

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is intended to investigate learners' belief about vocabulary skill by English Department major students at the one of University in Kendari, South East Sulawesi. This chapter depicts the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research questions, and the purpose of the study. Moreover, it includes the significance of the study, and the definition of the key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the study

As a foreign language in Indonesia, English has taken an important role in learners' study. It can be found in most of school in Indonesia have taught English at their school. Some of them might be only as local content, but the rest of them have made English as one of the most important lesson because it would be tested as national examination. In another word, English is language that the students need to learn.

Since English becomes substantial language that learners need to use, they must have their own idea about learning English. The first thing that comes to people mind when they talk about language must be "words". Words here are vocabularies. Ghazal (2007) indicates that vocabulary is central to language and is of great significance to language learners. The learners need to learn vocabulary more because it is important. Besides, Ahour and Salamzadeh (2014) also state that vocabulary is basic who people have to learn to make sentence that have meaning, the units of meaning from which larger structures such as sentences,

paragraphs and the whole texts are formed. It means that learners should know more about English vocabularies if they want to be able to speak and use English. The more vocabularies they know, the better their ability in English (Shadikah, Fauziati, Supriadi, 2017).

During the previous decades, the advanced of globalization and technology has influenced the English language as medium used for communication not only among native speakers of English but also among native speakers in parts of the world (Alghanmi & Shukri, 2016). Either of the English language skills that is very helpful is vocabulary, vocabulary knowledge is at the heart of the development and improvement of their foreign languages (Al-Masrai & Milton, 2012). The other hand, (Alsadat, Hassankiadeh, Jahandar, & Khodabandehlou, 2012) conducted research to make identification between different beliefs about vocabulary learning and to investigate their effects on student learning.

In this age, learners' beliefs are one of the topics that are of great interest to researchers in education in recent years (Heidari, Izadi & Ahmadian, 2012). This paper would report the results of learners' beliefs about vocabulary learning they have learned in college. The importance of learners' beliefs now greatly influences the field of applied linguistics, because there is a lot of research that has proven that students' beliefs can influence their success in language target (Simon & Taverniers, 2011). Learners' beliefs are things to know students' expectations about their goals and their satisfaction in learning activities (Dincer, 2017). Then, according to further review of the beliefs of language learners is still needed for insights for teachers so they can refine the language learning process

and apply better practices. Moreover, studies have revealed that learners' and teachers' beliefs do not always match.

A recent study by Brown (2014) states for instance, compared students' and teachers' beliefs about areas in foreign language pedagogy and found that there was a mismatch between learners' and teachers' beliefs, which could negatively affect the learning process. Furthermore, the researchers also expressed the importance of learning vocabulary. Vocabulary is an important part of language which is central to the development of other language skills and language proficiency, and mastering vocabulary can affect communication (Schmitt, 2010; Alderson, 2005). For example, beliefs meaningful communication in a foreign language depends mostly on words. If learners do not have the available words to express their ideas, mastering grammatical rules or pronunciation does not help (Schmitt, 2010).

Also, Knight (1994) and Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) also observed that vocabulary is considered as number one priority by language learners and teachers, and language learning involves the acquisition of a huge number of vocabulary items. Vocabulary is also viewed as a core component of language proficiency which provides much of the basis for how well language learners listen, speak, read, and write (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The fundamental question is how the self-concept and beliefs of EFL learners are formed. In the Therefore, various theoretical viewpoints have been asserted about how trust arises. These frameworks generally have a cognitive (psychological) or socio-cultural origin. That researchers in the socio-cultural paradigm claim that trust is

formed in a social context. The cognitive mainstream, however, regards self-concept and beliefs as individual mental acts which unite as a network of ideas in the minds of students (Gabillon, 2007).

In recent decades, many researchers interest to investigate about learners' beliefs in learning with different aims. One of researchers conducted about Advance EFL Learners 'beliefs about language learning and teaching with the aim of examining learners' beliefs about learning English at Tertiary Level in Flanders, with a focus of study on learning grammar, pronouns, and vocabulary (Simon & Taverniers, 2011a). In addition to study about vocabulary learning strategies and beliefs about vocabulary learning: a study of the beginning of University students of Russian in the United States, with the aim to explore the processes of vocabulary acquisition and to investigate beliefs about vocabulary learning. (Kulikova & Kulikova, 2015).

