CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a brief overview encompassing the research background, identification of problem, delimitation of problem, research questions, research objectives, and the significance of the study.

Background of The Study

In the present day, English has become a standard part of education for students at various levels in Indonesia. Beginning from elementary school and extending through higher education, the acquisition of English proficiency is recognized as a practical skill for effective communication in the contemporary global landscape. According to Chen and Yang (2014), the primary objective of learning English as an international language is to facilitate communication with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Additionally, English serves as a means to convey ideas through both written and spoken formats.

Moreover, in the process of learning English, students require tools to support their activities. There are numerous learning tools available that can assist students in acquiring proficiency in English. One such tool is a dictionary (Ortega & Gonzalez, 2016). In the contemporary era, individuals across the globe seamlessly integrate technology into their daily lives—it has become an inherent part of their routines. The internet and electronic devices offer convenient communication options, unrestricted by time or location. Beyond personal interactions, technology plays a crucial role in education, aiding educators in refining their teaching methodologies, and students in enhancing their

learning experiences. This trend is particularly observable in regions like Indonesia, where educators increasingly leverage technology to enrich their teaching approaches, and students, in turn, find it instrumental in their academic pursuits.

As for dictionaries, they too have undergone a notable transformation. From relying on thick printed books, people have shifted towards the use of online dictionaries. This transition facilitates easy word searches on various devices, and online dictionaries boast features such as instant updates and multimedia elements. The move from traditional printed dictionaries to online platforms signifies more than just a change in appearance; it represents a reconsideration of how information about words is compiled, updated, and shared in this digital age. Tulgar (2017) expressed that the advantages of an online dictionary include being more technologically advanced, allowing quick searches, providing audio for pronunciation, and offering easy access. In addition, Zheng and Wang (2016) say that dictionary can also help language learners in other aspects such as checking pronunciation, spelling, and unknown words.

The development of this dictionary tool is expected to assist students in learning English. The use of English is not common among students whose mother tongue is not English, especially in Indonesia. It's not surprising that English is only utilized during school learning activities. This leads to students being unfamiliar with a wide range of English vocabulary. According to information on the official website of the Oxford English Dictionary, they encompass more than 600,000 vocabularies, excluding jargon, slang, and other language variations (accessed in 27th January 2024, at 11:25 AM). Conversely, as indicated by Abdul Khak (2023), the Head of the Language and Literature Development Center within the Language Development and Guidance Agency under the

Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, the estimated vocabulary of the Indonesian language stands at around 120,000 words. This substantial difference undoubtedly affects students' vocabulary mastery process, given the need for them to memorize a considerable amount of vocabulary.

Based on observations made by the researcher, it was found that many students already use online dictionaries, either on their smartphones or through websites. Some of them stated that online dictionaries are easy to use because they can be carried anywhere and accessed whenever they need. However, they also mentioned that online dictionaries can only be used when they have a good internet connection. As online dictionaries develop, they offer additional advantages that still need to be explored, and undoubtedly, there are some disadvantages that need to be improved. This became the basis for the researcher to conduct a study on the advantages and disadvantages of using online dictionaries titled: "Exploring the Use of Online Dictionary Among Tenth-Grade Students at State High School".

Identification of The Problem

The researcher identified several issues in English language learning activities among students at one state high school in Purworejo, Central Java, based on observations and brief interviews. Some of the problems encountered include students not being habituated to communicating in English. In the process of teaching English, teachers usually still use Indonesian, and students solely rely on English material from school, leading to a lack of habituation in using English.

Another issue is the low mastery of vocabulary. A low mastery in understanding students' vocabulary has repercussions on their ability to grasp the four basic skills in

English: writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Moreover, students exhibit low self-confidence in speaking English due to the absence of a glossary. The fear of making mistakes hinders them from practicing English during study activities and outside of class hours. Furthermore, the use of a conventional dictionary is deemed less efficient. Conventional dictionaries are not only bulky but also visually monotonous and unappealing, making students reluctant to carry and use them. In this study, the researcher aims to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of using online dictionaries through interviews with students.

Research Question

Based on the background explained above, this research is guided by the following questions. These are the research questions:

1. What are the advantages of the use of online dictionaries among tenth-grade students at State High School?
2. What are the disadvantages of the use of online dictionaries among tenth-grade students at State High School?

The Objectives of This Research

Based on the research questions above, this study has several objectives, including:

1. To explore the advantages of using an online dictionary among students of State High School.
2. To identify the disadvantages of using online dictionaries among students of State High School.

The Significances of This Research

English Teachers. This research offers insights into the perspectives of English teachers regarding the utilization of online dictionaries among tenth-grade students at State High School during learning activities. It also aims to encourage English teachers to contemplate the integration of online dictionaries among their students during classroom learning activities.

The Students. This research aims to provide new information to tenth-grade students in the State high school about the effective use of online dictionaries in learning English. This research is also expected to serve as a reference for students to utilize the advantages of online dictionaries as one of the tools for learning English.

Other Researchers. This research is expected to serve as a reference for other researchers when conducting studies related to the use of online dictionaries in English language learning activities for high school students. Additionally, the findings may provide insights for educators on how to effectively integrate online dictionaries into their teaching activities to enhance students' language ability.