

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains some points which are background of study, research question, objectives of study, significance of study, scope and limitation of the study, and definition of the key terms.

#### **A. Background of The Study**

The English language holds significance importance in in human life, particularly in the fields of technology, business, and education. Richards and Schmidt (2010) explain that English functions as an international language that connects people across cultures and contexts. In education, it gives students access to understand research and information that comes from global sources. In the business world, it allows companies from all over the world to negotiate, collaborate, and expand their market globally. English is also used extensively in technology; the majority of software, apps, and internet content are available in this language. People need English to study abroad, communicate with others from different countries, and access global information. It means that English is the main language of international communication, technology, business, and education. Therefore, learning English can be challenging for countries that use it as a second language, such as Indonesia, which uses Indonesian as its primary language. This is because students must learn English as a foreign language or additional language for accessing information from other countries.

In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language and it taught as a compulsory subject in school. Although it is not used in daily communication, English plays an important role in education, as it helps students' access global knowledge and participates in international context. Rather than being used for real communication, English is mostly introduced and taught as a school subject. As a result, students rarely get the chance to practice English in real-life situations. They often find it challenging to acquire strong language skills, particularly in speaking and listening, due of this lack of practical application. To support students in learning English effectively, it is essential to understand the basic rules and components of the language.

Learning English requires a deep understanding of both its rules and the essential components that make up the language. The rules mainly refer to grammar and sentence structure, which provide the framework for constructing clear and correct sentences that convey meaning accurately. Without a solid understanding of these rules, students may find it difficult to express their thoughts correctly or understand what others are saying. Apart from these guidelines, a number of language elements such as grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling are important for the learning process. Each of elements contributes uniquely to the overall ability to use in English effectively. For example, vocabulary knowledge helps students understand the meaning of spoken and written text, while pronunciation accuracy supports effective verbal communication. Nation (2001) states that vocabulary knowledge involves not only recognizing the meaning of words but also understanding their form, use, and contextual function. It means that these components form the foundation necessary for developing the four key language skills; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Mastery of these elements allows students to engage in meaningful conversation, understand the meaning of the texts, and produce coherent writing. Understanding all of these rules and components connect each other is essential for building confidence and competence in using English. Among these components, vocabulary plays the most important role because it supports all aspects of communication and enables the students to express ideas more precisely and understand others more deeply.

Vocabulary is the key element that connects all language skills and serves as the foundation for effective communication in English. Similarly, Wilkins (1972) emphasizes that “without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed,” highlighting that communication cannot occur without adequate vocabulary knowledge. Students have to develop their vocabulary to express their ideas clearly and to understand what other person say or write. Having vocabulary understanding would cover the words, which can assist the students to deliver the overall meaning in the conversation. It supported by Wallace (1982), emphasizes that limitations in vocabulary can significantly hinder learners’ ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written forms. So that, without adequate vocabulary, they will

unable to communicate and transform their ideas in spoken or written form. Furthermore, learning vocabulary cannot be learnt only from what they hear or write, but from what they see around. Limited vocabulary can significantly affect students' ability to read complex materials, write meaningful texts, and participate confidently in speaking activities. Therefore, the teacher should prioritize helping students strengthen their vocabulary mastery by introducing new words through engaging and relevant methods, encouraging frequent practice, and providing meaningful contexts for language use. Developing a rich vocabulary allows the students to improve in all language areas and supports their overall progress in learning English. However, in real classroom situations, many students still face difficulties in learning and remembering new words.

One of the most frequent issues founded by language learners is vocabulary acquisition. Many students struggle to remember new words because vocabulary instruction often relies on traditional methods, which can be monotonous and fail to engage their interest. These difficulties are even more evident among elementary school students, that still developing their cognitive abilities and tend to learn better through concrete, visual, and interactive experiences rather than abstract or repetitive drills. At this stage, elementary school students are naturally curious and easily distracted, so maintaining their attention requires activities that are both enjoyable and meaningful. Cameron (2001) explains that children in elementary school require learning activities that are concrete, engaging, and visually supported in order to maintain their attention and motivation. It means that vocabulary learning for elementary school students should involve creative and engaging techniques that help them connect new words with real-life contexts. To address these issues, it is clear that elementary school students need more creative and interactive learning experiences that capture their attention and motivate them to participate actively. In this case, teacher plays an important role in providing meaningful teaching and learning activities. Incorporating games, multimedia tools, and real-life context can make vocabulary learning more enjoyable and meaningful, helping students remember words more effectively. These challenges indicate that teachers should provide learning media that make vocabulary learning more interesting and effective.

