

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides some information about the research description. The background of the study includes the reasons why the researcher was interested in researching the topic. The researcher states, and limits the problem in statements and limitation of the problems. Also, the researcher limits the research in the delimitation of the study. The researcher also presents the research question and research objective. This chapter also discusses the significances of the study for teachers, students, the institution, and the next researchers. The last sub chapter is the organization of the chapters.

### **Background of the Study**

As a foreign language learned at schools, English may be considered as difficult language for Indonesian students to learn. Rahayu (2015) stated that the students feel difficult to understand English since the structure of English and Indonesian are different. Therefore, although the students have learned English for a long time, most of them still feel that English is difficult to understand.

Based on the talk to the English teachers at one of state vocational schools, the English teachers complained about their students' achievement. Also, the students got lower scores in English lesson because the vocational school has no longer used bilingual language. Chen (2008) stated that students who have limits exposure in learning a language tend to get lower score. Moreover, Indonesian government has already changed the pioneer of international standard school (RSBI/Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional). Thus, in vocational school, the English low scores indicated

that there are some problems or difficulties faced by the students related to their English language learning.

Based on the data given by English teacher on how low the students' score in English, the researcher conducted the informal talk to several students. The results of the informal talk are many students stated that they have problems in learning English. Most of the students said that they have a problem in pronouncing words because they rarely listen to people who speak English, so they pronounce words as they write similarly. Nakhalah (2016) argued that the students often make mistakes in pronunciation since English is rarely use in their environment.

Another problem is that some students feel difficult when they have to memorize vocabulary. Arifiani (2017) explain that in learning English, students face difficulty in memorizing vocabulary. The students also mention that they get difficulties when they have to use tenses in the correct form. In a research conducted by Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011) mention that students face difficulty in applying tenses in speaking or writing correctly.

With regard to the researcher's informal talk, the students also mentioned that they feel bored with the way of teaching applied by their English teachers especially in delivering the lesson. In addition, some students mentioned that they feel uncomfortable with the environment that makes them difficult in learning English. In a research conducted by Alaraj (2016) explain that students who feel uncomfortable with the environment face more difficulties. Hence, all of the problems come up as the difficulties for the students in mastering English.

Usually, students also apply some strategies in learning English. Rebeca (2000) mentioned that to make students easier, faster, and more enjoyable in learning process, they use strategies when they learn the materials. By using learning strategies, students will be easier in learning process. Learning strategies used by the students are different. Every student has their own strategies. The strategies commonly used by the students are kinesthetic, auditory, and visual learning. The process of learning strategies is when students occupy several resources in order to finish their task with their own way (Williams & Burden 1997). In order to have suitable strategies, it is important for the students to identify their problems in learning English.

There are some factors that make students get problems in learning English. The factors may come from the students, the teachers, or the environment. In a research conducted by Kurniawati (2015), the result of the study explains that the factors are divided into two, internal and external factors. Internal factors are physical condition, students' opinion, students' motivation, and learning opportunities. Meanwhile the external factors include the material, teachers and methods, the place and facilities and infrastructures.

In the success of teaching and learning process, it is important especially for a teacher to understand their students' difficulties or problems in learning English so that the teacher can teach efficiently to help the students solve their problems in learning English. Sari (2012) stated that education world needs the teachers who are aware of the difficulties faced by the students in learning process, so the teachers can help their students to get rid of the difficulties. From the statement mentioned, it

means that if teachers understand their students' difficulties or problems, they can find ways to help their students to solve their problems. When the students' problems are solved, the teachers are expected to be able to improve their own students' scores.

Another important reason to know students' problems in learning English is that students themselves have to be aware of their own problems, so they can solve the problems in their learning process. Also, the students should take responsibility for their learning of language (Ivarsson & Pihl, 2013). The students are encouraged to find solutions to problems encountered in learning process. Moreover, identifying students' problems in learning English is necessary. Therefore, based on the phenomena mentioned above, the researcher is interested in conducting a research on students' problems in learning English.

### **Statements and limitation of the problems**

Learning a foreign language may cause some problems for the learners. The students of a state vocational high school admitted that they face problems in learning English. The students also mentioned that they get difficulty to memorize vocabulary, pronounce English words, and use correct grammar in the English use. Regarding the teaching and learning English process, most of the students do not pay attention to the teacher's explanation since they feel bored with the class, and they feel uncomfortable with English learning environment at school.

This research focuses on the students' problems in learning English at a state vocational high school in Central Java. Also, it focuses on investigating the problems

faced by the third year students. The researcher wanted to know students' perception about their problems when they learn English.

### **Research Question**

In regard to the delimitation of the study above, the problem of this study is formulated into "what are the students' problems in learning English?"

### **Research Objective**

The objective of the study is intended to investigate the students' problem in learning English.

### **Significances of the Study**

This research is expected to give positive advantages for the teachers, the students, the institution, and other researchers.

**For the teachers.** The findings of this research can be used as additional information or evaluation for the teachers in understanding students' problems in learning English. The teachers' roles require the teachers to know their students' problems. If the teachers know their students' problems, they can apply the appropriate way to teach their students. In addition, teachers can minimize students' problems in learning English by knowing the problems faced by the students.

**For the students.** This research can give beneficial information to the students about what kind of problems that they face. Sometimes, students keep repeating their mistakes because they do not understand what exactly the difficulties that they faced. Meanwhile, the findings of this research provide some difficulties faced by English learners that can help students to do reflection in identifying their

difficulties. After the students can identify the difficulties faced in learning English, they are expected to be able to solve their problems. Therefore, this research can be useful for the students in learning English.

**For the institution.** The institution can get benefit from this research since the findings of the study present the students' problems in learning as an important factors in learning English. Also, the institution will be able to understand and fulfill the students' needs in learning English in order to create an effective teaching and learning process in the school. This research can be additional information for a state vocational high school in renewing the program, syllabus or curriculum. Thus, this research also can be a recommendation to solve the students' problems in learning English.

**For other researchers.** This research will bring benefit to other researchers who will do a similar research or want to continue this research. Other researchers can use the finding of this research as the theoretical overview of further research on the same topic and might become a recommendation of further research. Thus, by conducting this research, it can also encourage other researchers to conduct the researches related to the same area of this research.

### **Organization of the Chapters**

The report of the research is presented into five chapters. Chapter one is introduction. This chapter explains the reason why the topic of the research was taken. This chapter consists of background of the study, statements and limitation of the problems, research questions, research objective, significance of the study, and the last is organization of the chapters.

Chapter two is literature review. This chapter elaborates the literature review. This chapter explains the profile of state vocational high school which the research will be conducted. The other points include the lack of vocabulary, grammatical error, mispronunciation, limited learning environment, lack of motivation, anxiety, previous studies and the last sub chapter is conceptual frame work.

Chapter three is research methodology. In this chapter, it consists of research design, research setting and participants, and data collection methods. The last sub chapter is data analysis.

The fourth chapter is the research findings and discussion. This chapter includes the findings based on the research question. The research question is “what are students’ difficulties in learning English in a state vocational high school?”

The fifth chapter shows a conclusion and recommendation of this research. The conclusion of the research is explained in the first part of the chapter. In the second part, the researcher gives the suggestion and the recommendation for the people who are involved in this research to make this research more beneficial in the future.