

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

English is an international language which is used in many countries over the world and widely used in many sectors such as trade, education, economic, and technology. In Indonesia, English has an important role to absorb and develop science, technology, arts, and culture to establish a good relationship with other nations. For that purpose, English is taught as the first foreign language in all schools from junior high school to university, even in elementary school and kindergarten, English taught as an elective subject or local curriculum content.

There are four language skills that should be achieved in studying English as a foreign language. These four language skills are developed from four components; structure, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling. Those components are important in learning language but vocabulary is the most important because no language can exist without words and vocabulary.

Nunan (1998:117) argues that vocabulary is essential or successful second language used because without an extensive vocabulary, students will be unable to use the structure and function. Then it is supported by Napa (1991: 30) who says that vocabulary is one of the basic components of language and there is no language without word.

Words can be combined into sentences, and can be used to communicate with other. When people want to communicate their ideas effectively, they need to use certain number of words. The more words used, the clear ideas can be shared.

If students have a rich of vocabulary, they will not get difficulties in combining words into sentence.

In accumulating vocabulary, every student has different strategies to learn and increase their vocabulary. Lecturers or teachers should know their strategies, so that they can give the appropriate way to facilitate the students in learning vocabulary. The appropriately way in learning vocabulary can determine the success of students' of vocabulary mastery.

There are many examples of students' strategy of learning vocabulary. Some of them are: learning vocabulary using song, learning vocabulary using dictionary, and learning vocabulary by guessing the meaning. To the students who learn vocabulary using song, the lecturer can give the song to accommodate students with this tendency. For the students who learn vocabulary using dictionary, the lecturer should give assignment to make students use the dictionary if they get the difficult words. The students who learn vocabulary by guessing the meaning, the lecturer should distribute the text and ask the students to analyze part of the sentence.

Based on the test conducted by the researcher at the fourth semester students of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto, the problem faced by the students was that sometimes the students make mistakes in translating the word in a sentence. For example: the word *sink*. The students were confused whether *sink* here mean *stoward the bottom of liquid* or *a large open container for washing dishes*. The problem is due to the fact that the students do not know that the word *sink* can be used as noun and verb. To determine whether *sink* is verb or noun, the students should analyze the sentence. The possible reason of this problem is the students have less ability in

absorbing the material. Moreover, inappropriate way in learning vocabulary can be a reason why learning vocabulary is difficult.

A research use among English education students' had been conducted by Maya Novita Sari in 2011. From her study, it could be concluded that use of vocabulary learning strategies can increase the students' vocabulary mastery.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in carry out a research on the strategies of English vocabulary learning. Therefore, a research entitled "A study on vocabulary learning strategies in English department" will be conducted on the fourth semester students of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto in academic year 2013/2014.

B. Reason For choosing the topic

There are two reasons why "a study on vocabulary learning strategies in English department" is chosen as a topic of this research. Those are:

1. Vocabulary is a part of sentence by getting much vocabulary we can learn English well.
2. Students' Vocabulary learning strategies are important to know to enable teachers or lecturers to facilitate the learning process appropriately.

C. Problem of the research

The problems in this research are:

- a. What strategies do the students employ in learning vocabulary?
- b. What is dominant strategy used by the students?

D. The aims of the research

The aims of this research are briefly stated as follows:

- a. To find out what kinds of students' strategies in learning vocabulary
- b. To find out the most dominant strategy that used by the students in learning vocabulary

E. Classification of term

a. Study

Study in the new Grolier Webster International Dictionary(1976: 972) study means application of the mind to books, to arts or science or to any subject for the purpose of learning

b. Vocabulary

The total number of words with rules for combining them to make up a language; words known to a person or used in a particular books, subject, etc, lexis list or words with their meaning especially one which accompanies a text book in foreign language oxford (1998: 1425)

c. Learning strategies

Learning strategies are mental processes that learners employ to learn and use the target language Nunan (1991:168)

F. Contribution of the research

It is expected that this research can give significant value to the students, the lecturer and the other researchers.

a. To the Lecturer

Hopefully, the result of the research can be alternative for Lecturers to help the students in comprehending English. Thus, student can get the intended knowledge from vocabulary and also create a good progress in learning English

b. To the other researchers

This research can be useful source for other researcher to conduct a research with the same topic. In addition, it can be used as a motivation for other researcher to develop another better research.

