

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

In this globalization era, English is very important to be learnt. English belongs to foreign languages that should be understood well by the students. There are several elements in language, such as grammatical, rules, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Those elements are important in learning language but vocabulary is the most important because no language can exist without words or vocabulary.

Words can be combined into sentence, and it can be used to communicate with other. When people want to communicate their ideas more effectively, they need more words. The more words used, the clear ideas can be shared. If students have much vocabulary or words, they are able to communicate easily with other. They will not think about what word next in their communication.

To combine vocabulary into a good sentence, students must have a good knowledge. Knowledge here means the students' ability in combining a word with another word into appropriate sentence. If students have a good knowledge, they will not get difficulties in combining words into sentence. In fact, only some students have good knowledge and able to combine words into good sentences.

Based on pre-observation which was done by the writer at the fourth semester students of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto, the problems

faced by the students were: first, the students made a mistake in arranging the words in a sentence. For example: word *also*, this word should be placed at the first (I also work there) but sometimes the students put this word in the middle (I work also there). Second, the students also felt difficult in finding the meaning or the synonym of the words. This case happened when the teacher asked the students to translate the word *sink*. The students confused whether *sink* here means *toward the bottom of liquid or a large open container for washing the dishes*.

Based on the data taken from Vocabulary Test done by the lecturer, some students had good score but it did not reach 100 % from the total students. Their problems were almost the same which were the difficulties in finding the synonym of the words and arranging them. The possible reason of this problem was the students had less ability in absorbing the material. Moreover, inappropriate way in learning vocabulary could be a reason why learning vocabulary is difficult.

Most of the students always use their own way to learn vocabulary. They do not know that there are some learning strategies that can be implemented to learn vocabulary. These learning strategies can help the students in learning and understanding the words easier. Actually learning vocabulary is not difficult since the students know the appropriate strategies to learn it. Using appropriate and right strategies can help the students in learning vocabulary.

## **B. Reason for Choosing the Topic**

The reason why “A Study of Vocabulary Learning Strategies used by English Education Students” chosen as a topic was because vocabulary is an important part of language that is used for communication. However, only some students have rich vocabulary. This research was conducted to know the learning strategies used by the students in learning vocabulary.

## **C. Problems of the Study**

The problems in this research were:

1. What strategies did the students employed in learning vocabulary?
2. What was the dominant strategy used by the fourth semester students in Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto?

## **D. The Aim of the Study**

There were some aims in this research:

1. To know kinds of students' strategies in learning vocabulary.
2. To know the most dominant strategy that used by the students in learning vocabulary.

## **E. Clarification of Terms**

### 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, 1989 : 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 Study**

The writer hopes that this thesis gives positive contribution in the teaching and learning process, especially for English lecturer and students. The lecturer has to realize that every student has different learning strategy in learning vocabulary and it will make different approach to teach and learn language. Through this research, the writer hopes that the lecturer can teach vocabulary to the students with the appropriate strategy. Beside that, the writer hopes that the students know their own strategy in learning vocabulary.