

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents several points of study, such as: (1) Background of The Study, (2) Formulation of Research Problem, (3) Research Objective, (4) Research Hypothesis, (5) Significance of The Research, (6) Scope and Limitation of The Research, (7) The Defining of Key Terms.

A. Background of The Study

One of important things in learning English is vocabulary, because vocabulary is an important aspect of language learning because vocabulary is the basis that forms a language. According to Juhendi in Apriadari (2019) his research said that vocabulary is an important aspect of language, because it is present in every language ability which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing¹. Therefore, to improve English language skills students must master vocabulary well, vocabulary mastery should not be separated in english language learning. Especially in terms of reading, so that students can understand the content of reading in English texts, it is necessary to master a variety of vocabulary.

According to David Wilkins in Thornbury (2002) summarizes the definition of vocabulary, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed"². This shows how important vocabulary is for foreign language learners such as the majority of Indonesian

¹ Tessa Apriandari, "Improving Students' English Vocabulary through the Use of Riddles Technique for the Second Years Students at MTs Darul Ihsan Aceh Besar," 2019, p. 7.

² S. Thornbury, "How to Teach Vocabulary | Scott Thornbury," 2002, p. 13.

students. According to Hiebert, E., & Kamil, M., vocabulary is defined as the knowledge of words and word meanings³. The more vocabulary mastered, the easier it is for students to understand English content, In line with Alqahtani “the more vocabulary students have, the better they learn, regardless of their grammar knowledge”⁴. Vocabulary has a very important role in every basic English skill, because every term in a language is part of the vocabulary itself. The ability to understand the meaning of words is referred to as vocabulary⁵. This means that we cannot use English without knowing the meaning of words in the language. This also affects the basic skills in speaking, writing, listening and reading. Finochiaro in Suardi & Sakti, revealed that vocabulary teaching is very important in language learning, because having a rich vocabulary allows students to develop speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills⁶. Therefore, to improve the four basic skills, learning adequate vocabulary is a must.

According to Richards and Renandya, they state that “vocabulary is a person's ability to learn language and the basis for knowing how well a person is in speaking, listening, writing and reading”⁷. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is one of the main components in learning a language, especially in English.

³ Elfrieda H. Hiebert and Michael L. Kamil, “Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Bringing Research to Practice,” *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Bringing Research to Practice*, no. July 2005 (2005), p.1-3.

⁴ MOFAREH ALQAHTANI, “The Importance of Vocabulary in Language Learning and How to Be Taught,” *International Journal of Teaching and Education* III, no. 3 (2015), p. 24.

⁵ Hiebert and Kamil, “Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Bringing Research to Practice.” p.1-3.

⁶ Suardi Suardi and Juwita Eka Sakti, “Teacher Difficulties in Teaching Vocabulary,” *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature* 7, no. 2 (2019): p. 92–104.

⁷ Jack C Richards and Willy A Renandya, “Methodology in Language Teaching An Anthology of Current Practice Chapter 1 ~ English Language Teaching in the ‘Post-Method’ Era: Toward Better Diagnosis, Treatment, and Assessment,” *Research Gate*, no. May (2022), p. 25.

Vocabulary mastery is one of the main components in learning a language especially in English. A good vocabulary allows students to more easily understand the content of texts, communicate with others, understand instruction well, take part in class discussions more actively, and can express their thoughts clearly, as well as allowing students to compose their own arguments. A rich vocabulary can certainly give students the ability to read and understand various types of texts, ranging from academic texts to popular texts, which a rich vocabulary students can also easily read English books that they want.

According to Nation, states that vocabulary mastery is very important in language skills and text comprehension⁸. In the context of formal education, vocabulary mastery is often the benchmark or main indicator in the achievement of success in English subjects. Students who have a good vocabulary are able to follow instructions more effectively, and tend to have a deeper understanding of the material provided by the teacher. Also, students who have a rich vocabulary, excel in various aspects of language learning such as listening skill, reading comprehension skill, and writing skills. Because students who have a rich vocabulary, they have the ability to choose and arrange the right words into sentences with the correct structure.

