CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the reasons for conducting the research, and that deals with several aspects: an introduction that concerns with a background of research, the formulation of the problems, the purposes of the research, significance of the research, and rationale.

A.   BACKGROUND

Language is based on vocabulary; it means that no phrases, sentences, and no expressions stand without vocabulary. In learning a foreign language, vocabulary is one of the critical things that should be taught. Especially, in learning English, acquiring vocabulary knowledge is essential because having a limited vocabulary inhibits successful learning language

Decarrico (2001, p. 285) said that "vocabulary acquisition is central to language acquisition, whether the language is first, second, or foreign" The statements imply that even though someone learning his mother tongue, he needs to know the vocabulary first. In addition, Mehta (2009) stated that in language acquisition, vocabulary is the first and foremost step. It means that in learning languages, learners should master vocabulary before they learn more complex structure.

Vocabulary plays a crucial role in learning a language (Askar, 2016). The students should acquire a good vocabulary enhancement to support their performances in mastering every language skill. Although considered as the important thing to learn, learning vocabulary still becomes problems in language

teaching and learning especially at junior high school. The teachers commonly labeled teaching-learning vocabulary as the most problematic area (Celik & Toptas, 2010).

Based on the researcher pre-observation at SMP Negeri 2 Tanjungsari, it was found that most students have a low vocabulary mastery as proven by the following evidence. First, in one class, there are only 20% of the students (4 from 32 students) who reach the minimum score of the English test. The students' average score is 69 while the minimum passing grade score (KKM) for English subject in SMP Negeri 2 Tanjungsari is 75. Therefore, 75% of the students (24 from 32 students) said that they had a problem in their vocabulary enhancement.

Second, the students cannot remember a large number of the new vocabulary that introduces in the classroom. Even though the students had been taught particular vocabulary during the course, they were likely to forget it instantly and failed to perform the vocabulary that expected to know in the next meeting.

Several factors might cause the phenomena of students' low vocabulary mastery. First, usually, the students were asked to learn or memorize words on their own. The only technique that introduced by the teacher to remember the words is rote learning or word repetition; the step is by saying the English word form aloud with the first language translation.

As a result, the students will get bored and will not be interested in learning vocabulary. Moreover, the students only learned two typical things: the English word form and the first language translation. The types of information such as English definitions, synonyms, antonyms, were optional.

Second, the lack of media that used in teaching vocabulary. It makes the students' consciousness and motivation to learn vocabulary lower. Third, the unsupportive classroom atmosphere. It makes the learning process did not optimal.

From the problem above, this study would be concerned with the students' vocabulary enhancement and to solve the problem; the important step is by finding the compatible strategy to improve the students' vocabulary mastery which can be implemented in the Junior High School classroom. The recommended technique is Magic Memory Instruction. Furthermore, Magic memory (commonly known as memory strategy) is a system of memory codes that can make a person memorize well (Wijaya, 2011).

There are two previous researches that conducted the similar topic with this research. First, Piribabadi and Rahmany (2014) the participants were 120 Islamic Azad University students. Second research was conducted by Siriganjanavong (2013), the study was intended to introduce and explore the effectiveness of mnemonic method regarding short-term and long-term retention to low proficiency English learners. The result of the research showed that the learners who taught by Mnemonic Method could be better remembered the words both in short and long-term memory.

There are two gaps between this research and the two previous research studies. The first is the population used in the research; Piribabadi and Rahmany (2014) and Siriganjanavong (2013), take the First year of University students as the population while this research takes Junior High School students as the population. The second is the media and media used. Piribabadi and Rahmany (2014) and

Siriganjanavong (2013) use mnemonics technique or keyword method to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

Based on the previous research that explained above, in this discussion, Magic Memory Instruction was preferred to use as a strategy to support the junior high school students in memorizing English vocabulary. The researcher conducted experimental research "Building Students Basic English Vocabulary through Magic Memory Instruction."

B.   Research Questions

Based on the background, there are several problems on this research as follows:

1. What is students' ability in vocabulary mastery by using magic memory instruction?

2. What is students' ability in vocabulary mastery by using rote learning strategy?

3. How significant is the difference between students' vocabulary mastery by using magic memory and rote learning strategy?

C.   Research Objectives

From the research questions above, this study is intended to:

1. To find out the students' ability in vocabulary mastery by using magic memory instruction.

2. To discover students' ability in vocabulary mastery by using rote learning.

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3. To reveal the significant difference between vocabulary mastery with magic memory and with rote learning strategy.

