

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of study, problem of the study, objective of the study, hypothesis, scope and limitation, significance of study, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of Study

Vocabulary is the basis for knowledge, communication, and language skill in any language. Vocabulary mastery increases student ability to communicate ideas clearly, comprehend written and spoken language, and take part in insightful discussions (Islamiah et al., 2024). Many students, especially those who learn English as a foreign language, face difficulties in improving their vocabulary, often due to limited access to innovative teaching tools and effective instructional methods.

Traditional methods like rote memorization often fail to foster long-term retention, leading students to forget new words and struggle to use them in context (Fitria & Roziqi, 2022). Recently, English language learning has increasingly adopted digital approaches as an alternative to overcome these limitations. The use of digital tools and applications in vocabulary instruction has grown rapidly to provide more effective and engaging learning experiences. With the rapid development of educational technology, many digital tools have been created to support language learning, particularly in vocabulary acquisition. Studies have shown that digital applications can enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes. The popularity of mobile and web-based learning systems has increased due to their

accessibility, allowing students to access learning materials anytime and anywhere (Shopova, 2014). In addition, educational games and applications have been shown to boost students' motivation and memory recall (Fitria & Roziqi, 2022; Husada, 2019; Islamiah et al., 2024; Khoirunnisa et al., 2023; Simanungkalit et al., 2023).

One of the digital tools used in vocabulary learning is Educandy. This interactive platform allows teachers to create various games, such as matching, word search, spelling, anagrams, and quizzes, which can be accessed by students on their devices (Widyastuti et al., 2021). The platform enables flexible repetition and encourages students to engage in learning in a fun and motivating way (Wulandari et al., 2017). It also offers repeated exposure to vocabulary in different contexts, which is essential for long-term memory. Moreover, Educandy gives students the freedom to study both inside and outside the classroom at their own pace, providing an alternative to conventional teaching methods through game-based learning.

Previous studies have shown that the Educandy application is effective for improving students' vocabulary. Ardianti et al. (2022) found that seventh-grade students at SMP 3 Papalang significantly improved their vocabulary, with average scores increasing from 27 in the pre-test to 75.50 in the post-test. Another study by Salsabila et al. (2023) reported that eighth-grade students at SMPN 10 Serang who used Educandy performed better in vocabulary tests compared to those taught through traditional methods. The interactive features in Educandy helped increase students' interest and motivation in learning vocabulary. In addition, Irham (2021) explained that Educandy games made

learning more enjoyable and engaging, which contributed to better vocabulary retention among students. Although many studies have discussed the overall effectiveness of Educandy in vocabulary learning, most have focused on general use or features such as quizzes, word search, and spelling games. There is still a lack of research specifically investigating the use of the Word Match activity in Educandy. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by focusing on how the Word Match feature can help students improve their vocabulary.

Despite the positive findings, some challenges still exist, particularly in Indonesia. These include limited infrastructure, unprepared teachers, and unequal access to technology among students (Amalia & Sa'adah, 2020). However, acknowledging the significance of proficient language skills for academic achievement, schools such as MTSN 6 Nganjuk are starting to implement digital tools in English language instruction (Salsabila et al., 2024). Thus, using tools like Educandy may offer an enjoyable and alternative approach to support students' vocabulary learning.

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of Educandy in improving vocabulary learning among students at MTSN 6 Nganjuk by comparing vocabulary test results between students using Educandy and those following word match methods. This study used an experimental design to investigate whether Educandy is more effective than typical teaching techniques for vocabulary acquisition. In addition, the study looked at how students engage with the learning process and how they perceive the application.

B. Research Problem

Based on the background of study, the research problem in this study can be formulated as follow : “Is using Educandy application effective than word match in students’ vocabulary mastery at MTsN 6 Nganjuk?”

C. Objective of the Study

Based on the research problem, the objective of this study is “to find out whether Educandy application is effective than word match in students’ vocabulary mastery at MTsN 6 Nganjuk”.

D. Hypothesis

1. Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in students’ vocabulary mastery between those who use Educandy application and those who use word match at MTsN 6 Nganjuk.
2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in students’ vocabulary mastery between those who use Educandy application and those who use word match at MTsN 6 Nganjuk.

E. Scope and Limitation

This study focused on the effectiveness of Educandy in teaching vocabulary, especially in procedure texts, to seventh-grade students at MTsN 6 Nganjuk. The scope of the study was limited to students in one grade level, with one group receiving vocabulary instruction using Educandy and the other group following word match method. The vocabulary that was taught was based on the school curriculum for that grade level. The study did not explore other language skills such as reading, writing, or speaking, and it did not

address the long-term retention of vocabulary beyond the study period. Furthermore, the study was limited to the use of Educandy as a teaching tool and did not compare it to other digital platforms.

F. Significance of the Study

1. For Teachers: This study provides insights into how Educandy can enhance vocabulary teaching by offering a more interactive and engaging approach. It helps teachers integrate technology into their lessons, making learning more dynamic and reducing reliance on traditional methods.
2. For Students: Students can improve their vocabulary in a fun, game-like environment, which can increase motivation. The application allows students to engage more actively with learning, making vocabulary mastery more enjoyable and effective.
3. For Researchers: This study contributes to the growing research on educational technology in language learning, particularly in the use of digital tools like Educandy. It opens up opportunities for further research on the effectiveness of similar applications in different contexts and language skills.

G. Definition of Key Terms

The following important concepts are defined as they are used in this study to ensure clarity:

1. Educandy: Educandy is an educational application that allows teachers to create interactive games and activities for language learning, specifically focused on vocabulary. It can be accessed both as a mobile application and through its website, making it flexible and easy to use on various devices.

2. **Vocabulary mastery:** The ability to understand, remember, and correctly use vocabulary words in various contexts.

3. **Word match:** A vocabulary media where students match words with their meanings, synonyms, or related words. It is often used to help students practice and remember new vocabulary.