

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research examines the use of comic strips on students' learning motivation and vocabulary mastery. This chapter covers background of the research, research question, research objectives, significance of the research, delimitation of the research, and operational definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary mastery is essential for learning English. Vocabulary is one of the components that support English language skills. Without a sufficient vocabulary, it will be difficult to transmit ideas to others and understand what others are saying (EBA, Hambali, & Zuraida, 2016). Sometimes students tend to dislike this subject because of the large amount of material and limited vocabulary knowledge (Juliana & Syah, 2021). Therefore, learning English can be a burden for students (Juliana & Syah, 2021).

Students in Indonesia face difficulties in learning English. Many of them find it difficult when they have to remember many new vocabularies (Patahuddin, 2017). As a result, when the teacher asks students to say a word, phrase, or sentence, some of them do not know what they want to say because of the lack of vocabulary. This can lead to feelings of pressure as students may fear being unable to understand and express themselves in English (Mursidah, 2022). Additionally, learning vocabulary can be boring for students (Juliana & Afrianti, 2020). Thus, more medias are needed to assist students in learning and mastering vocabulary, as well as to prevent students from experiencing difficulties in understanding and expressing themselves in English.

In the teaching and learning process, the presence of media plays a crucial role as it helps clarify unclear material by serving as an intermediary (Hikmah, 2019). Students may become more motivated to

participate in learning activities when media is used in the classroom. In foreign language learning, motivation, which consists of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, plays a significant role in influencing students' engagement and learning outcomes (Liuoliene & Metiuniene, 2011). Intrinsic motivation refers to the drive that comes from within an individual to engage in an activity for the sake of enjoyment or personal satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards such as grades, recognition, or expectations from teachers and parents (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, it is essential for educational media not only to improve student understanding but also to make material delivery attractive and foster both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

One of the media that can be used is a comic strip that combines visual and narrative elements, thus making learning materials easier to understand and fun. This approach can attract students' interest and make learning English vocabulary, especially in procedure text, more fun and affordable. By using comic strips, teachers can enhance both students' intrinsic motivation, by making learning an enjoyable experience, and extrinsic motivation, by providing engaging materials that encourage participation and achievement. This, in turn, can make the learning process more effective and meaningful.

Research conducted by Narfiatus (2022) identified that the application of comic strips successfully improved vocabulary mastery in the eighth grade of junior high school at MTs Al-Firdaus Panti Jember. Comic strips are a series of comic stories that are a combination of images and text. Concentration is one of the important requirements that must be improved by readers to encourage the learning process (Azzahra, 2021). Therefore, comic strips that are full of interesting pictures make students pay attention to learning, so that they will not be bored with the material presented because it is interesting and fun to learn. Due to the importance

of vocabulary mastery, alternative learning media such as comic strips can be utilized to enhance students' vocabulary skills. Cabrera et al. (2018) provide that comic strips offer a unique combination of visual and textual elements that can engage students and facilitate the learning of new vocabulary. This approach can be particularly effective in improving students' reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery, as it provides a context for understanding the meanings of words and their usage in different scenarios.

The use of comic strips offers several benefits for learning English. Firstly, they provide visual representations of words and scenarios that help learners infer meanings from context. This visual context enhances memory retention and understanding (Edwards, 2009). Secondly, their engaging nature increases motivation and interest among students, leading to better retention and application of new vocabulary (Ranker, 2007). Comic strips integrate both textual information and visuals, promoting multiple literacies essential for comprehensive language mastery (Schwarz, 2002).

Thirdly, comic strips effectively address different learning styles among students. Students often have varying preferences in processing and retaining information; some students may prefer to learn visually, while others prefer an auditory or kinesthetic approach. By integrating images and text, comic strips offer a multimodal learning experience that caters to these diverse learning styles. Visual learners benefit from rich images that contextualize new vocabulary, while textual learners can focus on the dialogue and written elements in the comic. This combination ensures inclusivity in the vocabulary mastery process (Mackay, 2017). In addition, the comic strip structure that provides a sequential storyline appeals to students who learn through storytelling. Its visual cues also support students who may struggle with text-based learning. This adaptability makes comic strips a versatile tool in the classroom that not only improves

vocabulary mastery but also enhances overall language comprehension by accommodating students' diverse needs (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

Several studies have explored the use of comic strips in language learning. For instance, Juliana's (2020) research found that using comic strips effectively increased student motivation in mastering vocabulary at Al-Manar Modern Islamic Boarding School Banda Aceh. The results indicated that students found learning vocabulary easier and more enjoyable when using comic strips (Juliana, 2020). Similarly, Rahman's findings demonstrated that comic strips could boost student motivation due to their interesting characters and easy-to-follow storylines (Rahman, 2020). According to Liu (2004), comics possess attractive visual characteristics that can enhance student interest specifically in vocabulary-related activities.

