

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of research, the formulation of research problem, objective of the research, research hypothesis, significance of the research, scope and limitation of the research, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

Language is used to create meaningful communication (Nurhayati, 2016a). It means that the role of language is very important for human beings, by using language people can express their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and others. According to Nurhayati and Fitriana (2018a), English as foreign language become the third language is learnt by Indonesian students. It is considered as one of the international languages that are most widely used all over the world. In education, English is also become one of the subjects in schools that many countries around the world used English as their foreign language subject. Meanwhile, In Indonesia using and learning language among students and English lecturers with English as foreign language have received considerable attention (Nurhayati et al, 2018b). In Indonesia, English is one of the subjects that taught from elementary school until in university. However, learning English is not always easy for the students, sometimes they still get the difficulties although they have already study it for many years. It caused by many aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and so on.

In language learning context, it cannot be denied that vocabulary plays an important role for people who are studying language, it is a basic component of the language. The more people master the vocabulary, the more they can develop their language skills. In language there are four skills, those are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When people master all of those language skills, they can master that language. This is supported by Richards and Renandya (2002:255), they stated that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may discourage from making use of language opportunities around them. Furthermore, Nurhayati (2016b) stated that it is obvious that in order to be able to speak a foreign language, it is necessary to know a certain amount of grammar and vocabulary, it means that grammar and vocabulary plays important role to conduct communication or in other words the lack of practicing this skill arises some problems to the students. Meanwhile, based on researcher observation in MTsN 7 Tulungagung, the problem faced by most all of students is that they have difficulties in mastering the vocabulary. Every time they find unfamiliar words, they always ask about the means of the words and sometimes they try to find it on dictionary by themselves, when they already know it, they write it on their notes, but the problem is that it is only in short term of their memories, after in the next meeting when they find those words again they often forget about that and it can interfere the teaching learning process.

One of the things that causes why students have a limited in mastering and memorizing vocabulary also might be influenced by the teacher's strategy, the teacher might still use conventional strategy like wordlist strategy to teach vocabulary. Using conventional strategy, it makes the students get bored because the method is monotonous and the students are passive (Nurhayati, 2018c). Wordlist strategy is strategy which the students learn vocabulary based on the list of words that they have written, it is consist of difficult words that they find on textbook. In this strategy the teacher usually offered the meaning of the words only, the teacher directly shows the target words to the students and let them read and memorize the words by themselves. In this case, the students depend more on the meaning of wordlists in textbook. Finally, the students not be able to explore their vocabulary knowledge that they have known before, and they learn vocabulary passively.

It has been suggested that teaching vocabulary should not only consist of teaching specific words but also aim at equipping learners with strategies necessary to expand their vocabulary knowledge (Hulstjin 1993, as cited in Morin and Goebel, 2001). Hence, it is better for English teachers to find the best strategy to teach vocabulary. The activity should be done to make them active in the learning process (Nurhayati, 2015). It means that the teacher should use strategy that make the students not feel bored in the class and make the students full participated in the class. Therefore, semantic mapping can be used as an alternative strategy. According to McNeil (1984, as cited in Stahl and Vancil, 1986), Semantic mapping

may be effective because it allows students to tie new information to a child's already existing knowledge structures through the use of the map. Such a procedure is recommended not only for teaching vocabulary, but also for providing background information prior to reading. In addition, taking part in a semantic mapping process activates students' background information which is about the topic and provides an efficient way to strengthen key words, allowing students to include the new vocabulary into their existing schemata. Semantic mapping assists the learner to learn unknown words through known words in a semantically related network (Dilek and Yuruk, 2013).

Based on the Indonesia curriculum policy, Core and Basic Competence of 2013 curriculum, one of the materials taught in seventh grade of Junior High School is descriptive text. There is no material about teaching vocabulary itself, but we cannot deny that vocabulary always be part of them. In this research, the researcher focus on the descriptive text. According to Djuhari (2007:24), descriptive text is a text which describe and give more detail information about particular people, thing, place and animal. Meanwhile, according to Anderson and Anderson (1998:26), descriptive text describes a particular person, place or thing. Its purpose is to tell about the subject by describing its features without including personal opinion. It means that descriptive text tells the readers to know about something specifically by giving characteristic of something which described.

Through using semantic mapping in descriptive text, it helps the students to learn new vocabulary through a certain topic which they have known before and

allow them to explore their ideas and creativities of their vocabulary related to the topic, it also provides students with opportunities to actively engage with and manipulate words. This strategy also increases students' active exploration of word relationships, while directing them to a deeper understanding of word meanings by developing their conceptual knowledge related to words. Therefore, this strategy can help students memorize several new words easily and effectively.

