

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents seven topics related to the study. Those topics cover background of the study, formulation of the research problem, the purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study.

A. Background of the Study

One of the factors to master English language is vocabulary mastery. It means that the ability in understanding and using the words and meaning must be mastered by the students. It also plays an important part in language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When the students have much of vocabulary, they will be better in performing of their language. Therefore, the students will find difficulties in mastering English skill when they have limited vocabulary.

Some Indonesian students find the difficulties to master learning English vocabulary, because English learning is not the same from Indonesian language itself. Memorizing new words and enlargement of vocabulary knowledge are two sample of their difficulties. The fact showed that the students will find an obstacle in learning English which is caused by low vocabulary proficiency. While they have limited vocabulary in their minds, they are not able to use language accurately. It means that if the

students are lack of vocabulary, it will circumscribe them to use language skillfully to express their ideas.

Laufer (1997:140) states that learning vocabulary is one of the most important elements without which neither comprehension nor production of language is possible. In other words, it means that learning vocabulary cannot be separated from other language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The more words the learners know, they will be better to understand what they hear or read. And, the more words they have, they will be more accurate to express their ideas in spoken or written form.

Vocabulary have a function as conveying of information which is form in ideas, actions, and label objects. As the states that a language can be accessed by vocabulary. It is the basic of a tower. Without words, there would be no language structures. Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning (Nation, 2004).

The low vocabulary of students in English is generally influenced by various factors. One of them is inappropriate teaching strategies used by teachers. In teaching of vocabulary for Junior High School, teacher needs an appropriate and different strategy from the traditional way, in order that the students feel enjoyable, become active in classroom, and stimulate them to use the words which they have already known and brainstorm the new words around the topic, even though it appears in their native language first. It causes that the teacher feels teaching vocabulary is not easy. In teaching

English, the teacher is still having less creativity. Sometimes, the teachers did not use any technique in teaching English and just explain the material. It can make the students be bored. Teachers must be able to choose and use multiple technique of teaching. As teachers, they must build the interest of students to learn English by using varieties of strategy. The selection of a strategy needs to consider the material presented, learning goals, required time, and the number of students as well as matters related in teaching and learning process.

Semantic mapping is one of the techniques that can be used to teach vocabulary. One of the strategies that can be used to teach vocabulary is a semantic mapping. Barcroft (2004:200) stated that semantic elaboration increases memory preservation of lexical concepts in the way of memory for previously learned words, new words recorded as recognized words, and other forms of stimuli. According to Graves (2008:56), semantic mapping is one of the most important ways to teach vocabulary because it engages students to learn about word relationship. This strategy enhances the students' active exploration of word relationship, and thus brings them to a greater comprehension of word meanings by developing their conceptual knowledge related to word. This strategy will also help the students memorize new vocabulary quickly and efficiently.

Previous researchers find that the advantages of semantic mapping strategy on the teaching-learning activity could enhance students' achievement of English. For an example, the study of comparing word

mapping and a qualitative approach to learn the words prove that the semantic mapping strategy gave greater improvement in words learning (Margosein., 1982). In other study, Vadilah (2011) showed that the result of her research; there was improvement of positive responses in the teaching-learning activity of vocabulary by using semantic mapping strategy. Another research that was conducted by Krisnawati (2014) showed that the average score in the final post-test increased by 18.9333 from the average score in the pretest. It has shown that the use of semantic mapping in teaching reading comprehension was able to improve the students' ability.

Based on the preliminary observation in MTs Darul Falah Bendiljati Kulon, the researcher found that there were some problems related to learning and teaching process and students' vocabulary mastery. In interview with the English teacher of seventh grade, the researcher knew that students' vocabulary mastery is poor. Most of the students get difficulties in developing their vocabularies. Many of them confused in doing their assignment that caused by the students do not have a lot of vocabularies.

