

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

For many years students from many places around the world have been learning English. Since it is considered an international language, learning English has become a necessity for everyone who wants to engage in international interaction. Mastering this language is not a simple thing to do. Some skills should be learned and practiced, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Moreover, reading is considered the most important foreign language skill. This is in line with what Harrison in Aprilia (2019) said “The importance of reading is not only related to the development of knowledge, but also related to people thinking capability”. In addition, reading is a good thing in life because it is a factor of great importance in individual development and the most important activity in school. It is also needed in every level of the field of study.

Being able to read in English is very important. Students know that success in reading is the most necessary because it is a basic tool of education. All the subjects of elementary school such as mathematics, science, language, and others depend on the ability to read. In high school and college, reading ability becomes even more important because students are more active to gain written information.

Nowadays, the ability to comprehend English is necessary for millions of people. By understanding English, people can communicate in English and also be able to read many kinds of English texts. People find many texts written in English, from holiday brochures to academic books, newspapers, pamphlets, magazines,

traffic directions, advertisements, etc. Therefore, the ability to read English text in any form will give a lot of advantages in our lives.

Reading requires understanding or comprehending the means of printed matters. Through reading, students acquire new ideas, obtain needed information, seek support for their ideas and broaden their interest. Students can also get the message that the writer had expressed. Besides, one of the purposes of teaching English as a foreign language is that they can read, grasp the idea and understand the book written in English. To achieve those purposes, students need a lot of words of English to master.

Vocabulary is the stock of words used in a language. Vocabulary as one of the language aspects is a crucial component in acquiring and understanding language. This is supported by Richards in Aprilia (2019) that vocabulary is one of the most obvious components of language and one of the first things applied linguistics turned their attention to. Therefore, it is impossible to learn a language without vocabulary. When reading something it would be better if students understand the words or vocabulary in their reading, because it will help and guide them in pronouncing, reading, and grasping the idea, so they will understand well. Thus, the more students have a stock of words used in a language, the better it will improve their understanding.

Mastering vocabulary is the ability to get or to receive lots of words. By having and mastering vocabulary students will know the meaning of vocabulary in the context. It can also help to avoid making mistakes in understanding a written or spoken text. Moreover, the English vocabulary often becomes a problem for most high school and university students although they have studied English since

elementary school. Sometimes the students always have difficulties understanding some words in context.

Most students if they find difficult words, still just continue their reading in the hope that the word they read is not important or that meaning will become clear later on. Meanwhile, the word that they usually pass is the key to their reading and understanding. Thus, they cannot catch and grasp the idea from the reading as well as possible. Therefore, reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery have a strong relationship. It is in line with Sedita (2005) who states that vocabulary knowledge is crucial in reading comprehension and determining how well students comprehend the texts.

From the explanation mentioned above, the researcher has known how important vocabulary mastery is in the reading activity. Therefore, the researcher formulated research entitled “The Correlation between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension of the Tenth Grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in Academic Year 2021/2022”.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Based on the description of vocabulary and reading above, it shows that vocabulary is an important component in language learning for students to succeed in reading. Therefore, it is important to formulate the research question. A research problem is important to make the discussion clear and specific. Thus, the research question of the study can be formulated as follows: is there any Correlation between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension of the Tenth Grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in Academic Year 2021/2022?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

A research objective is a goal that the researcher wants to do or achieve after the research is carried out. By knowing the research objective, it will help researchers pay attention to the data collection process in this study. Scientific investigations are carried out of course to answer research questions and seek scientific solutions to these research problems. This research is intended to answer research problems that have been formulated and previously determined. Based on the background of the research problem, the purpose of this study was to determine whether there is any Correlation between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension of the Tenth Grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in Academic Year 2021/2022.

### **1.4 Limitation of the Study**

This research was focused on finding the Correlation between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension of the Tenth Grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in Academic Year 2021/2022. This research was quantitative research. There was no teaching process in this research. It only collected the data from the sample, because it is believed that the correlation between the variables has occurred. To gain data from the students, two tests had been done. Those were the vocabulary tests and reading comprehension tests. Vocabulary test items focused on content words (verb, noun, adjective, and adverb). The reading comprehension items focused on finding general idea, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference. The genre of the text of reading comprehension was only descriptive paragraphs about places that they had learned from their English teacher.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The main practical consideration which was taken into explanation in the study is the significance of the research finding. The research will give some useful information about vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. This research will also present the description and correlation between the mastery of vocabulary and the ability of reading comprehension among the tenth-grade students of SMK N 1 Manggis in the academic year 2021/2022. In addition, the researcher hopes that this research will be more useful in terms of theoretical and practical significance. Thus, the findings of this study are expected to have theoretical and practical significance.