In Indonesian context, learners' belief has been an issue in EFL classroom. Many researchers have conducted research related to learners' beliefs, but the researchers did not find any research on learners' beliefs that specifically focused on vocabulary learning. Such as, the research conducted by Ali (2017) which aims to find out learners' beliefs about speaking skills. Then, other researchers conducted research related to learners' belief in English in general, not only investigating one English skill. Moreover, research conducted by Luluk (2019) where this research focuses on learners' belief in English as a foreign language.

This study conducted by Luluk (2019) shows are the students' self-efficacy and expectations about learning English, learners' perceived value and nature of

learning spoken English, learners' beliefs about foreign language aptitude, learners' beliefs in formal structural studies. Regarding vocabulary, this research shows that the most important part of learning a foreign language is learning vocabulary. Vocabulary is related to self-efficacy, so if students had good self-efficacy, then it would affect students' vocabulary.

Based on the research above, explore the beliefs of language learners are still needed because it had the potential to offer language teachers important insights to understanding and improving language learning processes, as well as implementing better teaching practices (Dincer, 2017).

Then, most researchers only do the research about students' beliefs about language learning in general even though they have different goals. Only a few studies that discuss about the field of learning English specifically. Researcher has not yet found studies that specifically such as student beliefs about vocabulary. Therefore, researcher conduct more significant research in the sense that researchers explain more about students' beliefs about vocabulary learning during the process of learning English from the English Department at the one of University in Kendari.

This study is to determine the beliefs of EFL students about vocabulary skills in the Indonesian context. It is expected that in this study the researcher can explain or present the results in more detail about students' beliefs about vocabulary skills and can also have a positive impact on students and teachers, because by knowing students' beliefs, teachers can create or design and improve

teaching materials that are appropriate to help students become more enthusiastic in learning and improve vocabulary.

1.2 Scope of the study

For the purpose of this study, the researcher involves 20 students at English Department at the one University in Kendari. It was their second semester to study and understands the importance of learning vocabulary. These studies focused on investigate learners' belief about vocabulary learning during the 2nd semester they must learn vocabulary in classroom. Reflection of students would be used as a data collection this study.

1.3 Research question

Based on the background of the study above, this study has one problem identified as in the following that is “How is EFL Learners’ belief about vocabulary learning during their study?”

1.4 Purpose of the study

Based on the research background, this present study aims to investigate learners’ belief about vocabulary skill of English Department at the one of University in Kendari.

1.4 Significance of the study

The results of this study are expected to explain and show the extent of learners’ belief about vocabulary learning in English department. It is also hoped that this research can be used as a reference for those who want to conduct research in investigating learners' belief about vocabulary skills or the perspective

of students about vocabulary skills. It also can help students and teachers to create their awareness regarding vocabulary learning.

Therefore, it can give a positive impact to students and teachers, because by knowing learners' beliefs, teachers can create or design and enhance teaching materials that are appropriate to help students to be more enthusiastic in learning and improving vocabulary.

1.5 Definition of key terms

For the purpose of this study, the terms to be defined are listed as the following:

EFL Learners': EFL learners are the term used for students who English is not the dominant language for those whose first language is mother tongue and Indonesia as second language. EFL learners also learn English as an additional language because they live in non-English countries. In this case EFL students are English students at IAIN Kendari who take class vocabulary in their 2nd semester.

Learners' belief: Learners' beliefs can be interpreted by how students' expectations of their learning situations and learners' beliefs can affect the student's learning process in terms of success or satisfaction with learning activities. Learners' belief is a means of understanding learners' expectations of success in and satisfaction with a learning activity (Horwitz, 1988). For example one of the results of research conducted by Ellen and Miriam (2011) has students perceived proficiency and confidence, where learners' belief that their English are very good for communication when their learn vocabulary, also the learners' belief

about strategy when sstudents have a belief that a good strategy in vocabulary learning can improve their language.

Vocabulary Learning: Vocabulary learning is an essential part in foreign language learning as the meanings of new words are very often emphasized, whether in books or in classrooms. It is also central to language teaching and is of paramount importance to a language learner (Alqahtani, 2015).

