

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Expanding vocabulary is one of the critical aspects of learning a foreign language. One needs to know how to utilize their vocabulary appropriately and have a sufficient vocabulary to speak effectively in a foreign language. (Sadiku, 2015) state that vocabulary is one of the inseparable components of language development reading, listening, speaking, and writing is four language skills that must be successfully combined to master English vocabulary. Having a vocabulary is the first step to able to communicate effectively in a language (Al-Hinnawi, 2012). Students' vocabulary knowledge level will significantly impact their ability to understand a text, whether written or spoken. If they possess a sufficient vocabulary, they can understand the messages conveyed either orally or in written texts.

Vocabulary is the core of any language. Without comprehending the words, it is hard to reach any expertise in a language (Afzal, 2019). Vocabulary serves as the cornerstone of acquiring a second language. To understand a language correctly, mastering of vocabulary is essential. With the correct vocabulary, language learners can communicate more precisely and effectively and build a strong foundation for further progression. Vocabulary is an essential part of a language to build better sentence structures in expressing ideas or ideas for students, especially junior high school students. Students need to become more familiar with English. Even though they had learned English since in elementary school, they still experience many difficulties learning this language. The classroom will be the only place for many students to practice their English. Most of the students believe that English is a difficult subject for several reasons. One of the reasons is that it is difficult to master vocabulary. It happened because they had to adopt the pronunciation and meaning of new words. Unfortunately, mastering vocabulary is not easy for students, especially for students in Indonesia, because English is not used in daily communication.

Critical elements of learning a foreign language often include vocabulary knowledge and competency. One needs an extensive vocabulary and an understanding of how to utilize it correctly to communicate better in a foreign language. There are numerous reasons that language learning is essential. The researcher start to recognize the languages spoken by us soon after our birth, and later we learn to construct these languages on our own (Webb & Nation, 2017). Vocabulary mastery is considered significant in the process of language acquisition or the expansion of individual talent in the language that is regulated. Having a good understanding of the words used in a language helps one to communicate well in that language. In addition, a better understanding of vocabulary can also facilitates the writing of more sophisticated texts. Using words correctly in a language is invaluable for enabling a person to express himself and his thoughts more meaningfully. The degree to which a person has mastered his vocabulary will determine how well they can comprehend the author's ideas in written and spoken texts.

Particularly English students at MTs Darussalam Adijaya struggle with vocabulary mastery. Researchers found the problem of eighth-grade students at Mts Darussalam Adijaya. The problem is that many students have difficulty mastering vocabulary, and some have difficulty memorising or need help understanding some vocabulary. According to one of the English teachers at the school interviewed by the researcher, most of his students could not effectively master the English language during the learning process, notably in grade 8 MTs Darussalam Adijaya. It might be difficult to instruct children in English at this time. The teacher frequently heard from the students that English class was tedious and the hardest subject overall to grasp. This occurs as a result of the numerous issues students face. Their continued vocabulary deficit will significantly impact their actions in English related courses. When students need help understanding what a teacher is saying or explaining the lesson, it will be complicated for the teacher to instruct. Thus, it is essential to know how students master vocabulary. Based on the hypothesis that factors such as linguistic abilities, cognitive problems, social problems, and lack of motivation can affect the level of students' vocabulary mastery.. In the

English learning process, if students do not possess the necessary vocabulary knowledge, they may find it difficult to achieve the desired level of language proficiency (Macis & Schmitt, 2017). By having a comprehensive vocabulary, students can expand their understanding of the language and become more competent.

To know the students' difficulties in mastering vocabulary, researcher first surveyed students' English scores with English teachers and obtained the following data:

Table 1.1 The Scores of Eighth Grade A English Students at Mts Darussalam Adijaya.

No	Score	Number of Students	Classification
1.	81 – 100	1	Excellent
2.	71 – 80	3	Good
3.	67 – 70	6	Medium
4.	60 – 66	6	Low
5.	< 59	12	Failed
TOTAL		28	

Source : English Teacher of Eighth Grade A at Mts Darussalam Adijaya.

Based on the table above, many eighth-grade A students at Mts Darussalam Adijaya scored lower than their minimum completeness criteria in their English class. There are still many students who experience difficulties in mastering vocabulary. The minimum completeness criteria that must be completed is 67. Meanwhile, there were 28 students in class VIII A, and it turned out that more students had low KKM scores. The dearth of vocabulary comprehension significantly impedes the proficiency of English as a Foreign Language students to communicate effectively (Adam, 2016). This can be associated with students needing more understanding of specific terms in a language to avoid miscommunication. For example, if students need more understanding of the terms used in a conversation, they may need help understanding the key message. Furthermore, they need to fully comprehend the words used in an essay to express their ideas and

opinions. Consequently, a lack of vocabulary knowledge limits students' success in their communication efforts. To illustrate, a student is exposed to a language without sufficient knowledge of its vocabulary, they may be unable to comprehend the meaning of the words used, thus hindering their ability to communicate appropriately.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in analyzing students' difficulties in mastering vocabulary and the factors that cause difficulties in mastering vocabulary. The subjects of this study were students of class VIII A MTs Darussalam Adijaya. Because at MTs Darussalam Adijaya there are many students who have difficulty in mastering English vocabulary. Therefore, the results of this study will be used to suggest an effective teaching approach to improve students' vocabulary mastery. This research will also be useful for identifying problems that students may experience in mastering vocabulary so that solutions can be found to help students master them. Based on the explanation above, the author take the title "A STUDY ON STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN VOCABULARY MASTERY AT EIGHTH GRADE MTS DARUSSALAM ADIJAYA"

B. Research Focus

The researcher used concentrate this research on students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary and the causes of students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary to prevent this research from increasing and avoid various incorrect perceptions, specifically to avoid research expansion and simplify the research process.

C. Research Questions

The researcher formulates the research problem as follows:

1. What are the difficulties faced by students' in mastering English vocabulary in eighth grade at MTs Darussalam Adijaya ?
2. What are the causes of students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary in eighth grade at MTs Darussalam Adijaya ?

D. Research Objectives

The research objectives that the author wants to achieve in this writing are:

1. To find out the difficulties faced by students' in mastering English vocabulary.
2. To find out the causes of students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary.

E. Research Benefits

Researchers assume that by conducting this research, it will have benefits both theoretically and practically.

1. Practical
 - a. For teachers, the findings of this study can assist in developing new strategies for teaching vocabulary.
 - b. For students, the results of this study are expected to make students know that mastery of English vocabulary is very important so that students will improve their vocabulary mastery.
 - c. For readers, the results of this research will be precious for readers interested in exploring the difficulties of vocabulary mastery of junior high school students.

2. Theoretical

The results of this study will add to our understanding of what difficulties students' experience in mastering vocabulary and the causes of students' difficulties in mastering vocabulary.