CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

"Language is any formal system of gestures, signs, sounds, and symbols used or conceived as a means of communicating thought" (Lewis, 2009). It is clear that language is an important aspect for human being to learn. Without language, humans will have difficulties in expressing their feelings. The first language or mother tongue is learned by human since they were babies. As they grow, they continue using the first language and it becomes natural, and so do the Indonesian people.

English is a worldwide language that people all over the world use as an international language. It is the reason why many countries use English as their second language nowadays. In Indonesia, as a foreign language, English becomes a subject that is taught at schools and has an important place in education so that Indonesian are able to get involved in international competitions in the globalization era. Therefore, it is essential that Indonesian learns English and its aspects.

There are some skills that learners need to consider in learning English; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and speaking are supported by vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Reading and writing are supported by vocabulary and grammar. So, those four skills are supported by vocabulary. As quoted by Bastanfar and Hashemi (2010),

Wilkins (1972) asserts "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (p. 158). It is clear that vocabulary has an important role to learn language. Learners need to master vocabulary in order to understand text or speech in the target language as well as to use it. The more vocabulary they have, the easier they learn the language. However, learning vocabulary is not only a matter of learning new words. There are some aspects that learners need to know. Those aspects are pronunciation, meaning and the grammar usage. There are some problems learners found in vocabulary learning one of which is the meaning of the word which is not literally conveyed.

Bastanfar and Hashemi (2010) note that learners has to build up the efficient knowledge of vocabulary to construct sentences conveying their meaning (p. 158). Without the knowledge of vocabulary, students must have difficulty in communicating and understanding the words of the sentence. As an example, the word "look" has one meaning when it stands alone, but it has a different meaning when it is combined with other words such as "after" and "for". Another example is when learners read a newspaper or scientific article, they will find formal words that do not frequently appear in daily conversation or school books. They may find it difficult to read and understand the message from the article because they do not have much vocabulary knowledge, especially of low-frequency words such as "legible" which is usually found as "readable" or "easy to read".

Agreeing to Mercer's (2005) statement that some students already use some strategies but they do it unconciously, it is likely to be effective when they use it intentionally with some direction. They need to be aware of vocabulary learning strategy in which they conciously use to enhance their vocabulary knowledge.

The students find that they do not know how to study vocabulary effectively. The words they have learned do not always remain long in their memory. They can forget the words easily. The problems they find make the writer is curious what strategy they should use to learn vocabulary. There are variety of vocabulary learning strategies that students can use such as listing the words from text, listening to the record or music, watching movies and so on. They might find the strategy from their teacher, internet, language course, people they know or perhaps by themselves. The study aims at finding out the kinds of strategies they use to learn vocabulary including the most and least used strategies. The study also aims at finding out how the strategy affects their English lesson achievement.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In accordance with the background, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. What types of vocabulary learning strategies are used by the students?

2. Which vocabulary learning strategies are most and least frequently used by the students?

3. How does the strategy affect their English achievement in school?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to find out the vocabulary learning strategies that students of a senior high school in Surabaya used to enrich their vocabulary knowledge. The specific objectives of this study are:

1. to find out the types of vocabulary learning strategies used by the students.

2. to find out the most and least frequently used vocabulary learning strategy of the students.

3. to find out how the strategy affects their English achievement in school.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study is based on vocabulary learning strategy taxonomy developed by Norbert Schmitt (1997). He divided vocabulary learning strategy into two strategies; discovery and consolidation strategy. Discovery strategy consists of determination and social strategy. Consolidation strategy consists of memory, cognitive, metacognitive and social strategy.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The data and information from this study are expected to give a clear picture to teachers of English vocabulary learning strategy which is based on Schmitt's taxonomy applied by the SMA students.

The findings will also be expected to give contribution to the teaching and learning of English. Learners can get some inspiration and apply it to their way of learning. Teachers can also adjust the strategies to their teaching techniques and even develop a new suitable vocabulary teaching technique applied to their students.

After taking a survey study of the students, the writer discussed the objectives of the study result based on the data found. The writer hopes that the study gives contribution to teachers and students, especially in Indonesian education.

The contribution of the study to English teacher is to give picture of what strategy students use and how it works to the students. Teachers will get ideas to teach vocabulary based on the students' habit of learning vocabulary and develop the suitable materials.

The contribution of the study to EFL students is to give them picture what strategy they might use and apply to their English learning.

1.6 Assumptions

The result of the study is only limited to the students in SMA NSA Surabaya in the academic year 2014-2015. The study was conducted on these following assumptions:

1. Students know the strategies of learning vocabulary.
2. The strategies can be applied to the teaching of EFL students.
3. The questions of the survey are purely answered by students based on their own experience.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

To achieve the objective of the study, the writer focused on investigating the types of vocabulary learning strategy used by SMA students, the most and least used vocabulary learning strategy of the students. Besides studying the two points, the writer also investigated how the strategy affects their English achievement. The research was done in approximately 1-2 weeks.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

- Vocabulary

  Vocabulary is a list of words for a particular language or a list or set of word (Hatch and Brown (1995)).

- Learning Strategy

  Learning strategies are specifications, behaviors, steps, or techniques used by students to enhance their own learning (Scarcella & Oxford (1992)).

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

The organization of the thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one discusses the background of the study, the statement problems, the objective of the study, the theoretical framework, the significant of study, the assumption that encounters the research, the limitation and scope and the definition of key terms used in the study. Chapter two presents the literature related to the field of the study. There are also some related studies of language learning strategies and vocabulary learning strategies. Chapter three explains the research method, subjects, instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis technique used in the study. Chapter four discusses study findings and its discussion. Chapter five is the last chapter which contains conclusion and suggestions.