In language learning, teachers can use various types of media and educational websites to make lessons more engaging and effective. According to Arsyad (2017), appropriate instructional media can help students understand abstract concepts more easily. These media can take many forms, including visual, audio, and audio-visual tools. As Hafiz Maksim (Secretary Of the Language Development and Coaching Agency) said in the socialisation of the Young Generation Literacy Development Programme (Phase II) at Hotel Karawang in West Java, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 ago, he explained that “the result of research in 2021 that Indonesia is experiencing a literacy emergency. Moreover, the habit of using gadgets today causes less interest in reading. The habit of reading must be instilled from an early age, not with gadget”. From this opinion, we can see that technology greatly influences the growth and development of the students. As technology continues to develop, digital platforms and online learning websites have also become powerful tools in supporting English learning. Among them, interactive media has gained particular importance because it provides opportunities for active participation and makes learning more enjoyable. Game-based learning, for example; transforms traditional lessons into fun ways and motivating activities that encourage students to engage more deeply with the material. This study not only increases students’ interest but also helps them remember vocabulary more effectively through meaningful and enjoyable practice. Given these benefits, the teacher is encouraged to add this interactive media in their teaching process. One example of such an engaging and interactive platform is Baamboozle, which will be discussed further in the following paragraph.

Baamboozle is an innovative online learning platform that has shown to be highly effective in teaching English vocabulary, especially in modern educational context where interactive learning is increasingly emphasized. One of its main strengths lies in its simple and practical interface, allowing teachers to design and modify quizzes easily. It’s practically saves time and allows teachers to focus more on the learning process rather than on managing complex tools. Furthermore, these quizzes can be customized to match specific topics, vocabulary sets, or levels of difficulty, making it easier to adapt lessons to

students' needs and progress. In addition to its flexibility to teachers, Baamboozle also promotes collaborative learning by enabling students to play in groups. This group activity encourages teamwork, communication, and mutual support, fostering a positive classroom atmosphere where students feel motivated to participate actively rather than monotonous tasks. The platform creates a competitive yet fun environment, as students compete to answer questions correctly and earn points for their teams. By combining customization, collaboration, and interactive gameplay, Baamboozle supports a more dynamic and effective vocabulary learning experience. Considering all these benefits, Baamboozle is expected to significantly enhance students' vocabulary mastery, particularly for young learners who respond well to engaging and playful learning methods.

Elementary school students are learners who are generally in the age range of 6 to 12 years old. At this stage, students are in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development, where they learn better through concrete examples, using media to explain the material, and give direct explanations rather than abstract explanations. According to Piaget (1972), children at this level tend to understand concepts more effectively when learning activities involve interaction and meaningful engagement. In other words, elementary school students have relatively short attention spans and require learning activities that are enjoyable, interactive, and varied to maintain their motivation. They are also in the early stage of language development, especially in learning a foreign language such as English, where vocabulary plays an important role as the foundation of language skills. Therefore, appropriate learning media are needed to support students in understanding and remembering new vocabulary. Based on these characteristics, elementary school students were chosen as the participants of this research because they need learning media that are simple, engaging, and suitable with their cognitive and developmental level. Vocabulary mastery at this level is essential, as limited vocabulary may hinder students' ability to understand English lessons and participate actively in class.

This study takes the location of research in the SDN Bulupasar. It is because the researcher finds that the students often struggle to understand and remember

new vocabulary because the teaching process still relies heavily on textbooks. In addition, the school has limited facilities, so teachers need a simple yet interactive tool that can be used effectively in the classroom. Baamboozle becomes a suitable option because it can operate with only one device, does not require student accounts, and creates a more engaging learning atmosphere. This idea is supported by Deterring and Mohamad (2021), who state that simple digital media can increase students' attention and help them understand the material through enjoyable activities. Therefore, Baamboozle is relevant for SDN Bulupasar as a learning media that meets both the students' needs and the school's conditions. Given these advantages, many researchers become interested in exploring the impact of Baamboozle and other interactive media on students' vocabulary learning. Previous studies have examined how such platforms can increase students' motivation, participation, and language achievement.

