

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of background of the study, research question, objective of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, theoretical framework, hypothesis, definition of key term, and organization of thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a media for interaction with other people in the world. Everybody from different country uses their own language, but they are using English as the language to communicate with other people around the world such as business, technology, and education. Therefore, English becomes the basic language which is used for communication around the world.

Many people in the world need to study English so they can understand the information around the world. They learn English as a first language or foreign language or as a second language. In Indonesia, English is learnt as a foreign language. It means that English language is not compulsory for Indonesian people. However, many people want to learn English, they take many courses or enroll themselves or their children into the school which has English as a subject and uses it in daily communication in class.

In learning English language, there are some aspects that should be learnt. They consist of four skills and three language components. The four skills are listening, reading, writing, speaking and the language components are grammar,

pronunciation and vocabulary. There are many ways of learning English language. One of the way to start learning English language is reading the book such as story book or course book. From that, the learners can learn new vocabulary knowledge from the text or get new information about the text that is used to get information around the world. According to Nation and Waring (2012:558), the learners need to know minimally 3000 words so that they can understand the text at least 95% of the text. As a result, the learners need to have sufficient vocabulary knowledge from books or the dictionaries. For beginning learners, they can start by reading the stories and finding the difficult words from the texts such as stories or the articles. Then they can open their dictionary or guess the meaning from the context when they have enough knowledge of vocabulary. By doing that, they learners can understand the main points of the text which might be the message from the writer to the reader or the learners.

Learners usually learn vocabulary by translating English into their first language or mother language that they have already mastered before. One of the way to learn vocabulary is to open a dictionary to translate the words one by one or guess the meaning from the context of a passage. Thornbury (2002:18) states that second language learners have already had their first language. It explains that learners in second language or in foreign language have their first language that they have mastered from their country, so they have two concepts of language in their head. Those two concepts of language are the first language and the second language. Therefore, they need to translate the first language into the target

language in their mind so that they can write, understand text in a foreign language and, speak in a foreign language.

In the reading process, each learner has different background knowledge and understanding in reading a book or article because they have their vocabulary knowledge in their mind. Stahl and Fairbanks cited in the Yildirim, Yildiz and Ates (2011) argue that the learners who have wide vocabulary knowledge get higher grade than those who lack of vocabulary. In other words, by improving the achievement of vocabulary, the learners can also improve their text comprehension and get correct information about a new vocabulary or new knowledge for their background knowledge. In order to do so, the learners need to read a lot of books or stories. If the learners find out the difficult words in the texts or articles, the learners can find the meaning of the words by looking up their dictionary or they can guess the meaning of the difficult words.

However, not all of learners are not aware of the importance of learning vocabulary and reading skill. As a result, they are not interested enough to learn English through the reading skill and vocabulary because they do not know the meaning of the word from the text and the text is too long. As a result, learners do not have enough vocabulary knowledge and lack their background when they want to read an English book. Furqon (2013:69) states that the reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery have a strong correlation. It can be said that learners need to know a lot of vocabulary to understand reading comprehension so that they can improve their reading comprehension achievement. In short, the vocabulary achievement can influence their reading comprehension.

Based on the fact that learners are not aware the importance of vocabulary and reading comprehension in learning English language, they do not give enough time for learning language through reading and vocabulary. Therefore, the researcher is interested in analyzing the correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement in private grade junior high school.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the research question is formulated as follows:

Is the correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement of the ninth graders high?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to find out whether the correlation between vocabulary and reading achievement of ninth graders is high.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to give information about the correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement for teachers and readers. The researcher reminds English teachers of the importance of vocabulary in reading comprehension achievement. Besides, they are expected to be able to develop vocabulary materials and exercises that can help the learners to improve their reading comprehension achievement. The teachers

are also expected to have method for the learners to improve on vocabulary and reading comprehension in learning language.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

There are two limitations of this study. First, the research only involved the the ninth graders who have already passed their eighth grade because they have already mastered how to answer reading comprehension for descriptive text, procedure text and recount text in the ninth grade and answer the vocabulary test based on the learning materials learned in eighth grade in semester 2. Second, the researcher only investigates the correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

To answer the research question for this study, some theories related to this study are needed. The underlying theories which support this study are the theory of reading and the theory of vocabulary.

Diamond and Glutlohn cited in Ferreira (2006:11) state that vocabulary is the knowledge of the words and their meaning. In other words, vocabulary is the knowledge of the learners to communicate or understand the text especially in foreign language. Hanson and Padua (2011:5) mention two types of vocabulary. They are productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. Productive vocabulary and vocabulary is the words that we use to communicate through writing and

speaking. Receptive vocabulary is the words that we understand from reading and listening.

There are two approaches to learn vocabulary based on the Nation (1970). They are direct vocabulary and indirect vocabulary. Direct vocabulary is the learning when the learners are given exercise from the teacher. Indirect vocabulary is the learning of vocabulary by focusing the learners attention on other feature; usually it is from the message from the writer or speaker.

In learning vocabulary, there are some ways for the teacher to teach the meaning of the words to the learners. According to Thornburry (2002), there are three ways to present the meaning of words vocabulary, namely using translation, explaining the meaning and using realia.

According to Smith (1991:25), reading is a process of communication between the writer and the reader. Based on that, the readers needed to understand the text carefully in order to get the main idea of the text which may become the message from the writer to the learners to give their important information of the text.

When the learners read the text carefully, there are three natures of reading process which help the learners to comprehend the text well. Below are three natures of reading process in the reading (Smith,1991:25):

- a. Written text is a blueprint to which readers add the detail
- b. Comprehending requires to construction the meaning. This is accomplished by using direct and indirect meaning of an author's words, plus what the readers has known is important
- c. Comprehending is an interactive process in which the readers' knowledge of the world interacts with the message conveyed directly and indirectly by the text. The result is fully developed communication between author and the reader.

1.7 Hypothesis

In connection with research question and the underlying theory, two hypotheses are formulated as follow:

- a. Alternative hypothesis: There is a high correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement of the ninth graders.
- b. Null hypothesis: There is no high correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement of the ninth graders.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

- Vocabulary is the knowledge of the words and their meaning (Diamond and Gutlohn:2006:11).
- Achievement is the result of what individual has learned from some educational experience (Travers 1970:447).
- Correlation is a statistical relationship between a set of variable, none of which have been experimentally manipulated (Kenny 1979:1).
- Reading Comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language (Kwiatkoska:2012).
- Vocabulary Achievement is the result of the vocabulary that has learned from the educational experience.
- Reading comprehension achievement is the result of reading comprehension of the learners from the educational experience.

1.9 Organization of Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I introduction presents about background of the study, research question, objective of the study, significant of the study, hypothesis, limitation of the study, definition of key term, theoretical framework and organization of the proposal. Chapter II concerns with the review of the theory that is used in the research. Chapter III consists of the research methodology. Chapter IV consists of finding and discussion of the result of the answer of research question. The last chapter is Chapter V concerns with the conclusion of this study and suggestion of the study.