

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter the researcher explained about related theoretical and related studies that the researcher used in this research. There were some related theories and some related to this research.

#### **A. Definition of Vocabulary**

Learning vocabulary is an important instructional aim to for teachers in all content areas in middle grades schools. A language's vocabulary is made up of all of the words that it up. One of the linguistic components in learning English is vocabulary. As a preliminary stage, pupils should learn about vocabulary before studying English skills. It's a tool for connecting the four language abilities of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Students ability to learn English vocabulary is hampered by a variety of factors, including lack of interest, low self-esteem, lack of motivation, teachers, and surroundings.

Rangkuti (2024, p.3) explains that In junior high school, one of the purposes of learning English itself was in ordering to have a lot of vocabulary to master in all of the skill in English. Teaching English to students Junior High School is not easy because the students are generally aggressive. Poor vocabulary knowledge is the primary cause of the academic failure of disadvantaged students. Thus, vocabulary is one of the significant parts of English. There many subjects or materials taught in this level such as vocabulary (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and so on).

Vocabulary is a aspect of language learning, refering to the collection of words that a person knows and uses in communication. In the context of second or foreign language acquisition, vocabulary plays a central role because it connects learners to the meanings they want to express and comprehend. Without sufficient vocabulary, learners cannot understand others or express their own ideas effetively, vocabulary function as the building block for other language skills, including reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Vocabulary is one aspect of language that must be considered and mastered to facilitate fluent communication in English, both spoken and written. Therefore, propaganda cannot be separated from words. Words are free-form units of language. Words are the most important element in English. Vocabulary consists of words that have meaning. Vocabulary mastery is the ability to recognize, understand and we words effectively and correctly through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Vocabulary mastery is essential for students to understand words. Vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in life, particulary in communication. With vocabulary mastery, a person will be able to speak fluently and effectively.

Vocabulary matery is developed through consistent exposure, meaningful usage, and various instructional strategies. Teachers are encouraged to implement methods that not only introduce new vocabulary but also reinforce previous knowledge through interactive activities. Webb and Nation (2017) emphasize that vocabulary mastery involves both receptive knowledge (the ability to recognize

and understand words) and productive knowledge (the ability to use words appropriately in speech or writing).

## **B. Kind of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary as a fundamental component of language proficiency, can be categorized into several types based on its frequency of use, complexity, and communicative function. Understanding the classification of vocabulary helps teachers and learners prioritize which words to teach and learn, as well as how to apply them effectively in various contexts.

### **1. Basic Vocabulary**

Basic vocabulary refers to high-utility words that are commonly used in daily communication. These include simple nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions that form the foundation of language use, especially for beginners. Thornbury (2002) explains that Words can be grouped by topic, function, or frequency to make learning more systematic and relevant to learners' need. For example, words such as book, eat, big and in are crucial for constructing simple sentence and understanding instructions.

### **2. High-Frequency Vocabulary**

High-frequency vocabulary consists of words that appear most often in both spoken and written texts. According to Marsden, E (2023), state Knowledge of the first 2,000-3,000 high-frequency word families provides approximately 80-90% lexical coverage of general English texts, making these words essential for developing reading comprehension and overall language proficiency. Sevigny et al. (2024) emphasize that Learners with

stronger mastery of high-frequency vocabulary are better able to comprehend written texts because these words form the core of everyday language and are encountered repeatedly during reading. Examples include words like people, time, go, and know, which are vital for everyday language use.

### 3. Low-Frequency Vocabulary

Low-frequency vocabulary includes words that are less commonly used and typically appear in specialized academic, professional, or literary contexts. These words are often more complex and context-dependent. Nation (2013) notes that although low-frequency words make up a large portion of the English lexicon, they are best acquired after learners have developed a solid foundation of high-frequency vocabulary. Webb and Nation (2017) also point out that low-frequency vocabulary is important for academic success and subject-specific knowledge, but requires more intensive instruction and exposure. Examples include words such as photosynthesis, jurisdiction, or metamorphosis.

## C. Teaching Vocabulary

Effective vocabulary instruction is a crucial component of language teaching, as it enables learners to understand, retain, and use words appropriately across various contexts.

### 1. Select

The first step in vocabulary instruction is the careful selection of words that are relevant to learners' needs, proficiency levels, and learning objectives. Teachers should prioritize high-frequency words,

academic, vocabulary, and words that are meaningful within the context of students' lives or subject content. Nation and Webb (2017, p. 82) emphasize that teachers must select words that not only appear frequently but also carry significant meaning to enhance comprehension and usage. Additionally, Schmitt and Schmitt (2020, p. 45) suggest that vocabulary selection should also consider learnability and relevance to communication goals.