Building on the growing interest in interactive learning platforms, several previous studies have examined how Baamboozle and similar tools contribute to vocabulary development. For instance, a study conducted by Intifada Azwa Nurfahana in 2024 "The Effectiveness of Using Project-Based Learning Method to Teach Vocabulary at the Tenth Grade of MA Darul Hikmah Sumberejo". In this research, the use of interactive and PBL can be a relevant basis for the implementation of Baamboozle to improve students' vocabulary mastery. And then, the second was a journal conducted by Fitriani, Ferri Susanti, and Dedi Efrizal in 2025 entitled "The Effect of Digital Baamboozle Game toward Students' Vocabulary Mastery". The discussion of this study showed that there is significant increase in the scores of the students. It indicates that the use of Baamboozle is effective in improving student's scores in English, especially in their vocabulary. Furthermore, the third still a journal that conducted by Fatma Azzahra Janatul Walidaina, Dian Fadhilawati, and Nita Sutanti in 2024 "The effectiveness of Baamboozle to escalate seventh-grade students' vocabulary learning outcomes". This journal proves that Baamboozle has an effect on improving students' score in vocabulary learning outcomes. And then, the use of Baamboozle also encourages active student involvement in learning. So that, this study confirms that Baamboozle is effective in supporting vocabulary learning.

The next research was a thesis conducted by Putri Amalia Amanda in 2024 “The Effectiveness of Using Baamboozle Games toward Students’ Vocabulary Mastery at SMP Negeri 3 Brebes”. The questionnaire results indicated that students have positive perceptions toward the use of Baamboozle, considering it’s enjoyable and effective in improving vocabulary mastery. The last previous studies is a journal conducted by Rahmi Rahmita Tanjung & Sholihatul Hamidah Daulay in 2025 “Students’ Perception of Vocabulary Mastery by Using Baamboozle Game”. The findings revealed that students showed positive responses, indicating that Baamboozle not only helped them learn vocabulary more effectively but also made the learning process more enjoyable.

Based on the previous studies, it can be seen that there are several reasons that have not been sufficiently explored. Most of the previous studies were conducted at the junior high school, while research at the elementary school is limited. Elementary school students have different learning characteristics compared to older learners, such as shorter attention spans and a stronger preference for visual and interactive learning. According to Harmer (2007), young learners learn more effectively when teaching activities involve games, visuals, and interactive media that actively engage them in the learning process. It indicates a need to investigate how this platform can be effectively used for young learners. Therefore, the findings from previous studies focusing on older learners may not be directly relevant to this research. The application of Baamboozle as an educational learning media is still limited in existing studies, particularly in vocabulary acquisition at the elementary school level. Previous research has mostly focused on the use of digital games to improve motivation or general language skills, while specific studies examining vocabulary mastery among young learners remain limited (Sari & Wahyuni, 2020). Moreover, the English learning process in many elementary school still using textbooks, which often causes students to feel less motivated and find learning English is monotonous. According to Richards (2015), the overuse of textbook-based instruction may reduce students’ engagement, especially for young learners who require interactive learning experiences. Some fifth grade elementary school students are still in the stage of developing basic literacy skills, so that they needs simple,

interactive, and fun learning media. This study was conducted in public elementary school with limited facilities, which is expected to provide the real conditions of English teaching in most schools. From these gaps, this study looks at how fifth grade elementary school students utilize Baamboozle to increase their vocabulary mastery.

The participants of this research are Elementary School Students. The reason for choose this level, it because vocabulary mastery of many students is quite low, especially in elementary school level. Although elementary school students already familiar with technology, and can even easily operate digital devices. This familiarity often leads them to spend more time on entertainment rather than educational purpose. As a result, it makes learning and school less interesting and challenging for them, because they can find answers on their cellphones every day. To solve this problem, teachers are expected to create learning experiences that are both meaningful and enjoyable. Therefore, integrating interesting media into classroom activities is important to help young learners stay motivated. Baamboozle is considered one of the suitable learning media for this study, because it combines educational content with interactive features that stimulate students' participation, collaboration, and enthusiasm in learning. Based on the explanations above, the researcher decided conduct a research entitled "**The Use of Baamboozle to Improve Fifth grade Students' Vocabulary Mastery**".