Reading frequency refers to how often individuals engage in reading activities, which significantly impacts cognitive ability, literacy development

⁸ I. S.P. Nation, "Learning Vocabulary in Another Language," *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, 2013, p. 18..

and academic performance. According to Cunningham and Stanovich (1998), individuals who read frequently tend to have a wider vocabulary and better comprehension skills compared to those who read infrequently⁹. Similarly, Krashen (2004) emphasized that extensive reading exposure contributes significantly to language proficiency and academic success¹⁰. Furthermore, Guthrie and Wigfield in Asriati argue that motivation and engagement in reading are important factors that influence reading frequency, which in turn affects learning outcomes¹¹.

According to Anderson, Wilson and Fielding (1988), students who read frequently show higher levels of comprehension and overall academic achievement¹². Similarly, Clark and Rumbold (2006) emphasize that frequent reading not only improves language skills but also fosters creativity, empathy and emotional intelligence¹³. From this statement, we can conclude that reading frequency serves as a gateway to lifelong learning and intellectual enrichment. A high reading frequency allows one to process information efficiently, engage in meaningful discussions, and adapt to new ideas. Reading frequency is not only beneficial for academic achievement but also for personal growth and the development of critical thinking. Regular reading habits allow individuals to

⁹ Cunningham and Stanovich, "What reading does for the mind," *California Management Review* 48, no. 1 (2005).

¹⁰ Stephen D. Krashen, "The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research," *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*, no. July (2004): p.1–216.

¹¹ Asriatri, "Dissertation Summary CONTRIBUTION OF READING MOTIVATION TO COMPREHENSION," *Acta Radiologica* 40, no. 5 (1999): 560

¹² "On Reading for Pleasure," no. May (2012), p.12.

¹³ "On Reading for Pleasure."p. 8.

explore diverse perspectives, enhance creativity, and improve their ability to critically analyze information.

Reading frequency has a significant influence on vocabulary mastery because the more often a person is exposed to various texts, the more new vocabulary they learn and understand in the right context. According to Nation (2001), effective vocabulary learning occurs when new words are encountered repeatedly in a variety of contexts, allowing for deeper understanding and more natural usage¹⁴. In addition, Krashen (1989) states that extensive reading is the most effective way to improve vocabulary, as it allows readers to absorb new words naturally without the need to memorize them directly¹⁵. Therefore, the higher the frequency of reading, the more likely one is to have a broad and deep vocabulary mastery.

Looking at the effect of students' reading frequency on vocabulary mastery. The researcher assumes that students with a good level of interest in reading English also have good vocabulary skills. Based on the researcher's observation during English learning in class X MA AL-Fattahiyah Ngranti, when English learning takes place there are still students who are not focused and not confident when the teacher asks to read English texts on the grounds that they are not used to reading English texts and there are still many students who have difficulty interpreting the facts in the text. Seeing this situation, the researcher assumed that there were still many students who were not interested

¹⁴ Nation, "Learning Vocabulary in Another Language."p. 74.

¹⁵ Krashen, "The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research."p.17.

in reading in English, so that it had an impact on the lack of vocabulary they mastered. The researcher was curious whether students who could not read in English well, how their vocabulary mastery scores were obtained. With this phenomenon, the researcher wants to conduct research at MA Al-Fattahiyah Ngranti to see whether children who have a good interest in reading English also have good vocabulary skills, considering that vocabulary is the basis for mastering English as a compulsory subject at the school.

This study was conducted by referring to several previous studies that relate with reading frequency and students' vocabulary mastery. Various previous studies have revealed the importance of vocabulary mastery in supporting reading skills and comprehension of English texts. Most studies highlighted the relationship between vocabulary and reading ability, as shown in research by Erniwati (2019) and Martina Belo (2023), who examined the correlation between vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension¹⁶¹⁷. Other studies such as that conducted by Ahmad Munawir & Yulia Rahayu Ramli (2021) also discuss the relationship between general reading frequency and vocabulary mastery, but not specifically on textbooks as the main reading source in a formal school environment¹⁸.

¹⁶ Martina Belo, "CORRELATION BETWEEN VOCABULARY MASTERY AND READING COMPREHENSION OF THE EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 4 PALU," 2023.

¹⁷ Erniawati, "The Correlation between the Student ' s Vocabulary Mastery and Their Reading Comprehension Ability in Learning English," 2019, 46.

