

# INVESTIGATING ENGLISH VOCABULARY OF GRADE X STUDENTS AT SMA NEGERI 3 TOLITOLI

**Indah Indrawati**

*indahvandah02@gmail.com*

*(Mahasiswa Program Magister Bahasa Inggris Pascasarjana Universitas Tadulako)*

## **Abstrak**

Tujuan dari studi kasus ini menggambarkan tentang permasalahan siswa dalam menguasai kosakata. Subyeknya adalah siswa kelas X pada SMA Negeri 3 Tolitoli. Data dikumpulkan melalui dokumen sekolah, kuisioner, dan wawancara. Analisis datanya menunjukkan bahwa kosa kata siswa masih sangat rendah atau sangat kurang. Ini berarti hanya sedikit siswa yang dapat menjawab benar dalam pilihan ganda, mencocokkan kata pada soal mencocokkan kata, melengkapi kalimat, mengartikan kata, dan menyusun kalimat. Diantara lima soal yang disediakan oleh guru, 93% siswa gagal dalam mengerjakan soal menyusun kalimat. Selain itu, masalah dari pengaruh kosa kata siswa dan membuat proses belajar dan mengajar tidak efektif adalah gangguan siswa dalam proses pembelajaran dan proses komunikasi karena kurangnya minat siswa siswa dalam belajar bahasa inggris, kurangnya kosakata bahasa inggris, dan sulitnya pemahaman dan mengidentifikasi konsep dalam bahasa Inggris.

**Kata Kunci:** Menginvestigasi, Bahasa Inggris, Kosa Kata, Kosa Kata Siswa

Nowadays, mastering English well and being able to use it in a communication will be important progressively in life activity. In education field for instance, English is used to promote science, culture, and technology. Being able to communicate in English will enable the students to follow as well as to master the development of science, culture, and technology that lately grows rapidly. Therefore, English is listed as one of compulsory subjects in the curriculum.

The teaching of English for the Senior High School students aims at providing the students with the basic knowledge of English competence. Therefore, they are greatly expected to be able to possess good competence of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The English teachers need to teach them the language components. They are structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Vocabulary is one of the language components, that plays a crucial role. It is the most vital organ which can fulfill all language skills. By mastering a great number of words, the students will find that learning

to speak and understand English is not as difficult as they think. In the school based curriculum (BSNP: 2006), it is stated that at the end of the study in senior high school the students are expected to have ability in listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary about 2500 words with appropriate grammar.

Based on the case of SMA Negeri 3 Tolitoli, it was found that the result of the national examination and school based examination (UN/UAS) indicates that 73% of the students were failed in English subject. To this phenomena, questions are raised how is the English vocabulary at the grade X students at SMA Negeri 3 Tolitoli? And what are the problem encountered by the students on English vocabulary?. In fact, they learned in the same circumstance, place, and taught by the same teacher.

Therefore the researcher would like to carry out a case study to investigate deeply why it happened?. In this study the researcher observed the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. It involved the teachers way

in teaching and the students involvement in the learning and teaching process.

By doing the research, the researcher expected to provide a clear description of students problem in English vocabulary especially in term of noun, verb, and adjective for the teacher and for students are expected to provide the students with valuable contribution in order to make them receive the input or learning English in more enjoyable way without any pressure or stress environment.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Definition of Vocabulary**

To understand about the concept of teaching vocabulary, it is important to know what vocabulary is. Vocabulary is list of words of a language. According to Hornby (1987:959), vocabulary is (1) total number of words which with rule for combining them) make up a language, (2) a range of words known to , or used by a person, in trade, profession, etc, (3) list of words used in a book, usually with definition or translation.

Referring to the above proposed definition, it can be understood that definition of vocabulary is given based on the form and size. The form refers to a list of words with their meaning which is arranged alphabetically in a certain language. On the other hand, the size refers to number of words that someone use or comprehend when she or he communicated with each other in a particular time or situation.