#### **B. Research Question**

Does the use of Baamboozle improve fifth grade Students' vocabulary mastery?

#### **C. Objectives of The Study**

To find out the use of Baamboozle in improving fifth grade Students' vocabulary mastery.

#### **D. Hypotheses of The Study**

Based on the objectives and research questions, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

- 1) **Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery between the experimental group that taught through Baamboozle and the control group that taught using conventional methods.
- 2) **Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery between the experimental group that taught through Baamboozle and the control group that taught conventional using method.

#### **E. Significance of Study**

In this research, the researcher expects that the findings will provide several contributions, both theoretically and practically, as described below:

1. Theoretical significance
  - a) The study adds information about the use of Baamboozle to support vocabulary learning.
  - b) It provides insight into how Baamboozle can improve fifth grade students' vocabulary mastery.
  - c) It may serve as a reference source for future studies.
2. Practical significance
  - a) For students  
Help students improve their Vocabulary through a more engaging learning tool.
  - b) For teacher  
Offers an alternative medium that can make vocabulary teaching more interactive.
  - c) For researcher  
Researchers have the ability to develop learning media and contribute to innovation in the advancement of the world of education.

## **F. Scope and Limitation Of The Study**

This study examines the use of Baamboozle as a digital game-based learning tool to enhance fifth grade students' vocabulary mastery at SDN Bulupasar. The scope of this research is limited to fifth grade students at SDN Bulupasar during the 2025/2026 academic year. This study involves two classes, one serving as the experimental group using Baamboozle, and the other as the control group taught through conventional methods. Moreover, the design of this study is quasi-experimental design that consisting of an experimental and a control group. Also, the analysis is centred on students' vocabulary mastery, not on other language skills such as pronunciation, grammar, or writing.

In other side, there is limitation. This study is limited by several factors. First, this study is limited to fifth grade elementary school students, whose learning characteristics include shorter attention spans and varied classroom behaviours. These conditions may affect the consistency of students' participation and focus during the teaching and learning process, which could influence the results of the study. Second, the use of Baamboozle requires active participation and teamwork. This may create challenges in classroom management, such as noise, and limited control over group dynamics. As a result, the learning process may not be conducted in a fully controlled classroom environment. Another limitation of this study is the short period of implementation. The limited duration may not be sufficient to measure the long-term effects of Baamboozle on students' vocabulary mastery. Lastly, this study relied on a limited number of research instruments to measure students' vocabulary mastery. The use of a single type of test and classroom observation may not fully capture students' overall vocabulary development, such as productive vocabulary use in speaking or writing. This limitation may affect the comprehensiveness of the data obtained.

However, after conducting the study, the researcher realized that these limitations also represent the real classroom conditions commonly found in elementary schools. The researcher was unable to fully control students' individual learning differences, classroom atmosphere, and external factors that may influence students' vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, the findings of this study should be interpreted cautiously, as they may be affected by these

uncontrollable variables. In addition, the results of this study may not be generalized to different grade levels, school contexts, or longer instructional periods.

## **G. Definition of The Key Terms**

There are some terms that are used in this research which are explained to make it clear and to avoid misunderstanding. They include the following:

### **1. Baamboozle**

Baamboozle (<https://www.baamboozle.com/games>) is a web-based educational game that provides a variety of interactive and interesting games. This *platform* is community-based so the teachers can see and use games and quizzes. Inside of this web, there are materials and games for study. There are much kind of interesting games and quiz, especially lesson language, like English and Indonesian lesson.

### **2. Vocabulary**

Vocabulary refers to the collection of words that a person knows and uses in communication. In this study, vocabulary focuses on English words that are commonly used in daily activities and normally taught at the elementary school level (Example: Fruits, Food, Drinks, etc.).

### **3. Vocabulary Mastery**

Vocabulary Mastery is person ability to master vocabulary, both in terms of the number of words known (breadth of vocabulary) and the depth of understanding of those words (depth of vocabulary). This includes understanding of the meaning of words, pronunciation, word forms, use in context, and the relationship between words and their synonym and antonyms.