world of childhood." The stories also provided an opportunity for a measure of self-reflection. Interestingly, Aesop's fables feature animals as protagonist rather than humans. In some contexts, the use of non-humans is meant to illuminate the human experience through "humans in disguise" (Sutton Spence and Napoli, 2010, p. 442). Clayton (2008) argues that Aesop's fable story illustrates that hierarchies in the animal world are analogous to human hierarchies in the context of everyday life.

In short, the advantages of using Aesop's fable story to teach vocabulary are the stories are simple, entertaining, and suitable for children. The stories also provided moral value and self-reflection opportunity for children.

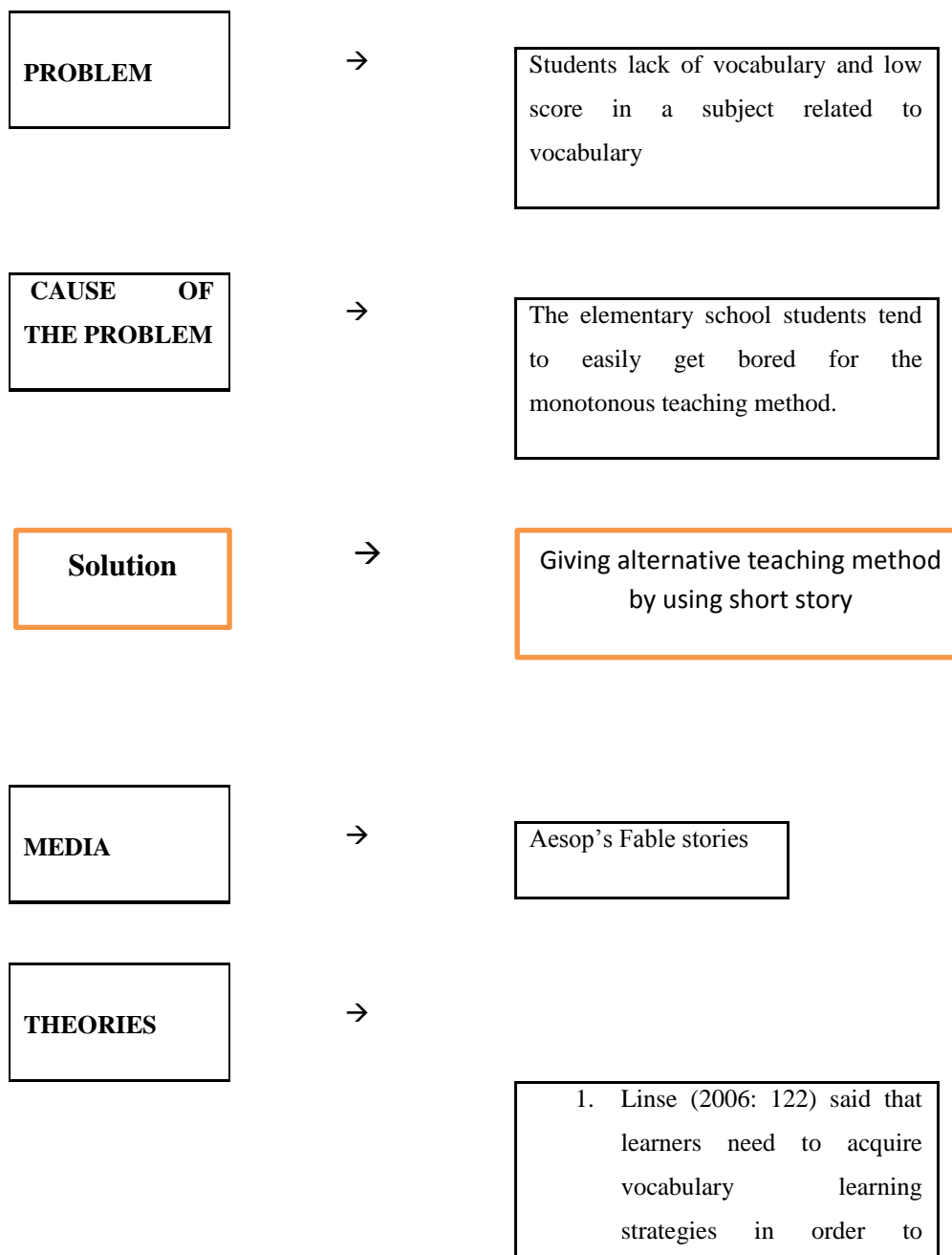
## 2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study was drawn based on the theory of Linse (2006: 122) as reference for teaching vocabulary. Linse (2006: 122) said that learners need to acquire vocabulary learning strategies in order to discover the meanings of new words. Unfortunately, when teaching vocabulary, some of the English teachers just give a text to the students and translate it into Bahasa. As a result, the students have difficulties in memorizing new English words that have been taught before because that strategy is not interesting and challenging to them. To solve the problem, English teacher needs to use interesting learning strategy in improving the student's vocabulary mastery. Chamot (1990: 1) defined that learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information.

From the theories above, I assumed that Fable stories are considered an interesting alternative strategy in teaching vocabulary for elementary s text which may increase students memorization and their achievement in mastering vocabulary.

In conducting this study, the researcher used quasi-experimental research design to get the data. The researcher took the data from the students of grade sixth of SDI DARUL ULUM. Each group would be given a pre-test to measure the understanding of writing simple present tense. The experimental group would be given the treatment using Short Story. And the last step was giving both of group a post-test and assessing the differences between them. The result of the pre-test and the post-test would be compared to get the conclusion. Besides using

test, the researcher also used a questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire would be used to know the student's opinion about the Aesops fable story that was used to enrich their vocabulary. The framework of the present study can be seen in the following scheme:



discover the meanings of new words.

2. Chamot (1990: 1) defined that learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information.
3. Short stories can be a good learning material since it is considered to be adequate for the learners from all levels (from beginner to advanced learners) Colin and Slater (1991:196)

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presented conclusions and suggestions based on the result of the analysis in the previous chapter.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

Based on the data analysis and result, the conclusion was that *Aesop's Fable stories* were an efficient medium in teaching English vocabulary. It can be seen from the pre-test and the post-test results. The students' achievement increased from 68.6 % in the pre-test to 80.4 % in the post-test. Generally, based on the results of the pre-test, it concluded that students' mastery in vocabulary was good after using *Aesop's Fable stories*. The result of the questionnaires also indicated that students showed some interest to this medium.

The factors that cause improvement from using this story were: the overall content of this story used English, so the only way to tell this story was to understand the meaning of every word in it. Students could easily remember new vocabulary what they found in this story, because they will understand the content by using *number head together* and *think pair share* method.

#### 5.2 Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, I would like to offer some suggestions. For the teachers, they should be able to use various method and materials, media or teaching aids of teaching vocabulary in order to promote the students' interest in

vocabulary. The improving of vocabulary should be maintained on a regular, frequent basis so that the student will not get difficulties on new vocabulary.

Second for the students, based on my observation, the students enjoyed the topic and make it easier for them to improve the vocabulary. They became *more curious* in the class. They could explore their ideas freely when they discussed the topic. The suggestion for the students was, that they should encourage themselves to learn English, especially in improving vocabulary.

Third for the other writers, to get a wider generalization of the result of this study, such activity should be conducted in

other classes of other schools, and I hope there will be many writers use other interesting media to teach vocabulary.



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