As long as vocabulary is list of words whether in foreign, second and target language, the students hope to master them in order to be able to communicate in that language. By considering this fact, vocabulary is viewed as main or prominent components of a language compared with other. Knight in Prayoga (1997:29) states that vocabulary acquisition is considered by many to be the single most important aspect of foreign

language learning. It doesn't mean that four skills of a language that is listening, speaking, reading, writing and other components of language grammar, spelling and pronunciation are not important, but on the contrary, the students must learnt and master the four skills of a language and also other components of language. The more vocabulary the learners have, the easier for them to develop their four language skills. Obviously, to learn vocabulary means to learn language skills all together even all of language components. Richards and Renandya (2002:225) state that vocabulary is a core of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, watching television and reading.

It is clear that basically the vocabulary is no single item or separated components of language to be learnt, but it must be integrated with language skills and other components of language. They support each other when they utilized in communication. There is no one focus only on grammatical aspect or spelling aspect to grasp without having sufficient vocabulary to support the students to study listening, speaking, reading, writing, and pronunciation.

### **What is Research Investigation?**

An investigation is an attempt to find, in scientific way, the answer to an original question. The scientific way may involve careful recording of organised observations such as watching the behaviour of wild birds or the movement of planets. It may use an experimental procedure that involves designing an experiment, controlling variables, interpreting your data and making conclusion. Investigations always look for

reliable results that can be used to explain or predict events.

### **Investigation Process and Report**

#### **Investigation Process**

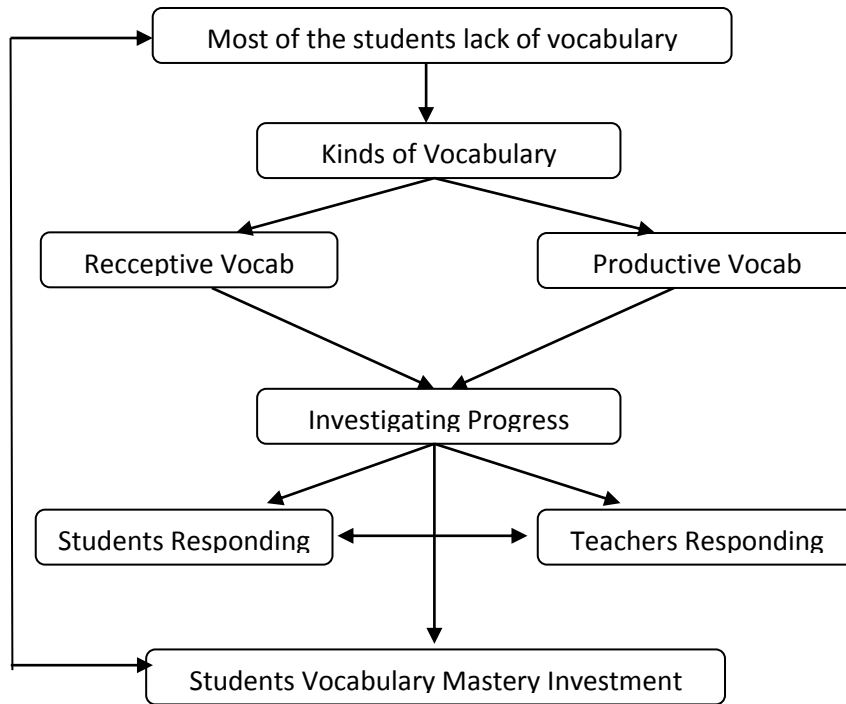
- a. The investigation normally will conclude examination by members of comitee, or staff assissting the board, of all relevant document, including but not necessarily limited to relevant research data and proposals, publications, and correspondences. The investigation comitee should keep general minutes of its meetings and must: (1) Use dilligent efforts to ensure that the investigation is through and sufficiently documented and includes examination of all research records and evidence relevant to reaching a decision on the merits of each allegation; (2) Take reasonable steps to ensure an impartial and unbiased investigation to the maximum extent practical; (3) Provide the respondent with reasonable opportunity to present evidence, testify, and present witnesses with relevant information to the committee. The committee will interview the respondent and other available persons who have been reasonably identified by the respondent as having information regarding any relevant aspects of the investigation; (4) Interview the complainant and other available persons, including those who have been reasonably identified by the complainant or others as having information regarding any relevant aspects of the investigation. The respondent may listen contemporaneously to any interviews conducted by the investigation committee and submit any relevant questions to be asked of any witness by the committee. For the protection of the witness, the committee may require the respondent to listen to or observe the interview from another room; (5) Allow any person who appears as a witness before the investigation committee to be accompanied by counsel or a representative of his or her choice; however, the chair of the committee may limit the participation of counsel or representative to advising the witness; (6) Record or transcribe each interview, provide either the recording or transcript to the interviewee for review and correction and thereafter provide the respondent with the recording or transcript as soon as practicable; and (7) Pursue diligently all significant issues and leads discovered that are determined to be relevant to the investigation, including evidence of any additional instances of possible research misconduct, and continue the investigation to completion.
- b. The committee shall use its best efforts to complete the investigation within 120 days of its start, including conducting the investigation, preparing the report of findings, providing the draft report for comment and sending the final report to any federal agency if required. If the RIO determines that the investigation will not be completed within this 120-day period, he/she will request an extension of time from the appropriate federal agency setting forth the reasons for the delay. If extension is approved, the record of the investigation should include documentation of the reasons for exceeding the 120-day period.
- c. The ultimate burden of proof for a finding of research misconduct is on the University, and such a finding must be proved by a preponderance of the evidence. However, the respondent has the burden of proving, by a preponderance of the evidence, any and all affirmative defenses raised or any mitigating factors relating to possible sanctions. Note that the destruction, absence of, or respondent's failure to provide research records adequately documenting the questioned research may constitute evidence of research misconduct if done intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly

and if the respondent's conduct constitutes a significant departure from accepted practices of the research community.

### **The Investigation Report**

- a. The investigation committee will prepare a draft written report that (1) describes the nature of the allegation of research misconduct, including identification of the respondent; (2) describes and documents the source of funding for the research, including, for example, the numbers of any grants that are involved, grant applications, contracts, and publications listing such support; (3) describes the specific allegations of research misconduct considered in the investigation; (4) includes a description of the general procedures under which the inquiry was conducted, including reference to these procedures as well as any federal regulations governing the conduct of the inquiry; (5) identifies and summarizes the research records and evidence reviewed and identifies any evidence taken into custody but not reviewed; (6) includes a statement of findings for each allegation of research misconduct identified during the investigation; and (7) recommends institutional actions, as appropriate.
- b. Each statement of findings should (1) identify whether the research misconduct was falsification, fabrication, or plagiarism, and whether it was committed intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly; (2) summarize the facts and the analysis that support the conclusion and consider the merits of any reasonable explanation by the respondent, including any effort by respondent to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she did not engage in research misconduct because of honest error or a difference of opinion; (3) identify the specific funding support; (4) identify whether any publications need correction or retraction; (5) identify the person(s) responsible for the misconduct; and (6) list any current support or known applications or proposals for support that the respondent has pending with any federal agencies.
- c. The record of the investigation should include the recording or transcript of all witness interviews.
- d. Prior to the submission of its report, the investigation committee, through the RIO, will provide the respondent with a copy of the draft investigation report and a copy of or supervised access to the evidence on which the report is based, including copies of any documents and materials. Respondent must also receive any witness statements, recordings, or transcripts produced during the investigation if not previously provided to the respondent pursuant to VIII.A(f).
- e. The respondent will be asked to provide any comments on the report to the RIO and committee chair within thirty (30) calendar days. The RIO will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether the report or relevant portions thereof should also be provided to the complainant for comment within thirty (30) days. The committee will decide whether, in view of any comments received, any revisions to the report are warranted and will then provide the final report to the RIO.
- f. The RIO will provide the final report as well as any comments submitted by the respondent to the Provost.

