

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is an essential element, especially in learning English. Students must be able to master vocabulary to have good English. Wainwright (2006:33) states that vocabulary is an important factor in reading. The more a person memorizes vocabulary, the better her/his language will be. Besides, vocabulary is the main aspect of reading. Without a well-developed vocabulary, understanding reading materials will be hindered. It will be progressively difficult to understand the information that is stated in a reading text or written sources. From the explanations above, vocabulary is important in reading activity. It shows that they have close relationships since to comprehend the text, the students require a lot of vocabulary. Besides, they must have good interaction with the text and need more attention from the readers to get the exact or close meaning.

Vocabulary is a sum or stock of words employed by a language, group, and an individual or in relation to subject. By mastering vocabulary, we will know the meaning of vocabulary in the context. It can also help to avoid making mistake in understanding. Hatch and Brown (1995) define vocabulary as a list or set of words particular language or a list or set or words individual speakers of language might use. It means that, by using vocabulary itself, the interaction can be happened. It is a tool for communicating each other in daily life.

Vocabulary mastery is the ability to get or to receive lots of words. By mastering vocabulary, we will know the meaning of vocabulary in the context. It can also help to avoid making mistakes in understanding a written or spoken text. Good mastery of vocabulary is important for anyone who learn the language used in listening, speaking, writing, and reading. A learner of a foreign language will speak fluently and accurately, write easily, or understand what he or she enough vocabulary and has the capability of using it accurately.

Reading, as one of the basic language skills, has an important role in wandering knowledge to access information and makes meaning. Reading skill is very essential, and students have master reading besides listening, speaking and writing. According to Teixeira (2012:10), reading is a key language skill that has a significant place in teaching and learning foreign languages. In addition to this statement, by reading the students can learn so many things. Reading skill allows students to access ideas that are communicated by people in the form of written or printed material from different countries, so it will give them the opportunity to broaden their horizon and increase their knowledge. Furthermore, there are so many benefits that the students get from reading in learning a language.

Reading is also something crucial and necessary for the students in learning English because the success of their study depends on their ability to read and find the information in their reading material. According to Pang et al. (2001:1), reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to the spoken language. In addition, comprehension is the process of making sense of words,

sentences, and connected paragraph. Reading will make vocabulary expansion because the more people read something, the more words they gain exposure. As a result, the students must master vocabulary and understand reading comprehension to make it easier to understand the reading text. Thus, those two variables of reading comprehension should be emphasized to make students understand what they have read.

Reading comprehension was the goal of reading activity. Through reading, the readers also begin to have greater understanding of a particular topic. Since reading leads the readers to understand a reading passage, it can be said that reading is a receptive skill in language learning. According to the explanation of Weaver (2009:14), reading is a process that is highly determined by the brain, emotions, and beliefs of the reader which is brought into a reading text. From the statement, the researcher concludes that reading is a process that provides knowledge and information to the human thoughts, emotions, and feelings. Reading is an activity where a learner will get many kinds of information knowledge of the reading activities. The readers also begin to have greater understanding of a certain topic through reading. Furthermore, there are many benefits that the learners get from reading. One of them is the learner can enrich their vocabulary that makes them more qualifying in reading comprehension. This is important to improve their language learning results for their future lives.

Vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension are important to teach for a learner in learning English. Based on the researcher's observation that has been done in SMPN 2 Marga, the learners who mastered and understood the vocabularies tended

to better understand the content and meaning of a reading text, while students who are lack mastering vocabulary could have difficulty in understanding a reading text. Furthermore, the best way to get many vocabularies is to read widely, if the students read widely, they can good readers. In addition to learning process undertaken for students in school, the vocabularies learned by students should be adapted to the curriculum. Without mastering vocabulary, the students cannot understand the meaning of a foreign language that they learn.

Vocabulary and reading are interconnected. It means vocabulary can help students learn reading comprehension and it can give an impact on the learning process. According to Boardman (2007:46), there is a correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Vocabulary is essential to reading comprehension. It is impossible to understand a text if learners do not have enough vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary should be part of reading comprehension because the vocabulary mastery is completely needed to comprehend reading passages.

In conclusion, vocabulary and reading comprehension are interrelated; without vocabulary, the students cannot understand the text. Vocabulary is a very basic thing in learning English. It is very important for students to increase vocabulary mastery in reading comprehension. Considering the explanation, the researcher is interested to do research to know the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Thus, the researcher would like to figure out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in academic year 2021/2022.

