

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This section serves as an introduction to the research. The background of the research explains the challenges faced by the Engineering students in mastering English vocabulary and the strategies of Engineering students in mastering English vocabulary. The identification of the problem section outlines the challenges, and the delimitation of the research defines the scope of the study, focusing on the challenges faced and strategies used by Engineering students in a private university in Yogyakarta. This chapter also contains the research questions, objectives, significance, and the organization of the chapters.

### **Research Background**

English is important for students, especially for Faculty of Engineering students because most of their textbooks are using English. According to Liermann-Zeljok and Ferčec (2015), the English language has replaced other languages as the primary means of communication for engineers because of the globalization movement and the rise in professional mobility. It is in line with the statement that English is a crucial language for educators, particularly in engineering and medical institutions where the ability to design academic activities in a second language is crucial (Hernández et al., 2012).

Students' speaking, writing, listening, and reading comprehension all depend heavily on their vocabulary. Students with strong vocabulary skills may be able to decipher the meaning of the material they are reading. If students are

proficient in many different vocabularies, they are also able to speak English effectively, and to develop their listening and writing skills. According to Zhou (2015), vocabulary may be used as a measuring stick to identify students' learning challenges. Students will have less problem in language learning if the students are proficient in vocabulary because as the meanings of new words are frequently stressed in publications and in classroom settings, developing one's vocabulary is crucial to learning a foreign language (Alqahtani, 2015). According to Bai (2018), One of the three components, the foundational component, of language is vocabulary.

Based on the researcher's observation and informal interview, Engineering students still find difficulties in understanding English especially in vocabulary although the textbook in their classes are usually in English. They generally see unknown words as the main problem. They have trouble deciphering the meaning of new or strange words when reading. They do not utilize English in their regular conversations; thus, they do not have a strong vocabulary. As a result, they find it difficult to comprehend the meaning of the words when reading a textbook.

The researcher is interested in looking at the challenges Engineering students faced in mastering English vocabulary language because of the background information given above. It is vital to understand the strategies engineering students use to acquire vocabulary based on the challenges above since these strategies might assist learners improve their vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, the researcher is interested in investigating the challenges and

strategies experienced by engineering students at Yogyakarta private university to learn vocabulary.

### **Identification of the Problems**

English language is important especially for students from Faculty of Engineering. By mastering vocabulary, students will find it easier when facing a sentence using English. However, there are many problems related to vocabulary learning such as strategies and challenges in vocabulary learning, motivation in vocabulary learning and idiomatic expression. Lack of vocabulary makes it difficult for learners to learn English since vocabulary is the starting point for learning English abilities. Based on information from Faculty of Engineering students, they often encounter words in English when studying most of Engineering subjects. They got two credits in English subject. They also stated that some learning module also use English. Some engineering students still struggle with it during their studies. They struggle to recall recently acquired words. Words that they already know the meaning of are readily forgotten by them. They frequently have no idea what new-acquired words imply. Based on the challenges above, there must be a strategy that can be used in learning English vocabulary. With strategies in learning English vocabulary, students will not find it difficult if they want to become a vocabulary mastery.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

To delimit this research, the researcher first focused on the challenges faced by Engineering students in learning vocabulary at private university in Yogyakarta in general. Then, the researcher also focused on the strategies used by Engineering students in learning English vocabulary in general. Data were taken from students' experiences. Vocabulary learning in this research happened in both inside and outside classroom.

### **Research Question**

According to the challenges described, the following problem formulations are argued:

1. What are the challenges faced by Engineering students in mastering English vocabulary at a private university in Yogyakarta?
2. What are the strategies used by Engineering students used in mastering English vocabulary at a private university in Yogyakarta?

### **Objectives of the Research**

1. To identify the challenges faced by the engineering students in mastering English vocabulary.
2. To explore the strategies of engineering students in mastering English vocabulary.

## **Significance of the Research**

After performing the research, the researcher expects that this study is beneficial to teachers, students, and future researchers.

**The teacher.** The researcher hopes that this study will help teachers recognize and comprehend their students' challenges in learning vocabulary. As a result, teachers may select the best strategies for them when teaching English vocabulary. Additionally, if a student only uses one strategy in learning English vocabulary, the teacher might encourage them to use multiple strategies.

**Students.** This paper can help students to find ideas on their English vocabulary learning strategies. By doing so, it will help students to understand English better.

**Future researchers.** This study provides some literature related to English vocabulary learning challenges and strategies as a reference.

## **Organization of the Chapters**

The organization of this research is divided into five chapters. The researcher introduces the study in the first chapter, which conveys the research background, identification of the research, delimitation of the problem, research question, objectives of the research, the significance of the research, and the organization of the research. The second chapter presents the literature review of learning strategy, vocabulary mastery, the importance of vocabulary in learning language, English vocabulary learning strategies, the problems faced by students

in English vocabulary learning. Besides, it also provides an overview of related studies. Then, chapter three presents the research methodology, research design, research setting, data collection method, data collecting procedure, research instrument, and data analysis. Furthermore, chapter four presents the results and discussion, and the last chapter concludes the research and provides recommendations.