**Conceptual Framework**



**METHOD**

This research was a case study research because it conducted in certain place that is SMA Negeri 3 Tolitoli. The research report merely performed qualitative data. Mc. Millan and Schumacher(2010) have defined comparatively “Case study” as follows:

“A case study examines a bounded system, or a case, over time in depth, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting. The case may be a program, an event, an activity, or a set of individuals bounded in time and place.”

As defined above case study means intensive investigation of the particular unit represented. This case studied research was research that explained and described any pertinent things related to students’ effectiveness to teach vocabulary.

This research was conducted at the tenth grade students in SMA Negeri 3 Tolitoli, particularly the students of the grade X. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), population is a group of individuals that generalize the results of the research.

Cresswell (2009) states population is a group of individuals having the same characteristics. Sample is a part of population that to generalize the population. In relation to this research, the researcher employed total sampling. The sample of the research was grade X. There were 26 students.

In order to gain precise data, the researcher was the main actor in collecting data from the field of research. The researcher used some instruments to collect the data. The techniques were employed in this research consist of three techniques, they were school documentation, questionnaire, and interview. The researcher investigated student’s English vocabulary. The researcher took the result of five kinds of test as a the documents analysis namely, multiple choice, matching words, complete sentences, write the meaning, and write the original sentences from the teacher. These tests used to investigate their vocabulary mastery. An interview was conducted to gain data of the first respondent (teacher) perception toward the class process and the difficulties of teaching vocabulary. Questionnaire was used

to get additional information to support the data and to investigate the students' response in learning English vocabulary, consist of ten questions that must be answered by the students through crossing one of the options provided.

In collecting the data, some procedures of collecting data are required. In this reseacrh, the researcher firstly categorized the variable based on the research problem. In this parts, the researcher took the following procedure: The researcher took the test as the document analysis from the teacher to investigate the students English vocabulary. The researcher analyzed the result of the students test based on the rubric vocabulary mastery. The researcher conducted an interview with the English teacher related to her perception about the way of teaching vocabulary, the difficulties of teaching vocabulary, and the preparation to teaching vocabulary in the classroom. The researcher distributed questionnaire items to fill in then to know the percentage of students problem tread.

After the data collection was totally done, the procedure to analyze data was determined. This research applied the following procedures in analyzing data, and

the triangulation scheme to be used in this research. This scheme consisted of 5 (five) part process: data collection, data reduction, data dispay, temporary conclusion, and final conclusion. i.e., after the data have been collected, selected, categorized, compared, and synthesized, they were analyzed, reduced and displayed.

To analyze data of test and questionnaire items the researcher applied percentage formula proposal by Sugiono (2009).

$$p \frac{\epsilon f}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

P= Percentage

$\epsilon f$ = Sum of frequency

N= Number of sampel

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

According to Heaton (1988:51-63) the role of technique assessing vocabulary that are now bein employed:

“A variety of question are used, chosen the following types, multiple choice, matching, and completion. The first task for the writer of a vocabulary test is in determine the degree which he or she wishes to concentrate on testing the students active or passive vocabulary.

