CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The research

As an international language English has four basic skills. These four language skills are developed from language components; structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling. In this research, vocabulary will be focused as one of the language components.

Vocabulary is included to language elements that an English learner must master. Napa (1991) stated that vocabulary is one of the language components and no language exists without words. Based on the previous explanation, it can be stated that if the students want to master English, they must master the vocabulary. It means that the good mastery of vocabulary will improve and increase the English achievement.

It is generally acknowledged among language teachers and learners that vocabulary is considered by both first-language and second-language researchers as an essential factor in language mastery. The previous study belonged to Wiranti, S.pd that entitled "A Study on The Correlation between The Vocabulary Competence..."
and English Learning Achievement of The Fourth Semester Students of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto in Academic year 2003/2004” showed that there was positive correlation between students’ vocabulary competence and their English learning achievement. It does prove that vocabulary is the crucial thing in learning English as a second language. Besides, another previous study belongs to Mohd. Sahandri Gani Hamzah Ph D Assoc Prof that entitled “Vocabulary Learning Strategies of Iranian Undergraduate EFL Students and its Relation to their Vocabulary Size” showed that there was a correlation between the students’ vocabulary size and the whole of the vocabulary learning strategies with the index correlation was 0.423. It showed that the variance value of students’ vocabulary size correlated significantly with all vocabulary learning strategies.

Although Vocabulary has always been a crucial part of language learning and communication, learning vocabulary is not something easy. Sometimes the learner is hard to find how to discover the meaning of new words, how to store them in their memory, and how to use them by practicing and expanding their vocabulary. To make students easy in learning vocabulary, they need some strategies in learning vocabulary.
Strategies are essential tools for developing vocabulary competence. Without strategies, the students will find it difficult to learn and acquire the meanings of new words, to store them in their memory and to use them in appropriate situations, or to expand their vocabulary size. Twinning (1992) states that to be successful in learning, students should know some factors influencing the success in learning language such as characteristics as a learners, the nature of materials to be learnt, the critical task of learning, and the variety of learning strategy. From the statement above, it can be concluded that strategies is one of important aspects to make the students successful in their learning vocabulary. Through appropriate vocabulary learning strategies in learning vocabulary, the students will find it easier to master vocabulary.

Therefore, it is unavoidable for language learners have to deal with vocabulary and vocabulary mastery. So that the correlation between the students’ vocabulary mastery and their strategies in learning vocabulary were investigated to the fourth semester of English Department of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto in the academic year 2013/2014.

Hopefully, this thesis gives some positive contribution in learning process, especially in learning vocabulary. First, the students can add their vocabulary stocks and increase the vocabulary
mastery as many as possible by using vocabulary learning strategies and they can apply the different strategies in their learning based on their characteristics. Second, this thesis can help the lecturer must become knowledgeable about vocabulary learning strategies. Third, the lecturer can motivate the students more in choosing and applying which strategies that is appropriate with their characters.

B. Reason for Choosing the Topic

There are several reasons why “The Correlation between Students’ Vocabulary Mastery and Vocabulary Learning Strategies” is chosen for the topic. They are as follows:

1. Vocabulary is one of the components in English. By mastering vocabulary the students can learn English easily, especially in understanding the sentences or native speaker.

2. What is the role of vocabulary learning strategies in helping the students learn vocabulary is interested to know.

3. Whether there is any significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and vocabulary learning strategies or not is interested to know.

4. Vocabulary learning strategies are important ways in mastering vocabulary because without strategies the students will be difficult how to learn vocabulary properly.
C. The Problem of the Research

The problems of this research are stated by the question:

1. What ability is the vocabulary mastery of the fourth semester students of English department of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto in the academic year 2013/2014?

2. Is there any dominant strategy used by students among those vocabulary learning strategies?

3. Is there any influence between the students’ vocabulary mastery and each vocabulary learning strategies which are determination strategy, social strategy, memory strategy, Cognitive strategy, and metacognitive strategy.

4. Is there any correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their vocabulary strategies.

5. Is there dominant strategy among those vocabulary learning strategies?

D. The Aims of the Research

The aims of this research are as follows:

1. to find out the students’ vocabulary mastery especially the ability in determining synonym and related words of the fourth semester students of English department of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto in the academic year of 2013/2014.

2. to find out the dominant strategy used by students.
3. to find out the influence between students’ vocabulary mastery with each vocabulary learning strategies used by students.

4. to find out whether or not there is a correlation between the students’ vocabulary mastery and vocabulary learning strategies of the fourth students of English department of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto in the academic year of 2013/2014.

E. The Clarifications of Terms

1. Students’ Vocabulary Mastery

   Vocabulary is word as units that were part of grammatical patterns (Lado, 1977: 182). According to Fries in Ratnawati (2006: 17) mastery is meant as the ability to use or to understand “all the words” of the language. Thus, this research deals with the students’ ability in determining the synonym and related words of certain vocabulary items and their usage in sentences to express ideas, opinion, and feelings in communication.

   From the definition above, it can be concluded that students’ vocabulary mastery is an ability to use or understand the words.

2. Learning Strategy

   Willing in Nunan (1991: 168) says that learning strategy is the mental processes which learners employ to learn and use the target language.
Learning strategy in this research focused on vocabulary learning strategy. The theory from Schmitt will be used in this research because those vocabulary learning strategies are commonly used by students. They are determination strategy, social strategy, memory strategy, cognitive strategy, and metacognitive strategy. Later, those strategies will be correlated with the students’ vocabulary mastery. In the end, the correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their vocabulary learning strategies will be known.

F. The limitation of the Study

Although the research has reached the aim, there are some unavoidable limitations because of the limit. This research would be limited into four problems. First, the students’ ability in determining the synonym and related words. Second, the most dominant strategy used by students and third the influence between students’ vocabulary mastery and each strategies used by students, and fourth, the correlation between students’ vocabulary mastery and their vocabulary learning strategies will be investigated.