1.2 Research Problem

As what has been previously stated, reading comprehension does not only focus on reading the texts but also understanding the meaning. Based on the background of the study, which has been stated, the crucial issue that attracts the researcher in conducting this study concerns the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in academic year 2021/2022. Moreover, the researcher was interested in finding out the significant correlation of vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the students in junior high school. Therefore, the research problem in this present study can be formulated in the form of question as follows: is there any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in academic year 2021/2022?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Every research has its own objective. Research objectives described concisely what the research is trying to achieve. A particular investigation was expected to provide a scientific solution to the research problem. The objective of the study should in the line with the background and the research problem that has already been formulated for the study. The present study is related to a scientific investigation to get the right solution precisely. Regarding the research problem formulated above, the objective of the study is to find out the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in Academic Year 2021/2022.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this study to make this present study deeper and more specific, it is focused on investigating the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade student of SMP Negeri 2 Marga in academic year 2021/2022. The limitation of the problem as the follows: the vocabulary mastery that focus on (verb, adjective and noun) and reading comprehension investigated with factual question positive based on descriptive text and conversation about introduction.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significant of the study was important in conducting research. This study is only focus on figuring out whether there was a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in academic year 2021/2022. Therefore, the finding of the present study was expected to give both theoretical and practical significance on the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension that will be conducted in the future.

Theoretically, the result of this study was expected to give information and reference to the readers about the study between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga and also to complete the lack of previous research related to the students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension on acquiring English as foreign language.

Practically, the results of the present study are expected to be beneficial for English teachers, students, and other researchers. For the English teachers, the researcher hopes that the teachers could improve their quality of teaching foreign languages and help students to master vocabulary and reading comprehension. For the students, the researcher hopes this study could positively influence the students and give motivation in learning English. The students can improve their vocabulary mastery better than before, so they will not face difficulties learning a foreign language. The last is for the other researcher. The researcher hopes this study can be useful for other researchers as a reference for those who would research the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

1.6 Definition of the Key Term

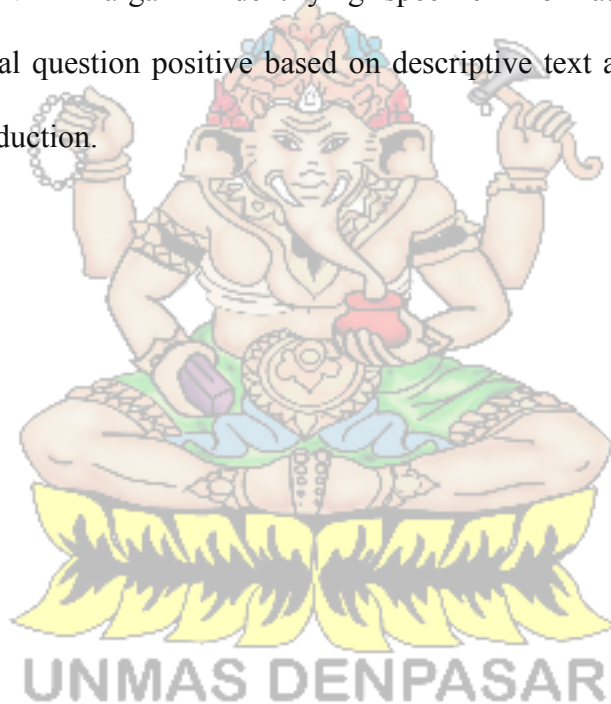
Key terms are important to be defined to avoid misunderstanding and confusion among the readers in comprehending this research. The researcher provides a clear operational definition in comprehending this study and clarifies the terms used in the present study. These operational definitions can be used as reference in confining the complexity of the present study related to the key terms. Additionally, the definitions of the key terms are also intended to make them clear in comprehending this study and to give limitation to the terms of the research conducted. Accordingly, the definition of the key terms used by the researcher in this study was vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga. Furthermore, the definition of the key terms which are used in the present study could be briefly and concisely defined as follows:

1. Vocabulary Mastery

In this study, vocabulary mastery refers to the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in academic year 2021/2022 in mastering vocabulary in the form of noun, verb, and adjective from written text.

