

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English as an international language is important to be learned. Many fields require people to be able to communicate using English. Speaking, reading, writing, and listening are four English skills needed in this globalization era. Reading is crucial to human life and learning English and other languages because humans can increase knowledge and understanding through reading. It refers to the activity of getting the meaning from letters, symbols, etc. In reading, some aspects need to be considered, such as comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, and word recognition. The students need those aspects to become good readers. Most importantly, good readers can understand or comprehend a written text's meaning. It is related to reading to gain new information and knowledge and is an important tool for the academic process.

Reading is the process of conceiving the meaning of written words or symbols (Patel & Jain, 2008). This activity is an active process that consists of recognition and understanding ability. Through reading, someone will be active in recognizing and trying to catch the meaning of the written words or symbols. Reading aims to comprehend the written text, and the readers are expected to be able to understand. Scanlon, Anderson & Sweeney (2010) states that reading is a language skill. Reading activity cannot be separated from learning a language because by reading, people can learn a language through vocabulary and comprehension of the text being read.

According to Duffy (2009), reading requires comprehension because the primary purpose of written language is to convey ideas. The students should

understand what they have read to learn new knowledge from the texts or books. Understanding the meaning of a written text is called reading comprehension. When the students can get the meaning or point from the text, they comprehend the reading and achieve the primary purpose of reading. Reading comprehension is how readers interpret every word, sentence, and paragraph correctly.

In comprehending a written text, the readers have to understand every word, then one of the important things that will influence how good the readers' comprehension is their vocabulary. Vocabulary is a word in a language known by people as a communication tool. Vocabulary is important in learning a new language, especially mastering four English skills. People need a vocabulary to communicate and express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions. If the students lack vocabulary, they will have difficulties expressing their minds. A good understanding of vocabulary also included pronouncing and reading words well.

Based on Couchenour & Chrisman (2016), learning vocabulary is essential because the more words people know, the better comprehension they have. Vocabulary is the thing that cannot be separated in human's life. In daily life humans need to communicate with others by using vocabulary. Humans will easily understand written text by having a rich vocabulary. The more vocabulary students have, the better it will be to support their English skills. They are expected to have a large collection of vocabulary so they can comprehend reading text.

In addition, Graves (2016) describes that vocabulary can be categorized as oral and written. The knowledge of vocabulary will influence people's understanding of a language, both oral and written. Without vocabulary, the readers are not able to understand the meaning of the text or understand it. The vocabulary that students have will affect the reading activity. Some students still do not have

enough vocabulary. Inadequate vocabulary makes it hard for the students to understand the meaning of the reading text. It has been proven that vocabulary is an essential consideration in reading comprehension.

Bahri conducted a relevant study (2019) in the article entitled “The Correlation Between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension at the Seventh Grade Students’ of MTs Daarul Ihsan”. There were 32 samples in this research. The result of this research showed that there was a correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension, and it was considered a strong correlation category.

In relation to this study, the researcher would like to determine the correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning. Thus, the title of this research is “The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in Academic Year 2022/2023.”

1.2 Research Problem

The researcher should formulate a research problem before conducting the research. Formulating the research problem would make the researcher easier to define what will be analyzed. Based on the background of the study above, this research can be formulated as follows: is there any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In conducting research, there is always an objective. Every research has a different objective based on the requisite of the research. The word objective refers

to the aims or targets the researcher wants to achieve. The objective of the research should be related to the research background and the research problem that has been formulated. Therefore, based on the background of the study and the research problem, the main objective of this study was to find the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

In a study, a limitation is needed to make the research focus on the objective of the study. Limitations would control the extent to which something has to be analyzed. This study focused on the chosen topic, which is vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. Therefore, the researcher wants to find and know the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023. Consequently, the focus of this research is students' vocabulary mastery. There are verbs, adverbs, nouns, and adjectives. For reading comprehension, the researcher emphasized students' ability to comprehend descriptive text, particularly in getting specific information, general information, textual meaning, and textual reference.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The focus of this study is to find and know the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023. The researcher hoped that the findings of this present study could give an advantage to the study of English. It is strongly advised that the current research findings will offer substantial studies on the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

The outcome of the study has two significance. They have theoretical and practical significance, and both could be explained.

Theoretically, the outcome of this research is expected to give information related to the correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension. At the end of this research, it also could help future studies for additional empirical evidence. Moreover, this study is also expected to give students information about the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. This information could help the teachers and students know how much the influence of vocabulary on reading comprehension.

