# INTRODUCTION

## Background of the Study

Vocabulary is one of the essential things when we learn a language. According to Ur (1991), one of the essential aspects of language teaching is vocabulary, besides grammar and pronunciation. In line with this, Richard & Renandya (2002) stated that a core component of language proficiency providing much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write is vocabulary. The more people master vocabulary, the more fluent they speak, read, listen, and read. In learning a foreign language (English language), students should know about vocabulary because they will try to express the idea and communicate by knowing the words.

However, students are still not familiar with the vocabulary learning strategy (Amirian, 2013). Most did not use specific vocabulary learning strategies such as semantic maps and discovering meaning through group work activities. It is contrary to the notion that all students must have their learning strategy on their own to learn vocabulary. According to Brown (2001), vocabulary items are a boring list of words that must be defined and memorized by students. That is one of the reasons why Indonesian students do not want to memorize vocabulary. It is also further studied by Thornbury (2002) that without vocabulary, the idea will be failed to be conveyed.

Several studies have been done to investigate vocabulary learning strategies used by English as a Foreign Language students. Yeh & Wang (2004) showing that cognitive strategies were reported as the most frequently used strategies while social strategies were the least frequently used. Also, there is research from Bai (2018) that stated the metacognitive vocabulary learning strategies used to study the students. Another research found that the metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies among foreign language learners (Cengizhan, 2010). Amirian (2013) stated in their research that the order of strategy used: determination, cognitive, memory, metacognitive, and social strategies. In particular, the most popular strategies were guessing from context and using a dictionary. Bakti (2017) stated on their research that on learning vocabulary, students choose practical, simple, and fast strategies. Strategies such as checking if the word is also an Indonesian word, guessing the word’s meaning from the context, asking the teacher to give the definition, studying the word with their classmates, remembering the word by studying, and paying attention to the word’s spelling, underling the word, and using English media were frequently choose in this study. One of the studies that also related to the topic has shown that the most and least used strategies showed that while the determination strategies were not operating as much as the other strategies (ÇELİK, Serkan, & TOPTAŞ, 2010). Hassan & Abubakr (2015) stated in their research that the participants use for learning new vocabulary, 46% of the respondents prefer ‘watching movies’ rather than the other ways. This way might be more enjoyable and easier for them as strategies could be any method the learners may use to make learning easier. 36% of the participants also are asked whether they guess the meaning of new words from the context or look up the dictionary. Also, there is research from Hadi & Xihuang (2020) that stated learners preferred learning words through use (contextual learning) rather than memorization. They also could identify, select, and understand essential words. Furthermore, the learners preferred more readings and the feedback they received. They relied primarily on a dictionary, guessing, repetition, and auditory encoding in learning vocabulary. Wu (2015) they showed in their research that the traditional method of study encouraged by the Taiwanese school system requires students to memorize English grammar and vocabulary through repetition. Patahudding Syawal & Bin-Tahir (2017) they showed that their study was born out of ways EFL learners learn English vocabulary, such as doing the assignment, practicing English pronunciation, learning English tenses, practicing English dialogue, English translation exercises, reading English text, memorizing, and writing practice.

Based on the statement above, most of previous studies focused on learning strategies used by students in general. Therefore, the studies centered on type of learning strategies used by young learner and still few. Hence, this study aiming to investigate type f learning strategies used by young learners.

## Research Question

Based on the background study above, this study will investigate:

What learning strategies do young learners employ in enriching their vocabulary?

## Research Objective

Based on the research question. The objective can be stated as follows:

To find out strategies used by young learners in learning vocabulary.

## Significance of The Study

Theoretically this research expects to increase readers’ knowledge about strategies that used by EFL students at the Junior High School level to employ in enriching their vocabulary. In addition, this study can use by other researchers as an additional reference. Professionally, further research regarding strategies that used by EFL students at the Junior High School level to employ in enriching their vocabulary can positively impact another researcher.

## Definition of Terminologies

Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects in language teaching, beside grammar and pronunciation. As a stock of words used by a person, it can be defined, roughly as the words we teach in the foreign language (Ur, 1991).

(Schmitt, 2002) explains that vocabulary learning strategy (VLS) can empower learners and attract their attention in language learning to improve their vocabulary development.