CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research, statement of the problem, significance of the research, scope of the research, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

Vocabulary is the compulsary aspect which have to be mastered by students. Moreover, vocabulary is hard to be taught because some teachers are tend to run the material and ignore to teach vocabulary. Reardon (2011) states that English vocabulary is immersed when teaching language skills and using and understanding English words will create progress in those skills. It means that vocabulary is an essential skill that should be mastered followed by others English skills. Vocabulary needs to be mastered by the learners since it becomes the core component of language proficiency followed with all language skills. Those statement are also proven by Ragini (2011) on his paper under the title "Reading and Guessing Meaning in Context", it is shown that guessing the vocabulary and contextual meanings is the first step in understanding a written message. Besides, vocabulary learning strategies create multiple benefits in acquiring accurate word meaning through the help of context (Hirai, Borrego, Garza and Kloock , 2010). The statement means that through contextual clues, students are helped to understand the words easily. Context clues provide information about how a word fits in a sentence and with the ideas discussed in it. In other words, figuring out what a word means by looking at the words or phrases nearby (Hartmann & Blass, 2007). It is also in line with Praveen (2017) stated that contextualization helps learners to understand and effectively use the target language. Further more, according to a research conducted by Nation (2001) believes that employing contextual clues to learn vocabulary incidentally is the most important of all sources of vocabulary learning, which focus on meaning rather than form such as descriptive text, taking part in

conversations, listening to stories, many shades of meaning of words used in a particular context can better be mastered if context clues are provided.

Through expecting unfamiliar vocabulary in descriptive text, I tried to solve the problem where the students are difficult to figure out the similar meaning by using contextual clues. I found the same problem during my observation in SMAN 2 Mranggen, students' thought it is difficult to distinguish the appropriate meaning. I observed a class who which a problem related to vocabulary. It was class X MIPA 2 which consisted of 36 students. This class was heterogeneous in terms of English proficiency level. Before I did my observation, I gave vocabulary test to identify the problem. I found that most of the students faced difficulties in finding sufficient meaning from certain words in reading text by using contextual clues strategy. It is not only how the student found out the meaning, but also how they comprehend the text. It is also in line with College, 2015 which stated that comprehension in reading plays an important role in both personal and professional life. On the other hand, English reading comprehension tasks have proven to be a challenging for students due to their lack of vocabulary. It is also related with the problem faced by me about how to define the sufficient meaning in a text. In addition, this is also in line with the score in vocabulary test given. The test focuses on the target words in a text (see appendix 1).

The target word used was the daily vocabulary. However, they faced difficulties to find a sufficient meaning in a context such as the word *when*. When the students looked up the English dictionary, the word *when* had more than one meaning, they were *asking question (what time)* and *during*. The students should concern on that word and find the appropriate word from the context. Most of them answered *during* rather than *what time*. In addition, the score of the vocabulary test also showed that the students had limited vocabulary. Most of their score was still under the SKM (Standart Kriteria Minimum) which is set by the school regulation. On the other hand, to analyze test items, there are some criteria of a good test according to some expert. A good test

should have (1) Validity, (2) Reliability, (3) Level of difficulty, (4) Discrimination Power, and (5) The Quality of Options. This research was concerned with the whole with test items designed by MGMP. Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument really measures the objective to be measured and suitable with the criteria (Hatch and Farhady, 1982:250). In addition, the reliability refers to the consistency of measurement that is, to see how consistent test scores or other evaluation results are from one measurement to another (Grounlund, 2000:193). We used validity and reliability as a support data.

The vocabulary test was conducted on January, 8th 2020. The aim of the test is to get the data related student's vocabulary mastery. The format of the vocabulary test consisted of 30 words and taken from any sources taken from the student's book. The result of the test was most of the student still hard to define the sufficient meaning in context through reading activity especially descriptive text. They prefered to carry out the words meaning rather than words in context. However, I did not only use vocabulary test but also led a questionnaire for English teacher which had 9 questions. The questionnaire held in the preliminary study as the data collection and the aim was to gain some information from the teachers' strategy and technique during teaching and learning process. The result of the questionnaire also in line with what I found. The teacher states that the teaching and learning does not provide any vocabulary list for the students. It caused the time of teaching and also should stick on the material stated in syllabus. Thus, it affected the student's lack of vocabulary and also the meaning.