D.   Significances of Research

This study gives significances at least in two aspects:

Theoretically, this research can be beneficial for the teacher to use new vocabulary teaching strategy.

Practically, this method can help the students to improve their ability through the application of magic memory instruction, especially in memorize new vocabulary items easier.

E.   Hypothesis

Hypothesis is a brief statement about the result of the research Hatch and Farhady (1982). A hypothesis is a conditional assumption of the research based on the problem and rational, can be clarified by hypothesis as follows:

Ha: There is a significant impact of magic memory method on students' vocabulary mastery.

Ho: There is no significant impact of magic memory method on students' vocabulary mastery.

F.   Rationale (Research Framework)

In learning English, one of the problems that faced by the students is memorizing new vocabulary. To solve the problem, the use of learning strategies considered can make a positive impact on student achievement. Learning strategies

considered as excellent tools for accelerating learning, especially building vocabulary mastery (R. Behbahani, 2015).

According to Schmitt (2007) in Rawian (2015), language learner beginners, have commonly used the simplest memorization way such as repetition and taking notes. While intermediate or advanced learners are often preferred more complex strategies which required manipulation of information, for instance, inference, imagery, and keyword method.

Wu (2014) points out that there is also a challenging strategy that still exists and preferred by the learners, the strategy is wordlist or word card method, in this strategy the students required to write down the word a few times fills a full line of an A4 size starch-paper.

Those strategies are categorized into four main memory strategy (learning strategies for memorizing the vocabularies) arranged from the simple to the complicated way. The Memory Strategies are: (1) Rote Learning; (2) Creating Mental Linkages (3) Applying Images and Sounds; and (4) Reviewing Well (Oxford, 1990).

Among the vocabulary learning strategies, this study used the magic memory instruction as the strategy to improve student's vocabulary mastery. Magic memory is a system of memory codes that can make a person memorize well in a comfortable, fast and fun way with almost perfect memory (Wijaya, 2011).

The implementation of this strategy is by connecting a replacement word from a foreign word with a similar word, both sound, and writing. This kind of strategy is a combination of an old technique called mnemonics (memory strategy).

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From the explanation above, the researcher tries to present strategies that are expected to give a good effect on the students' vocabulary knowledge, especially for junior high school students. The sample of this research used two kinds of the variable. The first is the Basic English vocabulary as the "X" variable, and the second is magic memory instruction as the "Y" variable.

G. Previous Research Studies of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

There are several research studies that related to this research and consist of information that will support this research.

The first is by Ebrahimain and Nabifar (2015). This study conducted among 90 third grade high school students in three different schools. The students divided into three different groups, each group taught by using one type of the vocabulary learning strategy (Word-part, Word-card, and Context-clue). The result students that taught by context-clue had significant rates of vocabulary acquisition compared with other groups.

The second is by Vela and Roshidi (2016). This research attempts to support the claims that by keeping vocabulary notebook increase students' vocabulary acquisition and students' responsibility for their learning. The research conducted to three groups of intermediate level students from South East European University Language Center. The result from the test reveals that the experimental group results significantly successful than the control group. The conclusion is keeping vocabulary notebooks a useful tool that can be implemented.

The third is by Hidayat (2016). This research studies on 38 seventh grade of junior high school students in Gresik and attempts to improve students' vocabulary

through word game. The result of the study shows that learning English vocabulary using word game help the students memorize vocabulary easier.

The fourth is by Altalhab (2018) The purpose of this research is to examine the role of oral and written repetition strategies in vocabulary learning. The results indicated that the three types of repetition strategies were effective in retaining new vocabulary in short-term retention. For long-term, the students who taught by oral and written repetition achieved the best results.

The fifth is by Faliyanti (2017) The study was conducted among 40 students of Muhammadiyah University of Metro, and the purpose of this study is to know whether English song can improve the students' vocabulary. The result indicated that there was a significant difference between students' vocabulary mastery who taught by using English song and without listening English song. The conclusion is English song can increase students vocabulary mastery.

The previous research studies showed the efficiency vocabulary learning strategy to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, this research tries to use a different strategy with the previous study. The strategy is Magic Memory Instruction, an alternative memorizing strategy that helps someone memorize every information by using unique ways that based on the balancing of brain works.

Magic Memory Instruction consists of seven types of memorizing system (Magic story, Magic Mnemonic, Magic location, Magic Acronym, Magic number, Magic Keyword, and Magic shape). Therefore, from among the types, the researcher preferred Magic story and Magic Keyword to help the students building their vocabulary mastery.