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga in identifying specific information investigated with factual question positive based on descriptive text and conversation about introduction.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The theoretical review was a review of the theories that were related to the conducted study. Furthermore, it was used to support and build this study. In this chapter, the researcher describes the prominent points which include theoretical reviews which were related literatures to this study. The present study was conducted based on the following theoretical frameworks that were taken from the experts. There were some important points to be explained and discussed based on the relevant theoretical reviews that were taken by the researcher. The theoretical reviews include vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

2.1.1 Vocabulary Mastery

When learning a foreign language, our individual vocabulary in that language was one of the most important micro-skills to develop. Of course, all micro-skill like grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are important. One of those aspects that should be mastered is vocabulary. Pollard (2018:13) assumes that vocabulary is a basic building block of language learning. It will help the learners in learning the English language well. They need to know words, their meanings, spellings and pronunciations. When teaching vocabulary, teachers were required to make sure that they have explained the meaning as well as spelling and pronunciation. Vocabulary is a fundamental component of language proficiency, one of the primary goals of words. It is needed to commutate successfully in a foreign language interaction.

There are many definitions of vocabulary achievement that are proposed by some experts as follows. Hackman (2008:3) states that vocabulary is more than a list of words, and although the size of one's vocabulary matters, it can be understood how to use the ones which matter most. Of course, everyday life provides most of the vocabulary needs. Words are all around, but taking them in takes time to become acquainted with their numerous uses and the contexts in which they are appropriate a mix of rich language experiences help to expose words and appreciate their meanings, but not all students get this in their lives. Therefore, vocabulary refers to the words that must be understood to communicate effectively.

Vocabulary is the knowledge of a word that not only requires a definition but also implies how that word fits into the world. According to Nation (2001), there are two kinds of vocabulary. They are receptive and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary refers to the words that students recognize and understand when they read or listen to something. Productive vocabularies are words that the students understand can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing. Therefore, it can be concluded that vocabulary can be presented in four units. They are reading, listening, speaking and writing vocabulary. Reading vocabulary consists of the word found by people when they are reading. Listening vocabulary is the word that people hear and understand when they are talking to others or listening radio and television. Speaking vocabulary includes the words people used in their daily life and conversation. The last is writing vocabulary that consists of the word people use in writing essays reports, letter, etc.

Mastering vocabulary will help students to learn the language skills. Therefore, the success in learning English requires vocabulary acquisition. In addition, Kamil and Hiebert (2005:3), vocabulary is the knowledge of the meaning of words. This definition become complicated when the fact that word come in at least from two form: oral and print. Oral vocabulary is the set of words for which we know the meaning when the students speak or read orally. Print vocabulary consists of those words foe which the meaning is known when we write or read silently. Knowledge of words also comes in two forms. There are productive, the vocabulary that is used when writing or speaking, and receptive that are able to be understood and recognized.

Building vocabulary can be started from the teacher practice, students influenced by the conversation, short reading text and games. One of difficulties of students face when learning English is vocabulary because they always confused when they did not find the meaning of the word. It is because they seldom in memorize and use this language. Whereas the fact that vocabulary is the most important thing in reading skill make it more and more important to master by the students. Students cannot catch and grasp the idea from the reading as fast as possible. Looking up the difficult words in dictionary is better for student.

In this study, the researcher focused the theory of Kamil and Hiebert (2005:3), who said that vocabulary is the knowledge of the meaning of words. This theory tells that mastering vocabulary will help the students to understand the reading, and qualities of the reading comprehension depend on the quality and quantity of vocabulary that the students have.

2.1.2 Reading Comprehension

Reading was one of the important language skills that must be mastered by the students. The significant of reading is going to bring a big change for human life, especially for the learner or student. Nunan (2003:68) writes that reading is a fluent process of reader combining information from the text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. It means that reading activity help the students build a new concept. Combining the idea makes the students discover and get much knowledge around the world by reading. In addition, it will improve other skills. These aims will be reached if the students understand and comprehend the text that they read.

Students often have reading as one of their most important goals; they want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, and for study purpose. In addition, reading comprehension is the primary purpose of reading. Harmer (2007:14) argues that reading is useful for language acquisition. The students more or less understand what they read, the more they read, the better they will get it. This statement explains when people learn a new language by doing practice and read more; it will be a good combination to improve the language ability. These two factors will be related each other. Reading also can increase the student's ability of reading comprehension and also can help them to find information from the textbook that they have read. Furthermore, reading is the art of transmitting the ideas, facts and feeling from the mind and soul of reader, with accuracy and understandings, and much more.

There are certain aspects of reading, such as fluency, intonation and word

recognition which can be learned in few years. These basics must be mastered but at the same time reading comprehension should be emphasized in the process. Pang et al. (2003:14) describe that comprehension is the process of deriving meaning from connected text. It involves word knowledge as well as thinking and reasoning. Comprehension is not a passive process but an active one. The reader actively engages with the reading text to construct meaning and good readers normally take active steps to overcome difficulties in comprehension. It involves drawing inferences from the words and expressions that the writers use to communicate information, ideas and viewpoints through their writings.