In theoretical terms, the result of this research may strengthen the previous theories related to vocabulary and reading comprehension ability. This research also may be used as a reference for the next researcher who will concentrate on correlating students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension ability.

In practical terms, the results of this study can provide new information for English teachers that students' vocabulary mastery affects their reading comprehension skills. The findings of this study can also be used as material for consideration in learning reading. Teachers must realize the importance of mastering students' vocabulary in their reading comprehension skills.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Term**

Some words that are used in this study become keywords. To have a better understanding and to avoid misinterpretation about the terms used in this study, the researcher presents some definitions of terms, they are;

- a) Reading comprehension is the construction of meaning involving the students of the tenth grade of SMK N 1 Manggis connecting information from the written message with previous knowledge to arrive at meaning and understanding.
- b) Vocabulary mastery means students of the tenth grade of SMK N 1 Manggis can understand and use words that will help them to express their idea, understand the idea, and get more information.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

Theoretical review is a review of several theories related to research. This is used to support and build this research to be more assertive and based on facts. Therefore, a theoretical review is used to support and build on this research. This study needs to be supported by theories that have been put forward by experts. There are several sources from several kinds of literature that relate to and support this research. There are several important points to explain and discuss based on the relevant theoretical reviews taken by researchers. This study is based on a discussion of the following theoretical frameworks: vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension, and descriptive text. For this study, several new theoretical points, as well as empirical evidence, are reviewed. Some of the points of view are as follows:

##### **2.1.1 Vocabulary Mastery**

Vocabulary is a set of words that are recognized in a person's language. This word is used to express human feelings or ideas in spoken and written form. Every word in a language always has a certain meaning, both literal and semantic. In addition, people will use appropriate vocabulary to express their feelings or ideas so that they can be understood by others. By using vocabulary people can communicate with each other to ask questions or convey information. This is why vocabulary plays an important role in language use. In English, vocabulary means

every part of speech that is used to construct sentences when people communicate with each other. Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003:73-74) classified English words into two groups, they are discussed in the following points:

1) Content word

Content words represent the name of objects or things that are the concrete nouns (dog, motorcycle, and box); action done by with those things, that is: verb (drive, hit, push); the qualities of these things that is an adjective (charming, beautiful, heavy, tall); and the indication such meanings as frequency, degree, manner and place, that is adverbs (carefully, here, now).

2) Function word

Function words are those words that are used as a means of expressing the relation of grammatical structure. Function words include determiners (which, this, each and some), conjunction (and, but, or, and after), prepositions (in, at, on, and until), article (a, an, and the), and auxiliaries (are, be, have and do).

According to Huyen in Aprilia (2019) vocabulary is very important in learning English particularly in reading comprehension. This means that vocabulary is the most important part of the language and learners must master a large number of words to be able to present the language properly. Vocabulary mastery can be defined as a thorough knowledge of the words of a language. Mastery of the words of a language by students is shown by their ability to produce the language. By mastering vocabulary, it can help students to understand the text. This statement is also supported by Wassman and Rinsky (2002) who say the more words students know the better and the faster students can understand what students read. Students



cannot understand the passage without mastering vocabulary. Thus, students' vocabulary is needed to face difficulties in learning English, especially to understand the reading.

### **2.1.2 Reading Comprehension**

Reading is one of the important skills because it cannot be separated in the teaching and learning process of English. By reading, students can get a lot of information according to their needs in reading. Reading skills refer to the ability to understand written texts. Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication, and sharing of information and ideas. Reading skill can be described as “a complex process involving a network of cognitive actions that work together to construct meaning” (Dorn and Soffos in Nurdiana and Amelia, 2017).

By reading we can develop our creativity, critical thinking, and even writing skills. There are also many advantages from reading according to Goodman in Aprilia (2019):

- 1) Reading helps you learn to think in English.
- 2) Reading can enlarge your English vocabulary.
- 3) Reading can help you improve your writing.
- 4) Reading may be a good way to practice your English if you live in a non-English speaking country.
- 5) Reading can help you prepare for studying in an English – speaking country.
- 6) Reading is a good way to find out about new ideas, facts, and experiences.

Reading is a two-way interaction in which information is exchanged between the reader and the author. In addition, reading is a process carried out and used by readers who want the message conveyed by the author to be conveyed through word

or written language. It can be concluded that reading is an interactive process between readers and writers to obtain the information presented by the author.

