

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

English language is an international language in the world. It is very important for people to learn it. Particularly in Indonesia, English is one of the foreign languages which is taught in all stages of school. In English class, the students learn four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and language components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation). Students in the school will get some textbooks which use to support the teaching and learning process. A textbook must be understood by the students. To understand a textbook, students be supposed to have good reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension can be defined as a process of understanding the meaning of a written text. Students will be focused, gain their knowledge, and get more information. Pollard 2008:45 (as cited in Junianti, N. W., 2020) states that reading involves students interacting which need to process and understand. The students do not need to produce language in reading meanwhile they receive the information to produce comprehension. Based on Duffy (2009:14), comprehension is the root of reading because the goal of written language is to communicate the message. However, students cannot fully understand the meaning of a written text because of lack of vocabulary.

To comprehend a particular topic, students need to understand the meaning of the word (vocabulary). Duffy (2009:14) says that when students do not know the meaning of the word, it can be said the readers do not have the fundamental knowledge. Vocabulary is a very useful tool for communication and then if studied

properly a student can be master vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary will help the students to get information and know the meaning of a written text.

Based on the statement above, it is known that vocabulary is a crucial thing to be master, especially in reading. If the students master vocabulary, the students will be easy to comprehend a written text. Thus, the researcher is highly motivated to do a research entitled “The Correlation Between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 1 Payangan in academic year 2021/2022.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Research is conducted because a significant problem happens and it should be solved straight away. Based on the background of the study that has been stated above, the researcher conducted a study concerning the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The research problem is formulated in the form of the question as follows: Is there any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Payangan in academic year 2021-2022?

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

In research, there must be a primary objective. Generally, the objective of the research is to find out the answer of the researcher problems and the proposes clearly. Thus, the primary objective of the present study is to figure out the significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Payangan in academic year 2021-2022?

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

The limitation of the study about vocabulary includes word classes such as noun, verb, adjective, and adverb in descriptive text about people, things, or animals. Vocabulary mastery assessed by using a vocabulary assessment test. Reading comprehension is limited from the ability to identify four aspects of reading such as general information, specific information, textual reference and textual meaning in descriptive text which are assessed by using a short answer test.

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

The result of the study would be useful for all subject such as English teachers, students, and other researchers who wanted to know about the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. For the teachers, the finding of this study will give information about the correlation between mastering vocabulary and reading comprehension. So that, the teachers can get more information to combine in the learning process. For the students, it will be good information because the students will know how important is vocabulary mastery for reading comprehension. The other researches are expected to be useful as references in conducting future research about the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

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

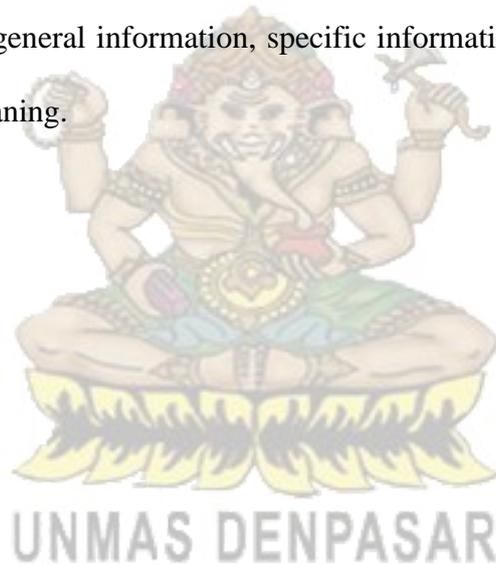
In order to make better understanding concerning this study, the researcher gives two key terms that will be defined to make this research clear. Those key terms are vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

### 1.6.1 Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is the ability of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Payangan in mastering the vocabulary which will help them to express their idea, understand the idea, and get more information from the descriptive text.

### 1.6.2 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Payangan in understanding the descriptive text which is intended in finding general information, specific information, textual reference and textual meaning.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The theoretical review is the statement from the expert related to the present study. In this chapter, the researcher realized that reviewing theories based on related literature is important to conduct the present study. So that, the researcher will describe some theories based on the relevant theoretical reviews that related to the study. Some of the theories which will be discuss are vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension, and descriptive text.



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

Vocabulary is a list of words used by a student in learning a language. Vocabulary also can be definite to the words that the students must understand to communicate effectively. In learning a vocabulary does not mean only memorizing the word but also understanding the meaning. According to Duffy (2009:14) vocabulary is the basic thing which important for understanding the message. Based on those statement to understand the reading students should master vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary will help the students to get information and know the meaning of the reading.

Knowing the meaning of a reading text will make the students more confident to read a lot of textbooks. Richards and Renandya 2002:255 (as cited in Junianti, N. W., 2020) states that vocabulary is a core component of language which provides much of the basis for how well students learn to read, speak, write, and listen. It means that understanding the meaning of vocabulary is the main part that

students need to learn first, without vocabulary students will struggle to learn English especially reading comprehension.

In addition, vocabulary is the knowledge of a word. Lehr et al. (2004:5) state that vocabulary can be defined as a knowledge of word and word meaning. Vocabulary is used as the first step to recognize the language deeper. Students who have good vocabulary mastery can understand more in communication. In contrast, students who still lack vocabulary mastery will get difficulty in communicating. It means that vocabulary has an important role in understanding the language for learners especially students. Students will be easy to learn language because the students know the role of vocabulary.

According to Pollard 2008:13 (as cited in Meirawati, N. M. 2020) states that vocabulary is an essential point of language learning. The students need to know the meaning, how to spell, and how to pronounce the words. So that vocabulary is important to understand and the students who have a lot of vocabulary in English can learn language easily. Having a good mastery of vocabulary will help the students to understand the language. When the students learn English language, the students have to learn the vocabulary in order to understand the message and also convey an idea.