¹⁸ Ahmad Munawir and Yulia Rahayu Ramli, "The Correlation between the Students' Reading Habit TowardtheStudents' Vocabulary Mastery," *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature* 9, no. 2 (2021): 502510.

However, there are still very few studies that specifically examine how the frequency of reading English textbooks-which is the main source in the learning process at school-affects students' vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, not many studies have been conducted in the educational context of Madrasah Aliyah (MA), especially at the tenth grade level, which has its own characteristics and learning approaches compared to other public schools.

Considering the gap, this study is here to fill the gap in the existing literature. The focus is to find out whether there is a significant relationship between the frequency of reading English textbooks and vocabulary mastery of MA Al-Fattahiyyah Ngranti students. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of English learning strategies, particularly in improving vocabulary skills through textbook reading frequency.

Looking at previous studies, there are many interesting topics to be used as research variables related to vocabulary skills. In this study, the researcher wants to know whether the topic used is students' interest in the frequency of reading English, whether it has a significant correlation or not with vocabulary mastery, because there is a statement from Al Qahtani according to him, the more vocabulary a person has, the better they are at learning languages, regardless of their level of grammar knowledge¹⁹. He also states that regular reading helps students acquire new words naturally. Here, the researcher used English reading frequency as a topic which is different from previous studies that used a variety of reading. Considering the results of this study, it is hoped

¹⁹ ALQAHTANI, "The Importance of Vocabulary in Language Learning and How to Be Taught."p.23.

that teachers can make considerations to develop strategies and lesson plans for future learning development.

B. Formulation of Research Problems

Based on the background that has been explained the research question can be formulated as follow:

“Is there a correlation between the frequency of reading English textbooks and the vocabulary mastery of tenth grade students at MA Al- Fattahiyah Ngranti?”

C. Research Objective

Analyzing the relationship between the frequency of reading English textbooks and vocabulary mastery of tenth grade students of MA Al-Fattahiyah Ngranti.

D. Research Hypothesis

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho)

There is no significant correlation between the frequency of reading English textbooks and vocabulary mastery

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)

There is a significant correlation between the frequency of reading English textbooks and vocabulary mastery

E. Significance of The Research

1. Theoretically

This study can provide theoretical data about the correlation between student's frequency in reading English textbook and their vocabulary mastery.

2. Practically

The results of this study expected to give an advantage for researchers.

a. The researchers

For other researchers, this study can serve as a basis for other researchers who want to explore the relationship between reading habits and other language skills. The results can pave the way for more in depth research on the factors that influence language acquisition, and also this study will add to the existing literature on English language learning and provide a new perspective on the importance of reading in the context of education.

F. Scope and Limitation of The Research

1. Scope

This research will find out the correlation between the students' frequency in reading English textbook and their vocabulary mastery and will be conducted on tenth grade MA Al-Fattahiyah Ngranti.

2. Limitation

The number of times students have read English textbook is represented by variable x , their vocabulary score is variable y and will

signify their vocabulary mastery, here some limitations are proposed as follows:

- a. The subject of this research is the 10th grade in MA Al-Fattahiyah Ngranti.
- b. This research examined the correlation between frequency in reading English textbook and vocabulary mastery.

G. The Defining of Key Terms

1. Correlation

Correlation is a statistical analysis function to determine the existence relationship between or among variables, and the correlation between variables can be classified into positive and negative correlations.

2. Frequency

Frequency is a number of occurrences of a data value. This data value appears in the form of numbers, but when it appears in the form of words in qualitative data.

3. English Textbook

According to Cahyani, S., & Perdana, S, textbook is defined as a manual of instruction in any branch of study²⁰.

4. Reading

Reading is a cognitive process of decoding symbols to understand the meaning of a text.

²⁰ Siska Cahyani and Satya Perdana, "Textbooks Evaluation by Ur's Theory," *Journal of English Language and Pedagogy* 2, no. 2 (2019): 162, <https://doi.org/10.36597/jelp.v2i2.4869>.

5. Vocabulary Mastery

According to Hiebert, E., & Kamil, M. Vocabulary is the knowledge of meanings of words²¹.

²¹ Hiebert and Kamil, "Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Bringing Research to Practice."