I have found the problem related to vocabulary mastery from the observation through questionnaire given to the English teacher and also the teaching and learning process. I got the data that actually the students understood the word's meaning but they were difficult to find the sufficient meaning related to the context especially in descriptive text. The students were difficult to catch the right meaning in text. I had to explain the differenciate the dictionary meaning and contextual meaning. It was not

easy because I had to drill them many times. The problem is also in line with the vocabulary test result which was held by me in preliminary study. In addition, the way to explain the text type in reading comprehension also be an obstacle to me. I should explain the tense used and vocabulary form to the students. In addition, the problem was not only covered with the difficulties of differenciate the meaning but also happened in teaching learning process which the teacher used the traditional way of teaching. The teacher taught the students by memorizing the vocabulary only without gave the contextual clues method. In fact, the teacher should realize that the aim of vocabulary learning is not only to know the meaning of the word but also they have to know how to implement the word appropriately through the context. This problem was also strengthen by Pora (2003:vii) as cited in Pratama (2014), there are several factors that determine English mastery, vocabulary size and vocabulary use. First is vocabulary size which acts as indicator in language proficiency. It is used to measure how well people are able to use English for communication in their daily life. The second is vocabulary use which is important in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Moreover, mastering vocabulary is helpful for learning all English skills.

From the reasons, I try to enhance students' vocabulary mastery by using contextual clues. The contextual clues also stated in Nation (2001) as cited in Alsaawi (2013) on his paper under the title "to what extent contextual clues is helpful in teaching vocabulary", it shows that contextual clues could be learnt deductively, which was more suitable for learners, or inductively which was suitable for teaching learners how to use clues successfully.

I used contextual clues to help the students' guess the sufficient meaning from the words. Tornbury (2002) stated that teaching vocabulary implicitly, for instance by exposure through reading, was better than teaching it explicitly. By teaching vocabulary implicitly, the teacher aim to raise students' awareness about using the context as a clue. Walters (2004) also agreed that through exercises might be useful in raising the students' awareness about using the context as a clue.

The previous study conducted by Pratama (2014) under the title "using word-focused task in English texts to enhance vocabulary mastery of eight grade students at SMP Kartika IV-8 Malang". The aim of the previous study was in a line with this study which was to enhance students' vocabulary mastery. However, this study is different with the previous which the way the strategy used by me. The previous study focused on the targeted words as a key to catch the answer but I use contextual clues applied in descriptive text. For example "Orchard Road is a Boulevard which became business entertainment center in Singapore". The question was "what is the appropriate meaning of "became" in the text?"(see appendix 1), so the students should look for the word become the text to catch the answer. In short, the previous researcher provide the answer in the text to be asked in a question. In other words, the answer was implicite on the text. However, in this study I bold the words which has similiar meaning with other word stated in the text. Therefore, I focused only on synonym and meaning of the words.

The previous study was also shown that using word-focused task is effective in helping students to master the vocabulary by providing them the targeted words related to the English texts. In addition, the strategy used by the previous researcher contributed to build active participation during teaching and learning process.

Hopefully, the students are able to understand the meaning and synonym of the word by contextual clues strategy. Moreover, I decided to use the strategy to improve tenth graders' vocabulary at SMA N 2 Mranggen.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The research problem based on the background is:

a. How does the implementation of contextual clues on students' vocabulary mastery in descriptive text at tenth graders of SMA N 2 Mranggen?

b.   How does the students' responses on learning vocabulary of descriptive text at the tenth graders of SMA N 2 Mranggen?

1.3. Objective of the Problem

a. To describe the implementation of contextual clues strategy in especially descriptive text to enhance students' vocabulary mastery.

b. To describe the students' responses on learning vocabulary using contextual clues especially descriptive text to enhance student's vocabulary mastery.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The result of the study will hopefully be beneficial theoretically, practically, and pedagogically

1. Theoretically, the result of this study can add knowledge and experience to do study in theoretical and practical manner on vocabulary mastery.

2. Practically, this strategy in study can be implemented to enhance students' vocabulary mastery.

3. Pedagogically, hopefully this strategy improves the English learning quality and enhances the students' achievement.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The research focused on enhancing the vocabulary mastery through contextual clues. The text contains several words which have same meaning in other context. In the activities the student learned to identify the contextual meaning of certain words by find out the meaning based on the contextual clues in descriptive text.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To give clear understanding of the term used in this research, the definitions of terms are given as follows;

Contextual Clues

Contextual clue analysis involves recognizing and understanding unfamiliar words through the use of the words or sentences surrounding them. Context clues are defined as words found around an unknown word that provides clues that reveal the meaning of the unknown word (Beck et al, 2002).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the body of words used in particular language. However, according to Richards and Schmidt (2002) state that vocabulary is a set of lexeme, including single words, compound words, and idioms. In addition, according to Richards (2002), vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Jackson and Amvela (2000) say that the terms of vocabulary, lexis, and lexicon are synonymous.

Descriptive Text

According to Corbett (1983), descriptive text is one of the expository writing. The description draws a picture, tries to convey the sound, taste and smell of things or objects. They are thirteen text in English one of them is descriptive text. This text is aimed at giving description of things, animal or human, place or certain place. Sundari, 2018 state that in descriptive text, you are writing about what a person, 4 place, or thing is like. Sometimes you may where a place is located. Pardiyono (2006) says that descriptive text is about description of something or someone that consist of characteristics.