Reading is one of the most important skills that should be mastered in learning English. Reading comprehension refers to an activity of reading and understanding written text. According to Brown (2004:185) reading is likewise a skill that teachers simply expect learners to acquire. Moreover, good ability in reading will help the student to comprehend text and its meaning better. Component of language such as, vocabularies, structure and other would help to understand the meaning of the text and support the ability of reading.

Reading is also meaningful as a pattern of communication with oneself, so that readers can find the meaning of writing and obtain information. Therefore, the reader will obtain information, include content, and understand the meaning of the reading. The ability of reading also will open new world for students. Reading comprehension also allows the readers to use their own existing knowledge about the topic. Furthermore, Wolley (2011:15) state that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from the text. Therefore, to get a thorough understanding of what

is explained in the text to get the meaning of words or sentences that have been read. In understanding reading text information, students develop these reading or representations of the meaning of the text ideas during the reading process.

Those statements above show the various definitions of reading, in this study, the researcher focused on the theory according to Wolley (2011:15) who states that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from the text. It means reading is a complex process of thinking in assigning meaning from printed materials which involve most of the readers' intellectual act such as pronunciation and comprehension in order to receive ideas or information extended by the text. It can be seen that reading is not only looking at word in the form of graphic symbols but also getting meaning from the word to word or line to line to understand what we read. It means that reading is a process to understand the text content and to get information.

2.2 Empirical Review

Empirical review in research methodology is when the researcher reviews the information currently available concerning the topic and the historical background. An empirical review is a review of relevant research conducted in which it reviews the previous research relevant to the present research. Empirical review deals with original research such as scientific experiments, surveys, and research studies based on experience and observation, rather than on systematic logic. Empirical evidence can help the research avoid unintentional replication of the previous study results and clarify and define the concept of the study. In the empirical review, the researcher inserted two relevant previous pieces of research. Those two theses used ex post facto

research design which they elaborated about reading comprehension. The two related pieces of research which are used as empirical reviews are described in chronological as follows:

The first research was presented by Yasa (2018) entitled “The Correlation between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Students’ Ability in Reading Comprehension at the Tenth Grade of SMA Cerdas Murni Deli Serdang in Academic Year 2017/2018”. The result states that there is a significant correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. In this research, the total number of population in this study was 90 students. By using random sampling, he chose 30 students of class X IPA-I of SMA Cerdas Murni Deli Serdang as the sample. The data was collated by using 40 items of essay test. After data was collected, the correlation data was processed using product moment formula. The finding was medium correlated to the result of the correlation coefficient which calculated the correlation between vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. The result of correlation coefficient is 0.491 which is specified as medium correlation. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is medium correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Additionally, the strength of this research was in data analysis. It was because the previous researcher provided a clear explanation about how to find out the correlation between two variables. Besides, the word that used by the researcher was simple and easy to understand. And for the weakness, there is no explanation about T-testing.

The second research of the present study was carried out by Meirawati (2020)

entitled “The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Eighth-grade Students of SMPN 2 Sukawati in academic Year 2019/2020”. The objective of the study was figure out the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade student of SMPN 2 Sukawati. The research used 50 students of the eighth-grade at SMPN 2 Sukawati. The research instruments which were used to collect the required data focused on the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

These research findings clearly defined that there was a highly positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Additionally, the strength of the previous study was in its research findings. The previous research finding showed a correlation between the two variables; they were vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. In addition, there was no specific aspect explained in the theoretical review related to the rubric elements that made the students unable to know what was assessed and focused them. Thus, the researcher tested the students’ vocabulary mastery in the present study by giving some words of these four aspects in vocabulary: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Besides, short answer task tested more on the four aspects of reading comprehension, such as identifying general information, specific information, textual reference, and textual meaning. This was expected to make the students know about the reading aspects they want to assess, so they can emphasize what aspects they have to master to get a good reading comprehension score.

2.3 Hypothesis

Hypothesis is estimate of the result of this study. The hypothesis needed to predict the existence or non-existence of a relationship. It is because the only persuasive argument we know of is that of contradicting an existing widespread belief (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009:39). Therefore, to answer the research problem in this study, the researcher proposed the hypothesis as follows:

- a. H_a (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga.
- b. H_o (Null Hypothesis): there is no significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Marga.

