

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary was an English component that needs to be mastered by the learners. When learners were learning a new language, they should have lot of vocabulary in order to make use their language into four language skills. The skills were listening, speaking, reading, and writing. On the other hand, if the students master vocabulary well, the students will be able to produce many sentences easily either in spoken or written. Students get problems to express their opinions, ideas, and feelings if they have limited vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary mastery must be an essential part in English teaching learning activities.

A researcher has said that without grammar very little can be conveyed and without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed (Thornbury, 2002). Besides, we will see most improvement if we learn more words and expressions (Sukrina, 2013). These statements showed that students will improve much if they learn more words and expressions. Even if students' grammar was excellent, they just won't be able to communicate their meaning without a wide vocabulary.

In Indonesia, English was considered as the first foreign language which was taught formally from Junior High School to Senior High School in Indonesian education system. In the Curriculum 2013 for Junior High School, learning English was not only in the class but also at home and society. The teacher was not the only learning source. The students must be active to explore many sources

to increase their knowledge. They can get it from many sources, such as books in the library, movie from the television or articles from the internet. The Guidelines of Junior High School (or SMP in Indonesian) Curriculum of English, graduation of Junior High School was expected to master vocabulary in order to be able to communicate whether in spoken or written form. The first year students of Junior High School were expected to master 1000 words after finishing their study. It was difficult to be reached since the students often lose interest when they find that foreign language study was the same as other subjects, learning on the book only without any practice. And as a result, the students faced difficulties in comprehending the meaning of the sentence and to express their idea whether in spoken or written form. Moreover, English was not Indonesian national language. Therefore, it was hard for Indonesian learners to master the vocabularies of English.

Based on the researcher's experience in teaching training at SMPN 2 Lingga Utara in 2020, it was found that most of the students had big problems in learning English. One of basic problems was lack of vocabularies. It happened because they lacked of vocabulary. Besides, most of students lack of motivation. The students easily got bored, more passive, and worried to learn English because the English teachers lacked of ability in using media, especially in teaching vocabulary. English teachers used text books only and white board in teaching learning process. Students just pay attention to their teacher's explanations or rewrite the vocabulary that's written by the teacher on the white board. The teacher just force the students to memorize some words, as a result, it makes

student cannot memorize some words well. Therefore, most of learners only master simple vocabularies like animal, clothes, things in the classroom etc.

The cases above were the only surface of the problems in mastering English as a foreign language. However, there were many other problems attacks and blocks students to improve their English, especially the vocabulary as an essential item of new languages. Teachers should find the solution of the problems. Thus, the first step to get the solution was finding the problems and to know them well.

In conclusion, the researcher was going to conduct a research at SMPN 2 Lingga Utara to know students' problems at the school in improving their English vocabularies. The researcher chooses the school because the researcher has ever conducted teaching learning processes at the school and being interested to help the students there. Therefore, the researcher entitled this research as: **“Students’ difficulties in vocabulary mastery at seventh grade of SMPN 2 Lingga Utara”**.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

According to the previous statements, there were some problems that the researcher found as students' problems to improve their English. The problems were given as follow:

1. The students have limited English vocabularies.
2. Teachers' strategies in teaching the English subject were boring.
3. English teachers should identify the problems of the students to enrich their English vocabulary.
4. Students were not interested to study English.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

The researcher has identified the problems in this research. Most of the problems were important to solve. However, it will be too large to investigate all the problems in this research. Thus, the researcher determines to focus on a specific problem in this research.

This research focused on the students' problems to master English vocabulary. This was because the English vocabulary was an essential part of English to build. Therefore, English teachers should identify the problems to find exact solutions.

1.4 Research Question

The researcher limited this research problem as an investigation of students' problems in mastering English vocabulary. However, the research formulates a research question in this research to facilitate the process of investigation. The research question was as follow:

1. What were students' problems to enrich their English vocabulary at seventh grade of SMPN 2 Lingga Utara?

1.5 Objective of the Research

This research was aimed to find students' problems to enrich their English vocabulary. The result of this research was expected to use as teachers' guidance to help students to solve their problems of mastering English. Therefore, the researcher explains the objective of this research as follow:

1. To know students' problems to enrich their English vocabulary at seventh grade of SMPN 2 Lingga Utara.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 Theoretically

This research paper gave any benefits. Theoretically, it stimulates the improvement of students' English vocabulary which effects the mastering of English as a foreign language for them.

1.6.2 Practically

This research gave contribution for benefit of the students, teachers, readers, and other researchers. The benefits of each group were given below:

1. Students. They were able to know the problems the face so far to enrich their English vocabulary. Besides, it was easier for them to find any solutions of the problems because they had identified the problems.
2. Teachers. They understood some ways or strategies to apply in their teaching learning processes to help their students enrich and master English vocabulary.
3. Readers. They got more understanding or knowledge problems in mastering English vocabulary.
4. Other researchers. This research paper was possible to use as a reference for further researches especially relating with vocabulary.

1.7 Definition of Keywords

There were some keywords in this paper. To avoid misunderstanding, the researcher serves the definition of the keywords as follow:

1. Difficulty. In this research, difficulty was known as students' problems to master English vocabulary.

2. Vocabulary. The research called all English words students know as English vocabulary.
3. Vocabulary mastery. The ability of students to master English vocabulary was known as vocabulary mastery.