Then, there were the students were lazy open the dictionary to find the meaning of words. They find the difficulty when using dictionaries. The difficulty here was they could not do the technique how the step to search the meaning of the word in the dictionary, just open the dictionary until the meaning found. They did not search by using the order of the word that would search. As the result the students prefer asked the meaning of word

to the teacher directly. They wanted got the meaning instantly. The worse thing was that students could not do assignment independently. They would depend the teacher as the instant dictionary. The condition indicated that the students had low proficiency in mastering vocabulary.

In the interview with some students, the researcher knew that English learning is difficult learning for them. The students find the difficulty to improve their vocabulary. So that, the students feel that their vocabulary is poor. From the lack of vocabulary causes the majority of the students had some difficulties in writing skill. They find the difficulties to combine words and sentences organize and use the appropriate words in their writing. It was because the writing skill deals with the develop ideas, vocabulary and grammar. Then, many students were bored in English learning in the class because of the strategy of teaching-learning was not enjoyable and monotonous.

In view of the fact, the researcher believes that some initiative is needed to solve the problem of English teaching-learning. Enrichment of vocabulary with the creativity in such a different way is required. The researcher is inspired to perform action research as a strategy to enhance students' mastery of vocabulary.

B. Formulation of the Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulated the research problem of this study is “how can the use of semantic mapping

strategy improve students' vocabulary mastery of seventh grade at MTs Darul Falah Bendiljati Kulon?"

C. The Purpose of the Study

The objective of this research is: to describe how Semantic Mapping Strategy could improve students' vocabulary mastery of the seventh grade at MTs Darul Falah Bendiljati Kulon.

D. Significance of the Study

- 1) For the English teacher in at MTs Darul Falah Bendiljati Kulon, the result of this study could be valuable information on how to develop students' vocabulary mastery by using semantic mapping strategy. Teachers are supposed to be able to inspire themselves to develop their skill in semantic mapping strategy.
- 2) For other researcher, the findings of the research could be used as knowledge for future researcher in order to improve the efficiency of teaching-learning English as a foreign language.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

From the discussion in the background and the research problem, the writer needs to limit the broad areas of the study. The problem of this study is limited to improve the students' vocabulary mastery by using semantic mapping strategy at the seventh grade at MTs Darul Falah Bendiljati Kulon. The use of semantic mapping strategy has been suggested as an action to improve the students' vocabulary. The strategy used to motivate the students to be more interested in learning vocabulary and help the teacher facilitate

the students' learning vocabulary, so that the goals of the English teaching and learning process can be easily reached.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

In order to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding of the term, the writer gives the definition of the term as follows:

1) Vocabulary mastery

Vocabulary mastery can be described as a number vocabulary (word) in a language that includes knowledge about its meaning, spelling and pronunciation in the sense of communication. It is a basic knowledge that students should master first before mastering English. Thus, vocabulary mastery is the ability of someone to grasp or use the words in a language. If the students want to study a specific language, such as English, they should first improve their knowledge of vocabulary because it can influence every step of the process in learning of the language itself.

2) Semantic Mapping

Semantic mapping strategy helps the students to explore their understanding of vocabulary by constructing a word diagram. It consists of a diagram that shows a single word or phrase, positioned in the center as a topic, and adds other related terms in the forms of a branch.

G. Organization of the Study

This graduating paper will consist of five chapters. Each chapter discusses as follows:

Chapter I contains introduction which covers the background of the study, the statement of the research problem, the objective of the Study, the significant of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key term and organization of the study.

Chapter II describes theoretical review of teaching vocabulary. Firstly, theory about vocabulary mastery, it presents the theory about vocabulary includes the nature of vocabulary mastery, the definition of vocabulary mastery, the important of vocabulary. Secondly, the writer presents the theories about semantic mapping strategy which consist of the nature of semantic mapping, form of semantic mapping, procedure of using semantic mapping, and learning vocabulary by using semantic mapping. Thirdly, the writer present of review the previous study.

Chapter III, presents about methodology of research, it discusses about research methodology. The research methodology consists of research method, subject and setting of the study, and procedures of the study.

Chapter IV, presents the research findings and discussions. The research findingsa are based on the dta obtained during the observations, and the discussions are based on the research findings.

Chapter V is the last part of this graduating paper by giving conclusion and suggestion.