

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Research**

English is one of the languages spoken by many people worldwide. English is very important for economics, journalism, politics, trading, business, science, technology, entertainment, and education. Nowadays, English is one of the requirements for several important things in human life. For example, it is required for jobs and education.

To be able to communicate in English well, students should master grammar and the structure of the language and also English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, when somebody wants to make a simple sentence, he or she needs vocabulary. Without vocabulary, people will be unable to make a correct sentence. Bai (2018) states that vocabulary is the basic component of language and a fundamentally important aspect of language development. Vocabulary is one of the most important things in language and it is the first aspect of language that students need to master. Without vocabulary, people will be unable to communicate in any language.

Vocabulary is defined as the total number of words that make up language (Hornby, 2002) Like (Nunan, 2005) states that vocabulary is a collection of words that someone knows. Vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning English and English cannot be understood without vocabulary. That is why school students

will experience difficulties in learning a language without having sufficient vocabulary.

Since English has been recognized as an international language, many countries have chosen English as their second language. In Southeast Asia, there are some countries that use English as their second language, such as the Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, and Malaysia. In Indonesia, people don't use English as a second language because Indonesia has the Indonesian language as a national language, but since 1946 English has been inaugurated as a subject in the Indonesian curriculum.

Indonesian students study English as a foreign language from the elementary level. According to English Proficiency Index (EPI) data compiled by English First (EF), Indonesia ranked 39th out of 80 countries in the world and 10th out of 20 countries in Asia in 2017. The average Indonesian score was 52.15, under the low proficiency level.

The lack of vocabulary in English lessons is one of the biggest problems faced by Junior High School (JHS) students around Jayapura. During the teaching practice program (PPL: Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan) in August-November 2022, the researcher and the researcher's friends found this problem in some junior and senior high schools. The researcher has observed the learning English process in SMP N 4 Jayapura and found the problem that mastering English vocabulary is one of the weaknesses for the students. It is really difficult for them to understand some unfamiliar words or even memorize them. Based on the English curriculums at the

JHS level, JHS students must master 1500 vocabulary, however, students in SMPN 4 Jayapura cannot master even 250 vocabularies.

The researcher found this problem while teaching the students and gave the students a vocabulary test. The students feel hard to translate and did not memorize a lot of English words. The students even cannot introduce themselves to others using English. The students cannot translate easy vocabulary like things around us, names of animals, names of fruit, parts of the body, and greetings.

There are a lot of factors that caused students difficulties to master vocabulary. Based on the observations of the researcher during the PPL, it is really hard for students to memorize new vocabulary because the students have a low interest in reading and memorizing and the teacher's less attractive teaching methods. Many students do not give their attention when teachers explain the materials because the learning process is boring then students do not give their feedback.

Vocabulary mastery is one of the factors to master English as a foreign language. It means that the students have the ability in understanding and using the word and its meaning. The larger vocabulary the students master, the better they perform in their language. By having a limited vocabulary, the students will find difficulties in mastering English skills.

Based on the phenomena described above, the researcher became interested in studying the above issues in a study titled **“Analysis of Students’ Difficulties in Vocabulary Mastery of Eight-Grade Students at SMPN 4 Jayapura in the Academic Year 2022/2023”**

The researcher chose SMPN4 Jayapura as a place to do research because this kind of research has never been done in this school before.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the background of the above problem formulation, the wording of this study is as follows:

1. What are the difficulties in vocabulary mastery of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Jayapura?
2. What are the factors which cause the difficulties in vocabulary mastery in eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Jayapura?

## **1.3 Objective of the Research**

1. To investigate difficulties in mastering vocabulary by the eighth-grade students at SMPN 4 Jayapura.
2. To find out the factors of students' difficulties in vocabulary mastery at SMPN 4 Jayapura.

## **1.4. Limitations of the Research**

Once the above problems have been identified, the researcher should limit and focus on the problem of studying students' vocabulary difficulties. The researcher focused on analyzing the difficulty of 8th graders in mastering vocabulary at SMPN 4 Jayapura.

## **1.4 Significance of the Research**

The finding of this research will give a contribution to the following:

a. For the student

To help the students to be aware of their weaknesses in mastering vocabulary and give input for them in order to increase their vocabulary.

b. For the researcher

To give input to the other researcher in order to conduct research about teaching vocabulary better in the future at other schools or institutions.

c. For the institution

It can be used as information to develop a new English syllabus which could help students to put more interest in English.

d. For the teacher

To find solution to improve how to teach vocabulary to the students. This can be also a reference and input for the teaching and learning processes.

### **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

1. Analysis:

In this study, analysis means the process of breaking down a complex topic or content into smaller pieces to better understand it.

2. Difficulties

Difficulty is the problem that students faced to memorize English Vocabulary that they have learned.

3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the list of words as a basic component of language pruriency which has a form of expression.

4. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is the ability or complete knowledge of the list or set of words that make up a language and can be used by a particular person, class, or profession.

