

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section consists of background of the study, limitation of the study, research questions, objective of the study, benefits of the study, and organization.

A. Background of the study

English is the international language that used by all countries in the world. English has also been patented as an international language where everyone must be able to communicate using English. According to Richard and Schmidt (2010: 206) languages that are not the core language of the region are not used in everyday life. Usually the language is taught only in schools. The meaning of the quote means that a foreign language can be interpreted as a language that is not the native language of most people in a certain country or region, which is not used as a means of communication in government, media and so on. In. Foreign languages are taught as subjects in schools with the aim that students can communicate with foreigners or read literature in a foreign language.

Before that, students had to master vocabulary well in order to master English. Because vocabulary is very important in language. By mastering vocabulary, students can master four English language skills (writing, listening, reading, and speaking). Hornby (2006: 1645) states that vocabulary is everything that a person knows and uses in a particular language. The more vocabulary that is mastered, the person can master English well in addition to other English language components and skills. This shows that when someone has a lot of vocabulary, they can assemble words well and then convey information to others.

Vocabulary is the main thing a person must have in order to communicate well with one another. This is expressed by Laufer (1997: 54) who defines vocabulary as the core of language learning and language use because they make the essence of a language. Without the vocabulary they have, speakers cannot communication and convey meaning to one another. And also according to Hatch and Brown (1995: 1) vocabulary is a list / collection of words for a particular

language or a list / collection of words that may be used by each speaker to convey meaning and communicate with each other. Vocabulary is small and simple part of a particular language. According to the Oxford University press (2008) vocabulary is all words that mean in a particular language, all words that are mastered or used by speakers and a list of words along with their meanings for the second language. That is, vocabulary is the number of words and their meanings that a person can use to form a language. The more vocabulary, the more proficient the person is in language.

However, in Indonesia, English is not the main language used in everyday life. So many people find it difficult to memorize English vocabulary because they rarely practice it. M. Thalal (2010) stated that there are many cases happen where students' expectations do not match with the reality of learning result showing that their English proficiency is still very low or no significant English ability after many years of study.

In the English department, especially at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, there is a vocabulary learning process in the first semester called the lexicon. Students learn a lot of vocabulary in the lexicon learning process. According to Kridalaksana (2008) that the lexicon is also called vocabulary. Information about the meaning of words and the use of words in a language is called a lexicon. Sapir (in Fill and Mühlhäusler, 2001) states that the physical and social environment of humans is a reflection of vocabulary. This means that the vocabulary used by a person reflects the boundaries of the physical environment and the cultural character of society.

Richards and Schmidt (2002) define lexicons as follows: 1) the set of all words and idioms from each language, 2) dictionaries, 3) words and phrases listed in the basic components of generative grammar and information about them, 4) all information from the mental system about words that a person knows. According to Psycholinguistics, a person's knowledge of a word includes: a) knowing how to pronounce a word, b) knowing the grammatical pattern a word uses, and c) knowing the meaning of the word.

In learning vocabulary, of course, there are strategies used by the lecturers. The strategy that is often used in learning vocabulary is memory strategy. Memory strategy is a strategy used to retrieve information and store it in memory in the long term. Therefore this strategy is preferred in vocabulary learning. So that the vocabulary received can be stored in memory for a long time. According to Oxford (1990: 38) Memory strategy is a technique used to remember important information that students collect from learning. Strategies related to memory, the entry and exit of information. He claims that the mind can store about 100 trillion bits of information, but to be able to store a lot of information it was necessary to have a strategy used by someone. It helped people to acquired new information and retain it in memory for a long time. Memory strategies are divided into four categories, creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well and employing actions. With the memory strategies that students use to remember vocabulary for a long time, it can improve their lexicon.

Based on explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting research related to vocabulary and memory strategy to improve lexicon. Researchers are interested in knowing the types of memory strategies students use and the strategies most widely used by students to improve lexicon. Therefore, the researcher gave the research title "A Case Study of Memory Strategy used to improve Lexicon by students of English Department".

B. Limitation of the Study

Based on the explanation the background, the researcher limited the subject and the object of the study.

1. This research subjects are the students class A at third semester of department of English education Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.
2. This research object are the memory strategies used to improve lexicon by students of English Department.

C. Research Questions

1. What are the type of memory strategy used to improve their lexicon?

2. What are student's preferences in using memory strategy to improve their lexicon?

D. Objective of the study

1. To know the type of memory strategy used to improve their lexicon
2. To know student's preferences in using memory strategy to improve their lexicon

E. Benefits of the Study

Benefit is the use which is got from the study. The benefits which are prospected in this study include:

1. Theoretical Benefits

This research provides general knowledge that could be used as reference for those who want to conduct a research and as input in English language teaching and learning process especially about learning strategies used by students of English Education to improve their lexicon.

2. Practical Benefits

a. The teacher

This research could be beneficial for English teacher in solving the problem faced by the students in learning Lexicon.

b. The other researcher

This research could be used as source of information and reference to the other researcher who do similar research, especially about the memory strategy used by the students to improve their lexicon.

F. Research Paper Organization

The research paper comprises in five chapters. A summary of the content of each chapter is described briefly as follows:

Chapter I is Introduction. It contains the background of the study, limitation of the study, research question, objective of the study, benefits of the study, and research paper organization.

Chapter II is a Literary Review. It contains the previous study and underlying theory

Chapter III is Research Method. It contains the research type, research object, research subject, data and data source, methods for collecting data, credibility of data, and technique for analyzing data.

Chapter IV is Research Result and Discussion. In this chapter the researcher analyze the data which were collected in order to find the memory strategies used to improve lexicon by students of English Department.

Chapter V is Conclusion, Implication, and Suggestion of the researcher.