To get information from the author, readers must have an understanding of the text they are reading. Comprehension means the process by which information from the text and knowledge held by the reader join together to construct meaning. The reader's previous knowledge or schema is one of the factors that can influence reading comprehension. According to Sutarsyah (2015), when the reading takes place, the reader scheme must be activated because it is used by the reader to understand the text.

In addition, Kruidenier (2002) explains that comprehension is an active process, and readers must interact and engage with the text to work properly. As comprehension takes place, words are translated and linked to their meanings in the reader's memories and phrases and sentences are processed quickly or smoothly enough so that the meaning derived from one word, phrase, or sentence is not lost before the next process. Therefore, reading comprehension can be interpreted as understanding the text being read, or the process of constructing the meaning of a text. Reading comprehension is described as the ability to understand what has been read.

According to Jeannette (2007), what is meant by reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex processes each word, that whole words that include in the sentence. Based on the statement above, reading comprehension is a way to understand a text which does not only include reading words, word knowledge, or fluency, but with reading comprehension, people can get extensive information and insight from the text such

as general information, specific information, textual reference, and textual meaning. Besides that, by reading the students can also improve their vocabulary.

Based on the statement above, the researcher assumes that reading comprehension is the process to understand the content of the text and to master reading comprehension the students have to know the reading skills such as general information, specific information, textual reference, and textual meaning.

### **2.1.3 Descriptive Text**

Fathoni (2018) states that descriptive text is a type of written text which describes an object (human or non-human) for example person, thing, and place. It is a text which says what a person or a thing is like. The purpose of descriptive text is to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing. Good descriptive texts usually have three important qualities:

- 1) They have a dominant impression (The first sentence or even the first word or words of description may establish the dominant impression.
- 2) Supported by specific details, a recognizable mood (feeling and emotions namely: joy, happiness, fear, anxiety evoker or create a mood).
- 3) Logical development (try to give a picture or impression of person, place, or thing).

According to Zumarkhin (2005:5), descriptive text is to describe some-things, such as people, things, and animals. Descriptive text is very important for us when the students want to describe something. In addition, Kane (2000:352), states that descriptive text is the description and identification of the structure text such as person and thing. Meanwhile, Pardiyono (2007:33) states that descriptive

text is a type of written text which has a specific function to describe an object (human or non-human).

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

Empirical review is the review of the relevant research that has been conducted; in which it reviews the previous research that is relevant to the present research. Empirical evidence can help the researcher avoid unintentional replication of the previous studies' results, and to clarify as well as define the concepts of the study. Concerning this research, there is some previous research that had been conducted by some researchers.

The first study had been conducted by Armykirana (2017). The researcher investigated the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension of the third of SMA Negeri 7 Kediri in academic year 2016/2017. The researcher used a quantitative-correlation method. The population of this research is 322 students. In choosing the sample, XII-IPA 2 was taken as the sample with 32 students (12 male students and 20 female students). All the data gained in this research was analyzed by using the formulation of Pearson product-moment correlation. The instrument used in this research is the vocabulary test and reading comprehension test which contains 20 questions each. After data were collected, the students' final score in vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension was calculated to find the students' level. The correlation coefficient is then calculated by using the Pearson product-moment formula. The result of his research stated that the correlation coefficient is 0.361. It means that there was a correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. Students who have high scores in the reading test also have high scores on the vocabulary test.

Another study was conducted by Bahri (2019) of seventh grade of MTs DAARUL IHSAN. The researcher investigated a correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. Data were collected from 32 seventh-grade students. The test item of vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension were given to the students to measure their level of vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The results were compared to find out the correlation between those variables. The result of his research showed students with larger numbers of words find reading easier. The correlation coefficient of his research was 0.724. It was proven that there was a correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. It could be considered as a strong correlation since the result was included in a strong category (Arikunto,2003).

Both of the studies have been done well by the researchers and have shown a strong correlation between variables. However, the instrument used by both researchers was difficult to construct and validate because they used multiple choices in both tasks. Multiple choice is difficult to validate because it cannot assure students' understanding, especially in reading comprehension. Therefore, the researcher was interested in finding the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension with different instruments, subjects, and schools. The sample used was 35 students of the tenth grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in the academic year 2021/2022 and the researcher used a matching task for vocabulary test and short-answer task for reading comprehension test as the instrument in collecting the data.

### **2.3 Hypothesis**

A hypothesis is defined as the provisional answer to the research problems or research questions. Concerning the theories and the assumption above, the hypothesis can be formulated as follow:

- 1) Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) : There is a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension of the tenth grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in 2021/2022.
- 2) Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) : There is no significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension of the tenth grade of SMK N 1 Manggis in 2021/2022.

