

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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

A. Background of the Research

English is an international language used by many people around the world, making it essential for effective communication in various global contexts (Crystal, 2003). It is not only a tool for everyday interaction but also a fundamental subject studied academically through formal education in schools, colleges, and universities (Graddol, 2006). Mastering English provides numerous advantages, especially in fields such as business, economics, and international relations, where English often serves as the lingua franca (Seidlhofer, 2005). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasize that English is a vital medium of communication and a gateway to accessing the global currencies of technology and commerce. Furthermore, language cannot function without vocabulary, as it forms the basic building block of any linguistic expression; without vocabulary, communication is impossible (Nation, 2001).

Vocabulary is one of the essential elements of language that must be developed by students, as it serves as the foundation for constructing phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs used across the four main language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation, 2001). Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, students struggle to comprehend or express ideas effectively in English

(Wilkins, 1972). In fact, vocabulary plays a central role in acquiring and integrating these skills to support successful communication in a foreign language (Richards & Renandya, 2002). However, mastering English vocabulary presents a significant challenge for Indonesian students due to the substantial differences between English and Bahasa Indonesia in terms of spelling, pronunciation, and meaning (Nurweni & Read, 1999). Many students become disengaged from English lessons because they cannot understand the vocabulary being taught, which stems from a limited vocabulary base developed during elementary education (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, expanding vocabulary knowledge is a critical first step in improving English proficiency and enabling students to communicate effectively.

Based on initial observations at MTsN 8 Pagu, Kediri District, it was found that students have some problems in vocabulary mastery. At school, teachers often apply the Text-Based Learning Method which often involves a text for students to analyse. Teachers usually instruct students to open the LKS (Student Worksheet) book and instruct students to understand the material. However, they assume that learning English is difficult and not the language they are used to, and most students do not understand the content of the text. Given these challenges, it is important to explore learning media that can increase interest and motivation that supports the understanding of information. With the help of interesting media, it will increase the effectiveness of absorption of the knowledge provided. This is reinforced by research conducted by Ashari (2019) which revealed that interesting learning media can make the learning atmosphere fun and motivate students to learn languages.

Learning media are tools brought into the classroom by teachers to facilitate the teaching and learning process (Rahardjito et al. in Baidawi, 2016). This study focuses on using media as an alternative method for teaching English and improving students' vocabulary. Various media, such as films, videos, and specific applications, can enhance vocabulary learning through audio-visual means. Popular English learning applications like Busuu are widely used in Indonesia for this purpose.

Busuu is an English learning application that allows users to study independently using a variety of engaging features. Aligned with international standards, the app offers structured lessons ranging from beginner to advanced levels, using audio-visual materials that develop reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Key features include flashcards, writing exercises, grammar lessons, and conversation models with native speaker recordings. The “Help Others” feature encourages peer interaction and feedback. Additionally, Busuu provides a daily reminder system to maintain learning consistency and includes gamification elements such as progress tracking and sound effects for correct answers to enhance motivation (Ginting, 2023).

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of the Busuu application in improving students' vocabulary mastery across various educational settings. For instance, research conducted by Muharrom (2018) analyzed the use of Busuu as an online and independent learning tool. This descriptive study focused on the app's features and content, and the findings indicated that *Busuu* has significant potential in supporting autonomous language learning. It offers

comprehensive and interactive learning materials that support the four main language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

A study by Aisyah and Yuli (2023) examined the effectiveness of Busuu in enhancing students' listening skills. Conducted with class VIII B students at MTs Anwarul Maliki, Sukorejo, the research employed a quantitative pre-experimental approach using a pre-test and post-test design. The experiment consisted of three stages: pre-test, treatment using the Busuu application, and post-test. The results showed a marked improvement in listening skills, with the average score increasing from 34.44 to 64.44 after using the app.

Aprilia (2024) conducted a study focusing on the effectiveness of Busuu in improving vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade junior high school students. Using a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, the study found a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control groups, indicating that the use of the Busuu application effectively enhances vocabulary mastery in students.

The aforementioned studies served as references for the author in conducting the current research and were also used as comparisons for evaluating the results of this study. This research specifically focuses on the role of the Busuu application in improving students' vocabulary mastery. Based on the explanation above, the author conducted a study entitled “The Effectiveness of the Busuu Application Toward Students' Vocabulary Mastery Among The Seventh Grade at MTsN 8 Kediri.”

B. Research Question

This research aims to answer the question "Is the Use of the Busuu Application Effective in Increasing English Vocabulary Mastery of The Seventh-Grade Students at MTsN 8 Kediri?"

C. Objective of the Research

This research aims to measure The Effectiveness Of Busuu Application Towards Students' Vocabulary Mastery At The Seventh Grade Of Mtsn 8 Kediri.

1. Significant of the Research

The significance that can be expected from this research are:

a. Theoretical Significances

This research is expected to use effective Busuu Application for learning English vocabulary mastery on students.

b. Practical Significances

1) For Institutions

This research is expected to be an indication that Busuu Application are effective in managing students' English vocabulary.

2) For Teacher

This research offers an innovative and effective strategy to address vocabulary learning challenges, making lessons more engaging and interactive.

3) For Students

This research provides a practical and enjoyable tool to improve their vocabulary, encouraging independent learning and increasing motivation. related to teaching English vocabulary mastery.

4) For Institutions

This research is expected to be an indication that Busuu Application are effective in managing students' English vocabulary.

5) For Teacher

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6) For Students

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D. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is formulated to determine the effect of using the Busuu application on students' vocabulary mastery. The null hypothesis (H_0) states that there is no significant difference in vocabulary mastery between students who are taught using the Busuu application and those who are taught using conventional methods. In contrast, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) states that there is a significant difference in vocabulary mastery between students who are taught using the Busuu application and those who are taught using conventional methods. This hypothesis is tested through the analysis of pre-test and post-test scores from both experimental and control groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the Busuu application as a learning tool.

E. Scope and Limitation

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the Busuu app in improving the vocabulary acquisition of the seventh grade students at MTsN 8 Kediri, focusing on the features of the app such as vocabulary exercises and interactive lessons. The

study involves a limited number of students, so the results may not be generalisable to the entire population of the seventh grade students in the area. In addition, external factors such as students' prior knowledge of English, level of motivation, and access to technology affect the results of the study. The assessment of vocabulary acquisition is conducted through pre-tests and post-tests, which may contain an element of subjectivity. Finally, the study is limited to the specific vocabulary provided by the Busuu app, which does not cover the entire vocabulary taught in the English curriculum at school.

F. The definition of key terms

1. Effectiveness

The term effective in the KBBI dictionary means 'having an effect'. Another meaning is 'able to bring results'. Referring to the KBBI, effective can be interpreted as something that has a result. The result in question is a positive result or can be said to be successful.

2. Busuu Application

Busuu application is a language learning application that provides various features to help users improve their language skills, including vocabulary mastery. Learning is organized interestingly and simply by adding images, videos, and audio from native speakers, making it easier for users to learn vocabulary, such as some vocabulary used in daily activities. Users can learn about vocabulary by watching videos of daily activities, with proper pronunciation and how it is used.

3. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is a person's ability to understand, recognize, and use the right words in a language. Vocabulary mastery is important in life, such as communicating, doing work, and performing daily activities. Therefore, it is important to continue exploring and improving vocabulary understanding to adapt to various situations.

In vocabulary mastery, there are two classifications. Namely, receptive. At this level, mastery is limited to understanding the meaning of vocabulary. In other words, it is only rote. Vocabulary mastery comes from listening skills and reading skills. The second is productive. This level of mastery is higher. Learners no longer just memorise and understand the meaning of words. Learners are expected to be able to apply the words they have learnt.