Some researchers have been conducted on Semantic Mapping. A research by Trisnawati (2018) who conducted a study entitled "Increasing Vocabulary Mastery Through Semantic Mapping Strategy at the Eight Grade of SMP the Darul 'Ulum Sekampung". The result showed that by using semantic mapping can increase the students' vocabulary. Then, a research by Vadilah (2011) entitled "*Enriching Students' Vocabulary Through Semantic Mapping (A Classroom Action Research in the First Year of Electro B Class of Triguna Utama Vocational School Ciputat)*". The result showed that by using Semantic Mapping the students' vocabulary was enriched and the students were interested and motivated in teaching-learning process. After that, a research based on Rahmah (2017) entitled "*The Effectiveness of Semantic Mapping on Students' Vocabulary Achievement (A Quasi-Experimental Study at the Eight Grade Students of MTs Islamiyah Ciputat Tangerang Selatan in Academic Year 2017/2018)*". The result of this study showed that Semantic Mapping can increase students' vocabulary achievement.

The previous studies above, all of them were used Semantic Mapping in order to increase students' vocabulary achievement. They were used Semantic

Mapping to teach vocabulary with different subjects such as describing things focuses on vocabulary in technique things and greeting card, meanwhile in this research used descriptive text that focuses on describing person and animal. Those previous studies there was also used different class as the subject under study.

Based on the previous studies, it can be concluded that there was no research that examined the effectiveness of using Semantic Mapping Strategy towards students' vocabulary mastery in the seventh grade of junior high school with descriptive text as the subject that focus on describing person and animal. Hence, this research is aimed to fill this gap by investigating the effectiveness of using Semantic Mapping strategy towards students' vocabulary mastery in the seventh grade of Junior High School. Moreover, this strategy was chosen because it is pledge to provide the opportunities for the students to be involved actively in teaching learning process. Therefore, the researcher decided to use this strategy because the researcher was curious to find out whether this strategy was "really" effective or not to teach vocabulary.

Based on the problem and the explanation above, the researcher interested in conducting a research concerning to Semantic Mapping in vocabulary in descriptive text entitled **"The Effectiveness of Semantic Mapping Strategy Towards Students' Vocabulary Mastery in Descriptive Text of Seventh Grade at MTsN 7 Tulungagung"**.

B. Formulation of Research Problem

In line with the background of the research, the researcher formulates the research problem as follows: “Is Semantic Mapping strategy effective towards the students’ vocabulary mastery in descriptive text of seventh grade at MTsN 7 Tulungagung?”

C. Objective of the Research

Based on the formulation of research problem, the objective of this research is to find out whether Semantic Mapping strategy is effective or not towards students’ vocabulary mastery in descriptive text of seventh grade at MTsN 7 Tulungagung.

D. Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis is tentative answer of variable in which the truth must be tested, based on the previous statement. To get the answer of the question, the researcher proposes null hypothesis (H_0) and alternative hypothesis (H_a). Those are:

1. H_0 (null hypothesis)

There is no any significant difference in students’ vocabulary mastery in descriptive text before and after being taught by using Semantic Mapping strategy.

2. H_a (alternative hypothesis)

There is any significant difference in students’ vocabulary mastery in descriptive text before and after being taught by using Semantic Mapping strategy.

E. Significance of the Research

First contribution is dedicated to the learners especially the seventh grade students of MTsN 7 Tulungagung, they can use this strategy when they get the difficulties in mastering the vocabulary.

Second, it is expected to inspire the English teachers to overview this strategy which can be applied when they get the similar problem in teaching English.

Third, this can be a new input for the readers which will improve their knowledge and give new perspective in teaching and learning English.

The last, this study is dedicated to the next researcher. It is expected whether this research can be used as the source in their findings, or inspire them to improve the newest findings related to this strategy.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Research

This research is only conducted to the seventh graders at MTsN 7 Tulungagung on academic year 2018/2019, especially VII-A class as a sample. The limitation of subject is English which focuses on vocabulary in descriptive text. Beside it, the researcher uses Semantic Mapping strategy to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

G. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding term and content on this study, it is necessary to define the key term in this study. Those are:

1. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a succession of doing something. It also can be defined as something that gives an intended or expected result from the doer.

2. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is someone's ability to understand or to use words in a language.

3. Semantic Mapping

Semantic Mapping is type of graphic organizers that visually represent relationships among categories of concepts. It is an approach leading students to relate new words to their own experiences and prior knowledge. It involves drawing a diagram of the relationships between words according to their use in a particular text. Semantic mapping has the effect of bringing the relationships in a text to consciousness for the purpose of deepening the understanding of a text and creating associative networks for words.