Although previous research has explored the use of comic strips in language education, there is still a significant gap in understanding how this medium affects students' motivation in vocabulary learning when viewed from the perspective of Self-Determination Theory. Existing research has generally focused motivation on vocabulary mastery in a broad sense, without specifically examining how comic strips fulfill SDT's core psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Unlike other motivational theories that often highlight general motivation, SDT provides a clear and practical framework for analyzing how learning tools such as comic strips can support students' sense of control over their learning (autonomy), increase feelings of effectiveness and skill (competence), and promote emotional and social connections (relatedness). By applying SDT, this study not only fills a theoretical gap but also fulfills a practical need for more effective and theory-based language learning methods.

The novelty of this research lies in the innovative media of integrating comic strips into English vocabulary teaching for procedural texts, specifically designed for State Vocational High School students majoring in culinary. The comic strip media was developed with content tailored to cooking chapters familiar to students, using action verbs that are relevant in culinary vocabulary. This study not only targets the improvement of vocabulary retention through familiar visual context but also stimulates intrinsic and extrinsic motivation according to students' needs. The combination of contextualized comic strips and a focus on the culinary vocational population presents a breakthrough in English education.

Thus, this study, entitled “*The Effect of Using Comic Strips on Students' Motivation in Vocabulary Mastery and Mastery*,” aims to explore the positive impact of comic strips on increasing Indonesian high school students' motivation in English lessons.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study using English comic strips can be an effective and interesting alternative media for learning English for students, the research question can be formulated as follows:

1. Is there any significant difference between students who were taught by using comic strips and students who were taught by using flashcards?
2. Is there any significant difference in student motivation in learning vocabulary between those who were taught by using comic strips and students who were taught by using flashcards?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the purpose of this study is:

1. To determine whether there is a significant difference in vocabulary mastery between students taught using comic strips and those taught using flashcards.

2. To examine whether there is a significant difference in student motivation in learning vocabulary between students taught using comic strips and those taught using flashcards.

1.4 Hypothesis

Based on the objective of the study, the researcher wants to know the effect of using comic strips on students' motivation in mastering vocabulary. Thus, the researcher builds the hypothesis to make objective of this study. The hypothesis is:

1. Research Question 1: Is there any significant difference between students who were taught by using comic strips and students who were taught by using flashcards?
 - H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in vocabulary mastery between students taught using comic strips and those taught using flashcards.
 - H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in vocabulary mastery between students taught using comic strips and those taught using flashcards.
2. Research Question 2: Is there any significant difference in student motivation in learning vocabulary between those who were taught by using comic strips and students who were taught by using flashcards?
 - H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in student motivation in learning vocabulary between students taught using comic strips and those taught using flashcards.
 - H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in student motivation in learning vocabulary between students taught using comic strips and those taught using flashcards.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The importance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the development of innovative and engaging media for teaching vocabulary, which is an important aspect of language learning. This study aims to

investigate the impact of using comic strips on students' learning motivation and vocabulary mastery, which may lead to a deeper understanding of the role of visual aids in improving students' engagement and learning outcomes. The findings from this study can inform educators about the effectiveness of comic strips as a tool to improve students' motivation and vocabulary mastery, which in turn can improve the overall quality of language education.

1.6 Delimitation of the Research

This study focuses on the use of comic strips in procedural text material that is in accordance with the curriculum at school. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of comic strips in increasing motivation and vocabulary mastery in vocational students. The subjects of this study were eleventh-grade students of State Vocational High School 1 Ngasem. The comic strips used in this study were created by the researcher using *Canva Premium*. It consists of 8 panels and covers the procedural text on "How to Make *Kue Cubit*." Comic strips focus on visuals that depict action verbs that are being done by characters in comics with the aim of helping students master vocabulary, especially action verbs in the culinary field. Also, the use of comic strips is expected to increase students' motivation to learn English.

1.7 Operational Definition of Key Terms

a. English Vocabulary Mastery

English vocabulary mastery is students' ability to understand, remember, and use a range of English words effectively in various contexts to facilitate clear communication and comprehension.

b. Comic Strips

A comic strip is a sequence of cartoons arranged in interrelated panels to display form a narrative, often serialized, with text in balloons and captions.

c. Learning Motivation

Learning motivation is the internal drive that encourages students to actively participate in learning activities for personal satisfaction, characterized by their enthusiasm and engagement when learning.

d. Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is the internal drive that encourages individuals to engage in activities for personal satisfaction or enjoyment, without relying on external rewards or pressures.

e. Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation is the drive to perform an activity influenced by external factors, such as rewards, recognition, or the avoidance of negative consequences.