Mastering vocabulary means having complete knowledge of a set of words that are used by a person. Vocabulary mastery is the competence to know words and meaning. In other words, the students are not only hoped to know the words but also their meaning. It is more precisely defined as knowing a word because the learners are said to have a good vocabulary mastery if the learners can recognize the meaning but also to know form, meaning, and word formation (Ur, 1991:60).

From the previous explanation about vocabulary, the researcher can conclude that vocabulary is fundamentally important for understanding the message. In the other words, vocabulary is knowledge of word and word meaning which plays an important role in learning a foreign language especially English. Students who have a good vocabulary will be easy to understand a language. In order to understand the reading students should master vocabulary. By mastering, vocabulary can make the students easier understand the context of the reading.

### **2.1.2 Reading Comprehension**

Reading becomes the main activity of the students. According to Blachowicz and Ogle (2008:15) state that reading is essential. It can be said essentially because it includes the process of students which increases information and ideas from books, newspapers, letters, and other written text. Reading comprehension can be taught in the early stages, then the students in junior high school will be introduced in advance with various kinds of text. Furthermore, the students can apply their knowledge to comprehend the text. By comprehending the written text, the students will be easy to answer some questions and also can elaborate on their perceptions.

In reading, students do not just read the text but also must comprehend the reading. That is because comprehending the reading is the goal of reading. Woolley 2011:15 (as cited in Junianti, N. W., 2020) states that reading comprehension is a process of making meaning from text. In the other words, the students must understand what has been explained in the text. It also means that reading is a process to understand the content of the text which includes general information, specific information, textual reference and textual meaning.

According to Pang et al. (2003:6), reading comprehension is understanding written texts and it is a complex activity that involves perception and thought. Complex activity means the activities that have a connected part or in this context is in reading comprehension includes the knowledge, strategies and understanding. Reading is also the process to get, catch, and understand the content of the written text. Reading consists of two related processes, word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition is a process of how written symbols are appropriate to a certain language, while comprehension is the process of how to make sense of words and sentences.

Duffy (2009:14) states that comprehension is the root of reading. It means that if the students want to know the message of the reading, the students should comprehend the reading first. Comprehending the meaning means that students understand the instructions or the content of a written text. Reading comprehension can be said that the ability to make sense of a written text. So that it will influence the students' knowledge in gaining information from the written text. Thus, by reading students can also improve their vocabulary to master English well.

Based on those explanations about reading comprehension, the researcher focuses on the theory by (Woolley 2011:15) who states that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The theory means that reading comprehension is the process to understand the content of the text to get general information, specific information, textual reference and textual meaning. Besides that by reading the students can also improve their vocabulary. The more often students read a written text, the students will learn a lot of vocabulary and reach their aims if the students can comprehend the written text.

### 2.1.3 Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is one of several texts which describe a particular person, place, animal, or thing. A descriptive text has a specific purpose, a generic structure and also language features. Descriptive text also has a purpose, Gerot and Wignel (1995:208) state that the purpose of descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place, or thing. It means that descriptive text is designed especially about a person, place, or thing.

According to Hammond (1996:78) states that descriptive text has two generic structures namely identification and description. In the identification, it contains the introduction of a person, place, animal, or thing. Then in the description tells about a description of something such as person, place, animal, or thing by describing its features. The features such as parts or things (physical appearance), qualities (degree of beauty, excellence, or worth/value), other characteristics (prominent aspects that are unique).

In descriptive text, there is also a language feature that supports forming a descriptive text. Language features will make a descriptive text clear. According to Gerot and Wignel (1995:208) state that the language features are usually found in a descriptive text, as follows: focus on the specific participant (focus only one subject), using an adjective, using simple present tense, and also action verb.

In conclusion, from the explanation above the researcher can conclude that the purpose of descriptive text is to describe and reveal a particular person, place or thing. Then generally a descriptive text consists of two elements, such as identification and description. Furthermore, some requirements are dealing with the

language features of descriptive text, including specific participant, using an adjective, using simple present tense, and also action verb.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

The empirical review provides a review of previous research that is relevant to current research. Empirical review deals with original research such as scientific experiments, surveys and research studies that are based on experience and observation. From many previous researches about vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, the present study used Rahmawati (2015) and Meirawati (2020) as considerations to make this present study.

The first research, Rahmawati (2015) “A Correlation Study Between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Eighth Year Students of SMP N 3 Trucuk Klaten in Academic Year 2015/2016”. In this study, the researcher wants to verify whether there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. This previous study used multiple choice to assess the eighth grade student. The result showed (0.779) it is considered a high correlation. It means that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

The second research is from Meirawati (2020) entitles “The Correlation Between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension of The Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 2 Sukawati In Academic Year 2019/2020”. In this study, Meirawati wants to know is there a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. This research used vocabulary assessment tasks and short answer tasks to assess students’ vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The result is the same as Rahmawati’s research that which shows

0.611. It means that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.

In the present study, the researcher used two kinds of tests to assess vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Payangan in academic year 2021/2022. This research used vocabulary assessment test to assess students' vocabulary mastery and short answer test to assess students' reading comprehension. The total number of the questions for vocabulary assessment test was 25 and short answer test was 30. In addition, those 55 questions were answered by the students in 50 minutes.

### 2.3 Hypothesis

Hypothesis is what the researcher predicts of the relationship between two or more variables. In the present study, the researcher will use the hypothesis to find a prediction about the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMPN 1 Payangan in academic year 2021/2022. Based on theoretical review and empirical review above, the researcher formulated the hypothesis of this research as follows:

- a. Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_a$ ): there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.
- b. Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): there is no significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension.