

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The study's background, research question, objectives, significance, and definitions of key terms are all covered in this chapter.

A. Background of The Study

English is taught to Indonesian students as a foreign language beginning in junior high school into higher education. The four primary abilities of the English language are speaking, listening, reading, and writing, like those of many other languages. Additionally, those four primary skills are connected by language components including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Out of all those linguistic elements, vocabulary is the main focus of this study.

Vocabulary refers to all the words in a particular language or known by an individual which are used and understood to communicate effectively. It is the essential building block for all language skills, and mastering vocabulary means developing both the ability to understand (receptive) and use (productive) words appropriately in communication. Alqahtani (2015), stated that mastering vocabulary is essential for achieving success in English, as students cannot communicate effectively using grammatical structures and language functions without sufficient vocabulary knowledge. Thus, acquiring vocabulary is a fundamental aspect in learning a new language.

Teaching vocabulary in senior high school is challenging. During the teaching and learning process, teachers continued to encounter challenges. Students who struggle to master vocabulary will not be able to participate in the teaching and learning process since vocabulary mastery is crucial for

supporting other language abilities. Thornbury (2002) stated that without mastering grammar, there is only a small portion of language that can be acquired, but without vocabulary, there is nothing we can convey. Even though vocabulary is important for learning English, many students nowadays still have difficulty with it.

Teaching vocabulary using conventional methods faces several significant challenges. Mokhtar (2016), stated that one of the main problems is that students quickly become bored with monotonous methods such as memorization and repetition, which leads to a lack of motivation to learn. The usage of media in the classroom and the teacher's incompetence make acquiring language and teaching tedious, which makes students feel bored. As a result, students struggle to articulate themselves verbally or comprehend sentences. But in this era of globalization, technology is essential to many sectors of human life, including education.

One of the most widely used language-learning application is called Duolingo. It is a free application that can be downloaded on a computer or smartphone. One of the most popular apps for learning languages is Duolingo. The website claims that more than 30 million students have registered for Duolingo, a free program created in November 2011 by Severin Hacker and Luis Van Ahn. "Free language learning for the world" is its tagline. An program called Duolingo allows users to learn over 35 languages worldwide. English is a worldwide language, and millions of people can use this software to learn any foreign language they desire. According to Munday (2016), Duolingo seeks to teach enjoyable languages, this software offers a game-like

activity that combines multiple skills. Numerous studies have confirmed Duolingo's significant impact on vocabulary mastery in various educational levels, notably among senior high school students, as shown by Zainudin (2025) and Mujiarni et al. (2024). However, a significant research exists regarding Madrasah Aliyah (MA) institutions, particularly at MAN 1 Kota Kediri, which combines a national curriculum with a religious educational framework. This study examined the influence of Duolingo in this particular and missing context. Its objective is to establish the validity of the application's effectiveness on students' vocabulary mastery, especially in expressing hope and dreams, among eleventh-grade students at MAN 1 Kota Kediri. This was help to provide a more detailed comprehension of technology-assisted language learning within the context of Indonesian Islamic schools especially in expressing hope and dreams topic.

This study was conducted at MAN 1 Kota Kediri. The selection of this location is based on several crucial considerations. First, MAN 1 Kota Kediri was one of the most popular schools with strong religious and academic programs, and has a diverse and representative student population. This was ideal for research involving a sufficient sample size. Second, the school, especially the English teachers, are very open to learning innovations. This openness allows for the smooth implementation of technology-based learning interventions such as Duolingo. In addition, based on initial observations, MAN 1 Kota Kediri has the proper supporting facilities, such as internet access and classrooms that support the use of digital devices, which are

essential for the success of this research. As a result, it may encourage users to become more proficient in the English language.

Thus, the integration of the Duolingo application into learning methods, particularly in teaching English, is the focus of this study, with the aim of helping students master vocabulary through its use. Duolingo was selected for this study because it can be easily used anywhere and by anyone, especially students. From the explanations above, this research entitled “The Impact of Duolingo on Vocabulary Mastery Among the Eleventh Grade Students of MAN 1 Kota Kediri” is intended to be conducted in order to determine whether vocabulary mastery was achieved by students taught vocabulary using Duolingo compared to those who are not.

B. Research Problem

This study formulates the research problem as follows in consideration of the background mentioned above: Is Duolingo application effective on students' vocabulary mastery among the eleventh grade of MAN 1 KOTA KEDIRI academic year 2025/2026?

C. Research Objective

This study aims to find out the effectiveness using the Duolingo application on students' vocabulary mastery in the eleventh grade of MAN 1 KOTA KEDIRI academic year 2025/2026.

D. Hypothesis of The Study

The impact of utilizing the Duolingo application on students' vocabulary mastery was the main focus of this study's research hypothesis. There are two main kinds of hypotheses:

1. Null Hypothesis (H₀)

There is no significant effect of using Duolingo application on students' vocabulary mastery.

2. The Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)

There is significant effect of using Duolingo application on students' vocabulary mastery.

E. Research Significance

The significance of this study is communicated to:

1. For teachers, it provides more information on a new type of educational media application that may be implemented or utilized to teach vocabulary and improve the quality of the teacher's English instruction.
2. For students, because the Duolingo program is a fresh and enjoyable form of learning, it is intended to provide feedback to boost their interest in acquiring vocabulary as well as their knowledge of it.
3. For other researchers, this study can be used as a resource for the new type of media for teaching and the cause of students' vocabulary mastering through it, as well as the foundation for further studies by other researchers interested in teaching English.

F. Scope and Limitation of The Study

Based on previous problems, this study aims to determine how proper students can master vocabulary by using the Duolingo app on the expressing hope and dreams topic. And this study limits the subject from XI-C and XI-D.

G. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, key terms related to this research are defined, so readers can understand the content.

1. Duolingo

A free gamified mobile language-learning program is called Duolingo that teaches vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation through interactive exercises such as matching games, reading practice, and quizzes. It employs spaced repetition and immediate feedback to facilitate language learning.

2. Vocabulary Mastery

Students vocabulary mastery is a potential for comprehension, recall, and appropriate use of words in suitable contexts, both receptive (reading/listening) and productive (speaking/writing) skills for expressing hopes and dreams especially in eleventh grade.