Practically, the result of the present study is hoped to give advantages to teachers, students, and future researchers. For the teachers, the researcher believes that English teachers could enhance the quality of their instructions in the foreign language and assist students in developing their English skills, especially in vocabulary and reading comprehension. For the students, this study is expected could positively impact the students and inspire them to learn English. A significantly more effective teaching and learning method might be created using the research findings regarding the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. For future researchers, this study can give information in conducting research about the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

The readers who want to learn more about this study must know the definition of the key term. The key term is explained in short by giving reflection and understanding before further discussion. This is used to give clear definitions

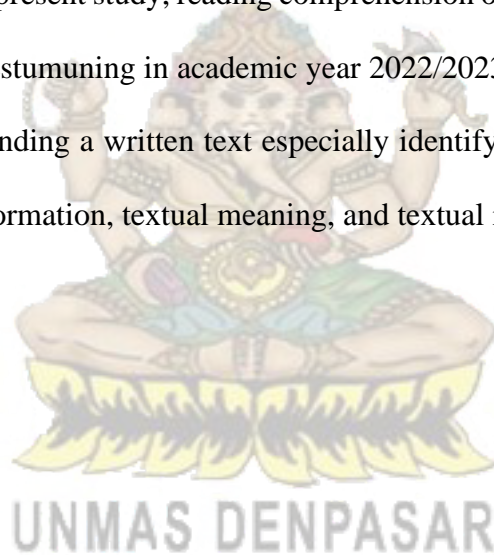
and prevent misunderstanding or confusion. Furthermore, there are two important definitions of key terms in this study:

1. Vocabulary Mastery

In this study, vocabulary mastery refers to the ability of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023 to master the vocabulary, including verbs, adverbs, nouns, and adjectives.

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to get meaning from a written text. In the present study, reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023 is operationally defined as understanding a written text especially identifying specific information, general information, textual meaning, and textual reference.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

In conducting research, there is a review of some theories regarding the study. The purposes of a theoretical review are to provide information and knowledge related to the variable and describe the theory related to the research problem. This theoretical framework is used to support research theory. This review establishes an understanding of theories and concepts relevant to the present study. There are some important points in this study related to the relevant theoretical reviews. The present study discussed the following theoretical framework: vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

2.1.1 Vocabulary Mastery

The simplest thing that needs to be learnt is words. The learner needs to arrange the word to become phrases or sentences. Words, phrases, or sentences are the communication tools used by people to interact with each other. Couchenour & Chrisman (2016) state that vocabulary refers to the words with their meaning. People use vocabulary in daily life to do communication with each other. In communication, people need to know the words and understand the meaning of the word itself. The word collection is used for all language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Learning vocabulary is essential for humans in doing communication and delivering information. Especially for the students who learn knowledge, vocabulary is beneficial for the learning process. Learning the meaning of words and how they relate to one another builds knowledge networks that enable students

to learn new material to previously studied material (Marzano & Simms, 2011). When the students are rich in vocabulary, it makes it easier to gain knowledge.

Rasinski & Rupley (2019) describe vocabulary as an important part of reading comprehension and a feature in using reading as a learning tool. In learning a foreign language, the student must deal with reading skills. Additionally, essential to reading comprehension is a wide vocabulary (Newton et al., 2013). This means increasing vocabulary knowledge is the key element of gaining a foreign language, especially English. The learners should increase and develop their vocabulary knowledge to have a good ability in the English language. The development of vocabulary knowledge has a positive effect on learners. Holding a lot of vocabulary makes understanding the meaning of both oral and written words easier. It also makes the students able to speak fluently using the second language. Moreover, in this globalization era, people use English as a tool of communication, both written and oral. To express their ideas, feelings, thoughts, and opinions, people need to master vocabulary.

Mastery means having comprehensive knowledge of a certain thing; in this case, it refers to the vocabulary. By increasing vocabulary, students rise in skills of fluency, writing, and reading comprehension (Willis, 2008). In the reading activity, students will find many vocabularies, and if they have an adequate vocabulary, it will increase their comprehension in reading. It can be said that vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension are related.

Having adequate vocabulary is very important for students, especially in English. It becomes important because vocabulary or words are used in four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. It can be said that those skills are concerned with words. Therefore, to master those four language skills, the

students need to increase their vocabulary, especially in reading skills. Neuman & Wright (2015) state that increasing vocabulary is essential to learning to read, which sounds nearly obvious. It stands to reason that students need to be familiar with the words that make up written texts to understand them, especially when vocabulary requirements for content-related materials are in the upper grades.

In addition, Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams (2013) classify words in the language into two terms, which can be briefly explained as follows:

a. Content Word

The content word is used to represent actions, objects, characteristics, and thoughts. They are verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.

- A verb is a word used to explain an action, expression, or state. For example: eat, read, sing, work, etc.
- A noun is a word consisting of a person, place, or thing. The noun can be used as a subject and object, for example: student, book, chair, table, pen, etc.
- An adjective refers to a word that explains more nouns or pronouns. For example: handsome, beautiful, tired, happy, etc.
- An adverb is a word used to describe a verb, adjective, another adverb, or the whole sentence. For example: slowly, quickly, clearly, etc.

b. Function Word

The function word refers to a word that does not have a concept or meaning and is simply used for grammatical purposes. Prepositions, pronouns, determiners, conjunctions, and auxiliaries are function words.

- A preposition is a word usually used to describe a position, place, direction, or time. For example: on, in, beside, behind, etc.

- A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun or noun phrase. For example: she, he, it, they, etc.
- A determiner refers to a word placed in front of a noun and the function is to clarify the meaning of the noun. For example: a, that, my, the, either, neither, etc.
- A conjunction is a word that is used to connect words or phrases. For example: but, and, because, although, etc.
- An auxiliary is a word used to complete the main verb in a sentence. For example: is, am, are, was, were, etc.

In learning English, students need to recognize two different types of vocabulary. Kamil and Hiebert (2005) differentiate those two types of vocabulary: productive and receptive vocabulary.

a. Productive vocabulary

This type of vocabulary is the words that are familiar and commonly used or easy to recognize, and it is usually employed by an individual, foremost in writing and speaking.

b. Receptive vocabulary

The receptive vocabulary refers to the word that is less familiar for the individual because these types of vocabulary are less likely to be used, and the individual may not use these types of words spontaneously.

In the present study, based on the previous arguments by the experts about vocabulary mastery, the author has similar thoughts to Newton et al. (2013), who define essential to reading comprehension as a wide vocabulary. Vocabulary is a crucial aspect that needs to be understood by people because both oral and written communication requires vocabulary. Especially in reading, vocabulary will greatly

affect their literacy or reading skills. The students with a width of words and word meanings will have good literacy skills. They can understand and catch the meaning or information in a text. Otherwise, they will have difficulties understanding a text if they lack the vocabulary or have low vocabulary mastery. It can be concluded that word knowledge or vocabulary mastery affects reading comprehension. The more vocabulary they have, the better their reading comprehension.

2.1.2 Reading Comprehension

According to Johnson (2008), reading creates meaning with text. In the learning process, students have to gain new information and knowledge, which can be done by reading students any information and knowledge that will support their capability in the study process. Reading can improve their language knowledge when students learn the English language. In reading activities, students will learn more vocabulary, phrases, or sentences. Nowadays, reading is from textbooks and many other sources, such as the internet and e-books (Electronic books). This transformation era helps students to find reading material easily. The aspects of reading comprehension assessed in this study include specific information, general information, textual meaning, and textual references. This is supported by Vaughn & Thompson (2004), who states that reading comprehension is an active process of constructing meaning from a written text; it includes understanding vocabulary and concepts, making inference, and finding the main idea.

Paul & Elder (2019) describes reading involves accurately constructing the meaning of the text one has read. It means that through reading, students are expected to have the ability to obtain various information, including content, and understand the reading text. In the reading process, there are the readers and the

reading text, and the readers try to get the meaning of the text. Reading activity is important for students because the students cannot be separated from the learning process. Fischer (2004) defines reading as the ability to understand written or printed symbols. The main purpose of the reading activity is to gain knowledge. Therefore, good readers must understand the contents of the written text. From the statements, reading activity expects the readers to get the contents of the written text and affect their capacity to think critically.

Reading gives readers many benefits, including entertainment, education, communication, and information about the past, present, and even future (Cain, 2010). Those benefits of reading are needed by the people in their life and needs by the students in the learning process. The benefits of reading could be formed in different kinds of written text, such as newspapers, books, dictionaries, comics, or other books. Grabe & Stoller (2014) define the specific purpose of reading are: (1) reading to find simple information, (2) reading to learn knowledge from a text, (3) reading to integrate information, write and critique texts, (4) reading for generic comprehension. Based on the explanation, reading is an essential activity.

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), there are five essential components for reading instruction, and these are the following components:

1. Phonemic Awareness

For reading, phonemes should be attached to letters using phoneme identification. Decoding unknown words requires the ability to blend. To read unknown words by analogy to familiar words, students need to be able to segment and blend onsets and rimes in words. When a word's written form is preserved in memory, phonemic segmentation enables children to recognize the attached graphemes.

2. Phonics

For beginners, reading is a challenging process. To read effectively and fluently, they must coordinate various cognitive functions. Students need to be able to use their alphabetic knowledge to decode new words and retain the meaning of words they have already read. Students assemble sentence meanings as they read connected material and keep those meanings in mind as they move to new phrases. Students must simultaneously keep an eye on their word recognition to ensure that the words that come to mind match the context's meaning.

3. Fluency

Fluency is a crucial aspect of proficient reading, which is generally recognized. A written text can be read quickly, accurately, and with the appropriate expression by fluent readers. Fluency depends on strong word recognition abilities. Despite the students' intelligence, students who do not achieve reading fluency will continue to read slowly.

