

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking is one of the important skills in learning English because it helps students communicate and express their ideas effectively. Through speaking, students can share information, opinions, and experiences in daily communication. Therefore, speaking skill becomes an essential aspect that students need to master.

Students have different levels of speaking ability. Some students can express their ideas fluently, while others experience difficulties when speaking English. One factor that may be related to students speaking skill is vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary plays an important role because students need sufficient words to express their thoughts and ideas.

However, Speaking skill is a complex process that involves several components, including fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. Fluency refers to the ability to speak smoothly and continuously without excessive hesitation, vocabulary relates to the range of words that learners can use, pronunciation concerns the clarity and accuracy of speech sounds, grammar involves the correct use of language structures, and comprehension reflects the ability to understand and respond appropriately in communication. According to Nation (2022), vocabulary knowledge significantly supports fluency

and comprehension because learners rely on vocabulary resources to produce meaningful communication.

Among these components, vocabulary mastery is considered one of the most fundamental aspects supporting speaking skill. Vocabulary provides learners with the linguistic resources needed to express ideas, convey messages, and maintain communication. Students who possess sufficient vocabulary knowledge tend to express their ideas more confidently and fluently. Conversely, students with limited vocabulary often experience difficulties in speaking because they do not know the appropriate English words needed to communicate their thoughts. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is closely related to students' speaking performance.

Based on the researcher's observation during the Kampus Mengajar program at SMP Negeri 9 Tanjungpinang, many eighth-grade students experienced difficulties in speaking English. When asked to speak, some students were unable to express their ideas because they did not know the English words needed to convey what they wanted to say. As a result, they often hesitated, paused for a long time, switched to Indonesian, or remained silent during speaking activities. This situation indicates that vocabulary mastery may be one of the factors influencing students' speaking skill.

At the junior high school level, the primary goal of speaking is effective communication. Students are expected to deliver understandable messages and express their ideas successfully rather than achieve perfect grammatical accuracy. In this context, vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role because students need

adequate vocabulary to communicate their ideas. Students with broader vocabulary knowledge tend to demonstrate better speaking performance, whereas students with limited vocabulary may struggle to express themselves orally. Therefore, the relationship between vocabulary mastery and speaking skill is important to investigate.

Several previous studies have investigated the correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking skill. Agustina et al. (2024) found a very strong correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking ability with a correlation coefficient of 0.884. Similarly, Indra et al. (2024) reported a strong positive correlation with a coefficient of 0.830. These findings indicate that vocabulary mastery may contribute significantly to students' speaking performance. However, Lia Russanti (2022) found a weaker correlation coefficient of 0.3925 between vocabulary mastery and speaking ability. These inconsistent findings suggest that the strength of the correlation may vary across different educational contexts and student backgrounds. Therefore, further investigation is needed to examine whether a similar relationship exists among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 9 Tanjungpinang.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to examine the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking skill among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 9 Tanjungpinang. This study is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between vocabulary mastery and speaking skill, enrich the existing literature in English language learning, and serve

as a reference for future researchers who are interested in investigating similar topics.

1.2 Identification of Problems

Some students still experience difficulties in mastering English vocabulary. The relationship between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking skill has not been clearly identified

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

This research is limited to examining the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking skill among eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 9 Tanjungpinang. The study focuses only on these two variables and does not investigate other factors that may influence students' speaking skill.

1.4 Research Question

Is there any significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking skill at eight grade students of SMP Negeri 9 Tanjungpinang?

1.5 Research Objective

The objective of this research is to find out whether there is a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking skill at the eight grade of SMP Negeri 9 Tanjungpinang.

1.6 The Significances of The Study

1. Theoretically

This study is expected to provide empirical evidence about the correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and speaking skill. The findings of this study can contribute to the development of knowledge in English language learning, especially in the areas of vocabulary and speaking. In addition, this study may serve as a useful existing information and reference for future researchers who wish to investigate similar topics.

2. Practically

a. For Teachers

This research can provide information about the importance of vocabulary mastery in improving students' speaking skill. It may help teachers design more effective teaching strategies that emphasize vocabulary development.

b. For Students

This research can help students understand the role of vocabulary mastery in speaking English and motivate them to improve their vocabulary to enhance their speaking ability.

c. For Future Researchers

This study is expected to provide information and references for future researchers who are interested in studying the correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking skill. The findings of this study may be used as supporting literature and a foundation for further research in the field of English language learning.

1.7 Key Terms Definition

1. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery refers to students' ability to understand, remember, and use English words in communication.

2. Speaking Skill

Speaking skill refers to students' ability speak fluently and clearly in order to communicate with others effectively.

3. Correlation

Correlation refers to relationship between two variables and indicates the degree to which they are associate

