Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents several points to reveal an accurate discussion of the main problem of the research. This chapter elaborates the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objective of the study, significance of the study, and the outline of the research.

Background of Study

English language has become one of the important aspects in the globalization era. It is used as a means of interaction in the international community. English as the international language has an important role because almost every country uses it for communication including for education, business and general interaction. Moreover, English language is usually used for interaction between different language backgrounds in the communication.

In Indonesia, English language becomes a special subject because English is the first foreign language that is taught as a compulsory subject at secondary or even primary school. According to Lestari (2003), English language is taught in early level because young students can learn English language better than the adults. Though English has been taught at school and it is considered as a very important subject to be examined, many students cannot master this language. Students generally find difficulties to study English if English language is not their mother tongue.

There are several factors which affect students' performance in English learning. According to Souriyavongsa, Sam, Mohammad and Leong (2013), the problem in English learning is that students are too dependent on the teacher. They also mention other factors which

are the lack of support from environment, and also lack of motivation to learn English. Students are scared about committing mistakes while they speak. The students also cannot express themselves well because they are lack of adequate and appropriate vocabulary. Another factor mentioned by Souriyavongsa et. al. (2013) that makes students difficult to learn English is that they are shy and nervous. The students feel fearful to speak English in front of other people because they are lack of confidence on their own competence in English.

From the above problems, the most common problem faced by students especially students of English Education Department of UMY is the lack of vocabulary. It can be seen when students are discussing, speaking and presenting in English. They find difficulty to find right words to express their mind. In this case, vocabulary is the common problem that is faced by students.

In relation to language learning, Vocabulary mastery should become a priority in language learning. Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) state that vocabulary learning has been regarded as one of the most important parts in a second or foreign language acquisition. Pikulski and Shane (2004) explain that vocabulary is an important aspect to know the meaning of text. It means that vocabulary is very important for English learning.

Student should have various strategies to learn vocabulary. According to Souriyavongsa et. al. (2013), strategy is defined as manners to increase language learning of learners. It helps students to acquire the language easier and appropriate strategy can influence students learning achievements. Therefore, in order to help learners to learn and master vocabulary successfully, they need to be exposed to various vocabulary learning strategies.

Based on the researcher's observation and informal interview, PBI UMY students face some difficulties to learn English in terms of vocabulary in some language skills. In reading, they

are difficult to understand the meaning of new or unfamiliar words. EED UMY students do not have strong vocabulary knowledge that makes them struggle to understand the meaning from text while reading textbook. In writing skill, they are weak to write their ideas or opinion because they do not know a lot of vocabulary and do not know how to express it in English. Also for speaking skill, students feel difficult to understand new concept presented in oral discussion because of the lack of vocabulary.

The informal interview with some students resulted the followings. Although the vocabulary becomes a big problem for EED UMY students in learning English, they have some strategies to learn it. One of strategy is listening to the music. It is not only giving more new words but also entertaining them when learning English vocabulary. Other strategies used by EED UMY students are by reading some articles and finding some new words that they do not understand then they open the dictionary. Moreover, when they are listening to the cassette or someone speaking, they take note.

Based on the above background, the researcher is interested to conduct the research to find out what problems faced by EED UMY students in mastering vocabulary and what strategies used by students to learn vocabulary.

Statement of the Problem

English has many important aspects to study but one of the important aspects to learn English is vocabulary. The reason is without mastering vocabulary, learning English is not easy. Vocabulary has important role in learning English. The reason is because vocabulary is as foundation to master other English skills. However, many students have difficulties to learn it.

They could not remember some vocabularies that they have got or known already and they do not remember the word spelling. They also do not know the meaning of the new words. Learning vocabulary is not immediately, it needs process. So, vocabulary usually becomes problem to learn English. Although Ellis (1994) argues that it is highly unlikely for foreign language learners to master vocabulary like natives, there are some strategies that students can use to master vocabulary easily. It can make students feel motivated and enjoy to study.

Research Questions

1. What are the problems faced by EED UMY students in learning vocabulary?

2. What are vocabulary learning strategies mostly used by EED UMY students?

The Objectives of the Research

This research is to investigate the problems faced by EED UMY students in learning vocabulary. Furthermore, the study also aims at revealing strategies mostly used by students of EED UMY to master vocabulary.

The Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give the following significances. The result of the study is hoped to benefit the following parties, consisting of researcher, teachers, and students.

Researcher

From this research, the researcher knows the problems that are faced by students in learning vocabulary and the kinds of strategies that are used by student in learning vocabulary. The result of this research can be used as a reference in the similar research.

Students

The result of this research can help students to know the kinds of strategy that are beneficial to help them in learning vocabulary. Besides, the students can apply the strategies discussed in this study in the learning process.

Teachers

From this research, teacher can increase their ability in teaching process in order to help the student's master vocabulary. Besides, teachers can apply the kinds of strategies to teach vocabulary.

Outline of the Research

This research report is arranged sequencely as the following:

Chapter I is the introduction of the research. In this chapter, the researcher discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research question, the objective of the research, the significance of the research and the outline of the research. Chapter II is the literature review. This chapter consists of vocabulary and vocabulary learning, the types of vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary in language learning, the problems faced by the students in learning vocabulary and the strategies used by students in learning vocabulary. Besides, this chapter also presents some previous related studies on vocabulary learning strategies. Chapter III is the methodology. This chapter explains the design of the research, population and sample, instrument of the research, setting, data collection technique, data analysis technique. Chapter IV presents finding and discussion of the research, in which the chapter focuses on answering two research questions which are posed by researcher in this research including the problems faced by EED UMY students in learning vocabulary and vocabulary learning strategies are mostly used by EED UMY students. Finally, chapter V

presents the conclusion and the suggestion of the research. It draws conclusion as the general

answer of the research questions.