4. Vocabulary

Students cannot be separated with vocabulary or words in learning to read. Not only reading skills, but this aspect also involved other skills such as writing, speaking, and listening. Having enough vocabulary will allow the students to have better skills in learning a language. The knowledge of vocabulary also influences the students in comprehending a written text.

5. Comprehension

After the students read a text, they must understand the knowledge or information, which is called comprehension. Reading comprehension is also important for boarder learning and success in the education process. It is

because the teaching and learning process will involve many tasks requiring students to comprehend well.

The main purpose of the reading activity is to get and obtain information or knowledge, cover the content, and understand the meaning of a written text. The readers need to comprehend the text they have read to make the readers get the point and not misinterpret the message in a post. Comprehension refers to understanding the concepts and the connection between ideas presented in a text (McNamara, 2007). In comprehending the written text, the readers are required to have a good interpretation and think about the concepts of ideas and how they relate to one another. Thus, the readers can catch the meaning. Every reader has a different ability to interpret the text's meaning, which will influence their reading comprehension. Good readers have to learn how to interpret word meanings.

According to Alderson (2000), reading comprehension is the process of processing text meaning through some processes of interaction with print. The reader has to decide not just what the words imply but also how they are related to one another. Reading comprehension is now considered a dynamic process in which the reader "creates" meaning depending on the information obtained from a text. Snow & Sweet (2003) define reading comprehension as obtaining and building meaning simultaneously. In other words, readers are aware of both difficulties, determining how print represents words, participating in the correct and fast conversion of print sound, and forming a representation of the information.

Comprehension is the goal of the reading activity. It is a multi-faceted strategy comprising a connection between learners and the information they bring to the text and variables linked to it. Based on Grabe & Stoller (2014), reading comprehension is the ability to understand or get the meaning from written text. It

is the capacity to recognize and locate information supplied in textual form, regardless of whether the content is stated. The reader engages with the information in the text to build an understanding of the writer's messages in reading comprehension. The explanation above indicated that the individual's ability to catch the meaning of a written text greatly influences their reading comprehension.

Based on the previous argument from the expert, the author has the same discussion as Vaughn & Thompson (2004), who states that reading comprehension is an active process of constructing meaning from a written text; it includes understanding vocabulary and concepts, making inference, and finding the main idea. These are struggles for students to understand. It means that reading is comprehending a text. The students should be able to get those aspects. Thus, the researcher used these four aspects to measure students' reading comprehension during the teaching and learning process.

2.2 Empirical Review

Empirical review is the activity of gaining knowledge and information by reviewing other studies in the same field. It can be direct observation, indirect observation, and experience. This is also to review the previous research relevant to the present study. Looking for another study of the research is important to define the strengths and weaknesses of the related study. The empirical review also can be a reference for the researcher. In this study, the researcher inserted two relevant previous studies. These two empirical reviews used an ex-post facto research design. The two related studies were described as follows:

The first previous study was conducted by Tiara (2022). The title was "The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Eight

Grade Students of SMPN 1 Blahbatuh in Academic Year 2021/2022.” There were 509 population of the eighth-grade students, but the researcher used 60 students as her sample. The samples were taken using random sampling techniques. The research findings showed a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 1 Blahbatuh.

Aprilia conducted the second study (2019) entitled “The Correlation Between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension in Descriptive Text at State Senior High School 2 Pekanbaru.” The aims were the same as the first study, to find the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The population was 322 students in the tenth grade, and she used 36 students or 11% of the total population, as the samples. The researcher also used simple random sampling to select the sample from the population. The findings showed a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMPN 2 Pekanbaru.

Overall, both researchers conducted the research well and used good research instruments to collect the data. However, the researchers did not allocate sufficient time for sample students to do the given test. The first researcher gave a short answer test with 30 questions for 30 minutes and a matching cloze procedure test with 40 questions for 40 minutes. In contrast, the second researcher has given a time allotment 30 minutes for 30 questions of multiple choice and 30 minutes for 30 questions of a short answer test. Therefore, in the present study, the researcher also provided adequate time allotment for the students in doing a test, 40 minutes for 30 questions of a short answer test and 45 minutes for 40 questions of a matching cloze procedure test. The researcher did this for the students with lower abilities who got a long time to work on the test.

2.3 Hypothesis

A hypothesis is the researcher's prediction of the study's outcome. In specific, the hypothesis declares some testable statement about what the result of the study might be. In this study, the researcher's assumption was related to the correlation between two or more variables. The researcher used a hypothesis to predict the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023. Based on the theoretical and empirical review, a hypothesis is proposed in this study. The hypothesis in this study is Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMK Restumuning in academic year 2022/2023