## 2. Teach

Once the vocabulary has been selected, the next step is to teach the words in ways that promote deep understanding. This includes providing the words meaning, pronunciation, spelling, part of speech, and usage in context. Webb and Nation (2017, p. 119) recommend the use of multiple contexts, visual aids, and translation when appropriate to support understanding. Teachers should also present examples of both correct and incorrect usage to clarify meaning and encourage accurate application. As Schmitt (2020, p.34) points out, explicit instruction is particularly effective for learners at beginner and intermediate levels who require structured exposure to vocabulary.

## 3. Active

Active engagement is essential for vocabulary retention. Learners should be given sample opportunities to use new vocabulary in meaningful and communicative tasks. These may include speaking exercises, writing tasks, role-plays, or interactive games. According to

Nation (2013, p. 114) active involvement helps transfer vocabulary from passive to active knowledge, which strengthens memory and supports productive language use.

#### 4. Review

Reviewing vocabulary is a critical phase that ensures long-term retention. Without reinforcement, newly learned words are easily forgotten. Nation and Webb (2017, p. 167) argue that vocabulary acquisition is a cumulative process that requires repeated exposure and practice over time. Techniques such as spaced repetition, quizzes, flashcards, and integration of previously learned words into new lessons are effective ways to consolidate vocabulary knowledge. Schmitt (2020, p. 66) further note that review sessions should be intentionally planned and varied to keep students engaged and support different learning styles.

#### **D. Types of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary in language learning can be categorized into several types based on context, function, and thematic content. Categorizing vocabulary helps both teachers and learners to focus on specific word groups that support meaningful communication and structured learning. According to Nation (2013) the classification of vocabulary into types allows instruction to be better tailored to learners needs and language levels. In the context of teaching English to junior high school students, the following five types of vocabulary are commonly used.

### 1. Alphabetic Vocabulary

Alphabetic vocabulary refers to words that are introduced and practiced based on the letters of the alphabet, such as A for apple, B for ball, I and so on. This type of vocabulary is commonly used in the early stages of language learning because it helps children connect letters with sounds, develop spelling skills, and build early literacy. According to Cameron (2001, p.75) states learning vocabulary is not just about learning the meaning of words, but also about learning how they sound, how they are spelled, and how they are used. Therefore, alphabetic vocabulary supports young learners in developing letter-sound correspondence and word recognition.

### 2. Numerical Vocabulary

Numerical vocabulary includes terms related to numbers, counting, quantities, and basic mathematical operations, such as one, two, first, second, half, plus, and minus. This vocabulary is essential for students to understand everyday communication involving prices, dates, measurements, and time. As emphasized by Nation and Webb (2011, p. 125) numerical terms are high-frequency words that learners must master early to navigate both academic and real-life contexts.

### 3. Nature Vocabulary

Nature vocabulary comprises words associated with the natural world, including animals, plants, weather, seasons, and geographical elements. Examples include words like tree, river, rain, sun, mountain, and

butterfly. Teaching this type of vocabulary can increase environmental awareness while expanding learners descriptive abilities. According to Webb and Nations (201, p. 92) teaching vocabulary through thematic units such as nature helps learners retain words better due to meaningful contextualization.

#### 4. Calender Vocabulary

Calender vocabulary includes terms related to days, month, seasons, and expressions of time, such as Monday, January, morning, afternoon, yesterday, today, tomorrow. These words are important for daily classroom routines and communicative exchanges. Schmitt and Schmitt (2020, p. 62) argue that calender vocabulary should be taught early and reinforced regularly to build temporal awareness and improve functional language skills in real-world settings.

#### 5. Certain vocabulary

Certain vocabulary refers to specific or thematic words that relate to students daily lives, school subjects, or common activities such as classroom, homework, exam, football, happy, or colorful. This vocabulary is often tailored to the learners context and interest, making it highly relevant and motivating. As noted by Nation (2013, p. 65) teaching context-embedded vocabulary improves learners mativation and supports vocabulary retention through personal relevance.