**Table 1: Test Classification on Vocabulary Mastery**

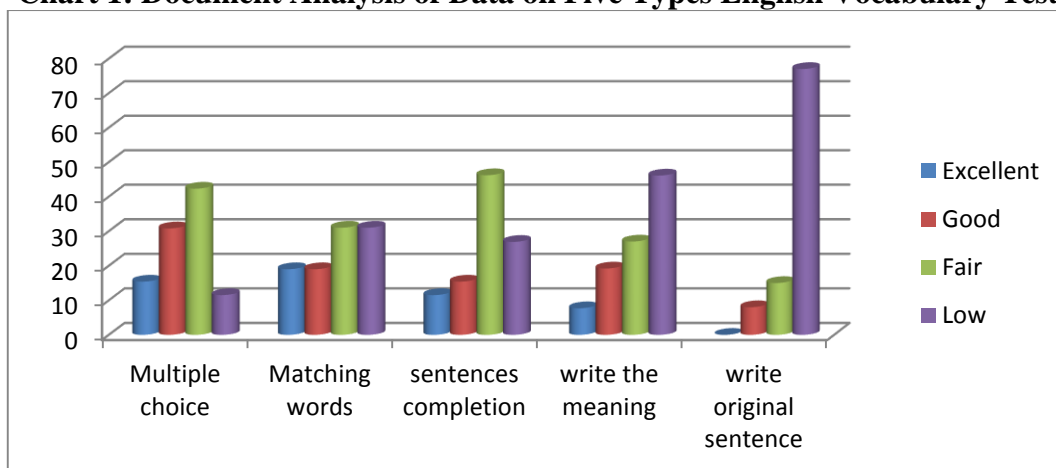
Students	Test Classification					Total	Score	Category
	Multiple choice	Matching words	Complete sentences	Write the meaning	Write original sentence			
ISM	80	100	70	60	60	370	74	Good
RSL	80	100	80	70	60	390	78	Excellent
TFK	20	50	50	10	10	140	28	Low
IKS	30	60	20	10	10	130	26	Low
PSP	60	20	40	20	10	150	30	Low
SHR	20	20	60	10	10	120	24	Low
IRW	50	40	30	40	10	170	34	Low
AGS	40	30	50	40	10	170	34	Low
FTR	80	90	80	70	50	370	74	Good
FHR	80	50	40	60	50	280	56	Good

ANW	60	40	30	30	10	170	34	Low
SSM	60	60	70	50	50	290	58	Good
FDL	60	30	50	20	10	170	34	Low
ISD	70	90	80	80	10	330	66	Good
CI	60	40	50	30	10	190	38	Fair
GBR	40	20	40	60	10	170	34	Low
ALD	50	60	70	50	50	280	56	Good
AU	50	50	50	10	10	170	34	Low
EK	50	60	40	10	20	180	36	Fair
RIL	60	20	30	50	10	170	34	Low
ZTN	40	60	20	30	20	170	34	Low
FZN	40	80	50	80	10	260	52	Fair
PR	40	40	50	30	10	170	34	Low
HIJR	40	50	30	40	10	170	34	Low
NVT	60	30	40	30	10	170	34	Low
HJR	50	20	20	40	10	140	28	Low

The table indicates that there was 1 (RSL) out of 26 students got high score (78) in excellent category from five types of the tests: multiple choice, matching words, sentence completion, write the meaning, and

write the original sentence. There were 6 out of 26 students got good category, 3 out of 26 students got fair category, and 16 out of 26 students got low score from five types of the test.

**Chart 1: Document Analysis of Data on Five Types English Vocabulary Test**



After analyzing the students' result of the test as the document analysis from the teacher above the researcher found that among the vocabulary tests were employed to the students, most of them or 93% failed the test about composing original sentences, because

the students did not have enough knowledge about sentence, structure, and grammar

**Result of the Questionnaire**

The researcher obtained the data about the investigation of students' respon are in learning English vocabulary that consist of

ten questions that were answered by the students through crossing one of the options provided. The purpose of doing this questionnaire as the next step is to find out

some information about the students' vocabulary mastery. The information obtained by the researcher is presented as in the following table:

