Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, identification of the problems and formulation of the problems. Besides, this chapter also consits of limitation of the problems, research questions and purpose of the research. Last, this chapter provides significance of the research and outline of the research.

Background

Vocabulary is a tool used in learning English. According to Namaghi and Malekpur (2015), vocabulary is a tool which is really important in reading because without adequate vocabulary knowledge learners cannot understand the information in the reading. According to Yunhao (2011) vocabulary is the main factor for language learning and it is very useful for students majoring in language. It means that the vocabulary plays an important role in language learning especially for students who learn English language. Alqahtani (2015) states that having a lot of vocabulary will help students to acquire a language easier because vocabulary plays a great role in learning a particular language.

Vocabulary can improve the ability in speaking English language, and it will help the students to develop their ideas. Harmon, Wood, and Kiser (2009) state that by mastering a lot of vocabulary, the students will have a great weapon to share their

ideas, and it will impact on their critical thinking. It means that without having a lot of vocabulary, students are difficult to express their ideas, opinions and feeling.

Learning vocabulary is one of the things that many students find it hard to learn. According to Asgari and Mustapha (2011), vocabulary has been recognized as crucial things in language learning, yet students sometimes get difficulties when they want to improve their vocabulary. These difficulties are like deciding which words are worth learning, organizing vocabulary, and remembering vocabulary. Those four barriers are commonly faced by EFL learners (Asgari and Mustapha, 2011). However, those problems can be solved by practicing or speaking.

In learning vocabulary, the students are not only required to memorize, but also to improve their vocabulary by speaking or practicing. According to Erkaya and Drower (2012), students indirectly improve their vocabulary by talking or practicing. It shows that if the students use memorizing only without speaking or practicing, they will get difficulties to improve their vocabulary. According to Recine (2015), practicing is a crucial strategy to learn vocabulary because practicing can help the students learn to discover new words. Last, it means that students should not only use memorizing as a learning strategy to improve their vocabulary, but the students should also use speaking or practicing.

Based on the researcher's experience as a student, the researcher was enthusiastic to ask the students who were not active. First, the researcher asked them why they were not active in the classroom. They told the researcher that they were afraid to speak up because they had less of vocabulary. Then, the researcher asked

them about the learning strategy that they used to improve their vocabulary, and they said that they often memorized some vocabulary in the dictionary without practicing. In fact, the teachers had taught the students some learning strategies to help students to improve their vocabulary. From this case, it leads the researcher to wonder why the students only used memorizing even though the students had been taught so many learning strategies to increase their vocabulary. In addition, the researcher read some journals and the researcher concluded that learning vocabulary cannot be done by memorizing only without practicing or vice versa.

To show that this research is worth to do, the researcher reviewed two research which were related to this research. Agusta (2015) found four problems and five strategies. Besides, second research which showed that this research was worth to do was the research from Utami (2016). She found that the use of English dictionary and students' vocabulary mastery at ELED at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta batch 2013 are correlated. From these two research, this research was worth to do because Agusta (2015) and Utami (2016) suggested to future researcher to conduct a research about vocabulary in wider area by using descriptive design. It means that this research enriched the previous research.

From the above background, the researcher was interested to conduct the research to find out about the perception of the ELED students at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta on vocabulary learning strategies.

Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary is one of the essential parts for the beginners who want to learn English. According to Sedita (2005), vocabulary knowledge is important because vocabulary is a thing that students have to know in order to express an idea, communicate effectively, and learn about new concepts. Besides, Kırmızı (2014) contends that language is very difficult to be mastered by students when students have limited vocabulary because vocabulary is the core or heart of language. It means that vocabulary should be studied first if students want to master a particular language.

Learning strategy is really important to be considered when the students want to improve their vocabulary. According to Kırmızı (2014), vocabulary learning strategy is one of the essential things that students should use when they want to master a foreign language. It means that the students should choose what learning strategies that the students want to use when the students want to improve their vocabulary.

Improving vocabulary is not as easy as it is seen. According to Hazrat and Hessamy (2013), vocabulary is one of the hardest things that EFL students or learners still face. Llerena and Yesenia (2017) state that improving vocabulary requires students to have some learning strategies which mean that the vocabulary will be improved easily by not using memorizing only.

There were some previous experts who stated that learning vocabulary cannot be done through one strategy only, yet some students still use one strategy only. By

this case, the researcher was interested in finding the students' perception about the advantages of vocabulary learning strategies. Last, the researcher also wanted to find out the learning strategies used by the students in improving their vocabulary.

Limitation of the Problem

This study focused only on the perception in vocabulary learning strategies at ELED of one the private universities in Yogyakarta. First, this research focused on the students' strategies in leaning vocabulary. Then, the researcher also focused on the students' advantages. Besides, this study also selected some students at ELED of one of the private universities in Yogyakarta which meant that the results of this research were different from students' perception from other universities.

Research Questions

1. What strategies are used by the students in learning vocabulary?
2. What is students' perception on the advantages of using strategies in learning vocabulary?

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research:

1. To find out the students strategies used in learning vocabulary.
2. To know the students' perception about the advantages of using strategies in learning vocabulary.

Significance of the Research

      The result of this study gave benefit to:

      Students. This research is important for the students in English Department. By looking at the findings or the results of this study, the students knew that strategies in learning vocabulary were not just using one strategy. After that, the students could apply the vocabulary learning strategies.

      Teachers. This research was advantageous for the teachers, especially for those who wanted to know what the learning strategies that students used in improving vocabulary are. It means that, by reading this research, the teachers could recommend what learning strategies the students can use. It also would help the teachers to get another strategy and it would be taught in the class.

      Future researchers. This research was meaningful for the next researcher. This research was important reference for the next researcher who wanted to do a research related to the students' perception on vocabulary learning. Besides, this research gave information about what the researcher recommended for the next researchers to conduct a research related to vocabulary learning strategies. It meant that the next researchers would be able to research about vocabulary in wider area, such as about problem in learning vocabulary and problem in implementing vocabulary learning strategy.