## **E. The Importance of Vocabulary**

Mastering of vocabulary is very important for people learning English both as a foreign language and as a second language. According to Alqahtani (2015, p. 22) said that mastering of vocabulary is very important for the successful use of a second language and plays an important role in the formation of complete spoken and written texts. In English as a second language and English as a foreign language. Vocabulary items play an important role in all language skills such as: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Without an extensive vocabulary, we would not be able to use the structures and functions we have learned for comprehensive communication. Fitria (2019:16) mention that vocabulary is significant for several of reasons:

### **1. Vocabulary as the basis of communication**

Without vocabulary nothing can be accomplished. It is fundamental to communication. Because the main form of communication a tool is frequently acknowledged to be words. The vocabulary is an expression of the human intellect that language learners make use of to convey their thoughts, feelings, and opinions.

### **2. Vocabulary as a reflection or social reality**

The reality of humans is as well created by vocabulary. It creates the reality of the world and even has the power to change human mind, which influences how language listeners behave.

### 3. Vocabulary as a predictor of academic ability

That vocabulary has a direct connection to the communication of scientific discoveries. It's because these words, which play important roles in academic discourse, are what make up research publications. Linguists believe that the terms employed in academic discourses are always academic and specific in order to understand their properties and categories. Additionally, word size and comprehension are more likely to accurately indicate academic progress. Even though the various effects and research approaches vary. It is true that the overall trend still favors the use of vocabulary.

According to Bhakti and Marwanto (2018) vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. Vocabulary should not be overlooked when learning a language. If someone wishes to master the four language skills of speaking, reading, writing, and listening, this can even be used as a standard. Inadequate vocabulary hinders students in learning English development. Vocabulary emphasizes that it affects reading activity the ability of children to participate fully in social and settings is also impacted by their vocabulary knowledge. So vocabulary is an important part, component, and skill in mastering a language, especially English.

### **F. Vocabulary Assessment**

Assessing vocabulary mastery is a component in evaluating students language development. Vocabulary assessment helps determine how well students understand, retain, and use vocabulary items in various context.

According to Nation (2013) effective vocabulary assesment should cover both receptive and productive knowledge and consider various aspects, including grammar, meaning, spelling, ang pronunciation.

### 1. Grammar

Grammar in vocabulary assesment refers to the ability to use words correctly in grammatical structures. This includes parts of speech, verb forms, pluralization, and sentence placement. Nation (2013, p. 87) states that knowing a word involves knowing its grammatical behaviour in sentences. For example, learners should be able to distinguish between a word used as a noun or verb based on context, such as run in I go for a run vs. I run everyday.

### 2. Meaning

Meaning is the core component of vocabulary knowledge. Learners must understand both the denotative (literal) and connotative (implied or emotional) meanings of words. Read (2023) Vocabulary assessment should measure learners' knowledge of word meaning, associations, and appropriate use in context rather than merely recognizing word forms.

### 3. Spelling

Spelling reflects students' ability to reproduce vocabulary accurately in written form. Poor spelling can interfere with communication and meaning. Schmitt (2020, p.103) emphasizes that spelling accuracy is a sign of strong word recognition and orthografic knowledge, which is vital for reading and writing fluency.

#### 4. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is essential in spoken language and impacts clarity and comprehension. Learners must not only recognize how a word is spelled but also how it sounds in context. According to Brown (2014, p. 156) correct pronunciation of vocabulary items includes knowledge of stress patterns, intonation, and phonemic distinctions, which are often tested through oral performance tasks or reading aloud activities. Mispronunciation, even with correct grammar and meaning, can hinder effective communication.

#### G. Related Studies

An Analysis of Students' Mastery of Vocabulary conducted research to determine what factors lead to students' difficulties with vocabulary mastery. The results show that students' difficulties in vocabulary mastery are caused by grammar. In grammar, some students have difficulties in comparison degree and past tense. In comparison degree and superlative degree. Other difficulties are caused by meaning of the vocabulary.

The second previous study was conducted by Simanjuntak et al (2021) An Analysis of Vocabulary Mastery of Eight Grade Students at SMP Amalyatul Huda Medan. Based on observations has been done by researcher in the eight grade of SMP Swasta Almayatul Huda Medan, the most difficult language skills or vocabulary. From the result of the data obtained by the authors the average value they get 56.5 in understanding vocabulary. Therefore, the English teacher did a teaching method to improve students

vocabulary understanding, namely by making a game method so that students more interested and younger in understanding vocabulary.

Based on the two experiments mentioned above, the researcher determined research entitled An Analysis of the Students Vocabulary Mastery at Seventh grade in SMP Negeri 1 Menjalin.