**Table 2: Result of the Questionnaire**

Question	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Are you happy with the teacher's way in teaching?	a. Always	5	19.2
	b. Often	10	38.4
	c. Seldom	11	42.4
	d. Never	-	0
2. Did your teacher teach you about certain vocabulary?	a. Always	8	31
	b. Often	12	46
	c. Seldom	5	19
	d. Never	1	4
3. Did your teacher give you assignment to master vocabulary?	a. Always	4	15
	b. Often	16	62
	c. Seldom	5	19
	d. Never	1	4
4. Do you memorize the vocabulary through.....	a. Context of the sentences	3	12
	b. Word transformation	-	0
	c. Using word in sentences	10	38
	d. Memorizing the meaning of the word	13	50
5. How do you learn the vocabulary through dictionary....	a. Using the meaning	3	12
	b. Using the word	4	15
	c. Pronunciation	9	35
	d. Usage in the sentences	10	38
6. How many vocabulary that you learn everyday	a. 2 – 4	8	31
	b. 5 – 7	8	31
	c. 8 – 10	10	38
	d. 7 – 10	-	0
7. Do you master more than one meaning of the word that you memorized.	a. Always	5	19
	b. Often	18	69
	c. Seldom	3	12
	d. Never	-	0
8. Do you use the vocabulary that	a. Always	9	35
	b. Often	7	27

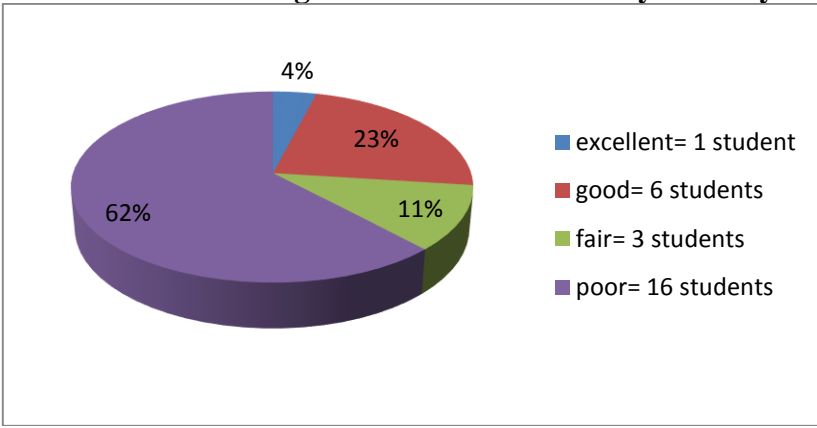


you memorize in the sentence..	c. Seldom	8	30
	d. Never	2	8
9. Can you make some sentences by using one vocabulary?	a. Always	2	8
	b. Often	13	50
	c. Seldom	10	38
	d. Never	1	4
10. What problem that you found in mastering vocabulary?	a. Affix and suffix	2	8
	b. Derivation	4	15
	c. Characteristics of vocabulary	6	23
	d. All of them	14	54

The table indicates that question (1) more than 40% students chose options C “seldom” category, it means that there were 10 out of 26 students seldom happy with the teacher’s way in teaching; (2) more than 40% students chose options B “often” category to their teacher teach them about certain vocabulary; (3) more than 60% students chose options B “often” category to their teacher giving them the assignment to master vocabulary; (4) there were 50% students memorizing the vocabulary through memorizing the meaning of the word; (5) there were 10 out of 26 (38%) students learn the vocabulary through dictionary by using it in the sentences; (6) more than 35% students

learned 8 – 10 vocabulary everyday; (7) almost 70% students chose options B “often” category to mastering more than one the meaning of the word that they memorized; (8) there were 9 out of 26 students (35%) chose option A “always” category to use the vocabulary that they memorize in the sentences; (9) there were 50% students’ option B chose “often” category to make some sentences by using one vocabulary; (10) more than 50% students chose option D “all of them problem” that they found in mastering vocabulary. Thus, most of students found all of the three problems in mastering vocabulary.

**Chart 2: Percentage of Students Vocabulary Mastery**



Based on the percentage of students’ English vocabulary, it was found that 4% students got excellent category, 23% students got good category, 11% students got fair category and 62% students got low category.

It indicates that the most of students English vocabulary in low category.

After analyzing the students’ result of the test as the document analysis from the teacher, questionnaire and interview that the

most common beliefs among students about rote learning strategies in learning new vocabulary. Mohammad Ta'amneh (2014: 157) found that students ignored using applying images and sounds strategy in their learning new vocabulary. It seems that they followed the way of learning vocabulary practices in their school. They thought that using learning vocabulary without using this strategy might save their time and effort. There were three main factors considered affected the students vocabulary mastery. They were the less of interesting study English, lack of vocabulary, the difficulties in understanding and identifying the concept of English. The explanation of the factors as follows:

a. Less of Interest English Study

Students always ignore using the dictionary to make some sentence. Mohammad Ta'amneh (2014:157) states that students also ignored using dictionary in their learning new vocabulary. It seems that the students' ignorance of the strategy stemmed from the fact that most of students did not need dictionaries in their daily life outside the classroom; beside that, the students had already learned the meaning of the new vocabulary from the ready answer which helped them to know the meaning of the new words without efforts. Teachers might justify this by saying that their students' active participant could be an indicator of their understanding of the use and meaning of new vocabulary. Furthermore, they thought that the teachers might not give them enough time to find new vocabulary items and they did not learn them how to dictionaries appropriately in order to find the meaning, pronunciation.

b. Lack of Vocabulary

The researcher found out the students' vocabulary mastery was still lack either noun, verb, or adjective. Because of the lack of vocabulary, some students confessed that it obstructed them in activities of learning such as asking some questions to the teachers. When this problem happened to the students,

it would obstruct the fluency of activities in teaching and learning at class. When the students did not understand their learning, then the students did not want to ask the questions because they cannot use English well to ask the questions as a result, it would make the students disadvantages. In addition, the other students confessed that they had problems such as in the mastery of vocabulary. Their vocabulary was lack and sufficiently to supported their learning, therefore the process of teaching and learning English was conducted ineffectively.

c. Difficulty in Understanding and Identifying Concepts of English

Other constraints that happened to the students during the English teaching and learning process were difficulty in understanding and identifying the concept of English. It might happen because the lack of vocabulary itself. When the students were lack in vocabulary, it was difficult for students to understand the concept as well. In addition, the result of the questionnaire indicated that most of students' unhappy with the teacher's way in teaching. The students is unhappy about grade on a paper, project, exam, of the course itself. They need to persuade the teacher, who has complete control over the grade, to change his or her mind. The grade decision has already been made, most teachers feel some pressure to defend their decision. Teachers also know how badly students want good grades whether they deserve them or not.

According to other researchers about the investigation vocabulary, there is no differentiate between this result and their results. It means that the students' knowledge about vocabulary still low, because many factors affected them.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

The students' result of document analysis on the five types of vocabulary test show that students' English vocabulary is still low. The students are able; 1) to choose only a few the correct answer provided in multiple choice; 2) to match only a few words to their meaning in matching words question types; 3) to complete only a few sentences with the correct vocabulary words in sentences completion; 4) to write only a few meaning for write the meaning questions type in write the meaning; and 5) to write a sentences for only a few words for write original sentences questions type in write original sentences. Three main factors which affect students' English vocabulary are: 1) lack of interest English study, 2) lack of vocabulary, and 3) the difficulties in understanding and identifying the concept of English.

### Suggestion

- a. The students: 1) to increase their English vocabulary by doing some exercises dealt with multiple choice, matching words, complete sentence, write the meaning, and write the original sentence; and 2) to change their common custom from using Indonesian language to the English language as a medium of communication suddenly.
- b. The teacher: 1) should be able to provide an effective learning strategy to improve the students English vocabulary; 2) to classify the students' problem in English vocabulary and provide solution to cope with their problem.

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