

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research that describe the reason way the writer conducts the study. Those are the background of the study, the problem of the study, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the limitation of the study, and the definition of the key term.

A. Background of the Study

The English language is one of the international languages. Studying English is very important in the globalization era to get involved in the development of scientific and technological information worldwide. English language may have a complicated past, but it has a bright future. It causes many students to learn the language, it helps connect us in the global world. English learning can also help us in we personal and professional life. Besides, the Indonesian government has decided English as the first foreign language that should be thought of as one of the subjects studied by the students for elementary up to college level.

Vocabulary is one of the factors that support students to master language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In speaking, students cannot communicate well without vocabulary; in listening, students may not know the meaning of the conversation well; in reading students may not understand the text; and in writing, students may not write ideas. The problem is many students still lack vocabulary. Students need to have a rich vocabulary that continually grows through language and literacy experiences, to comprehend and construct increasingly complex texts.

According to Sinatra, Zygoris-Coe, and Dasinger (2011,p.333) said that "Knowledge of vocabulary meaning affects children's abilities to understand and use the word appropriately during the language acts of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Nowadays, teachers just focus on the syllabus. In the syllabus, there is no teaching vocabulary, it just focuses on 4 aspects, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, students who have lack vocabulary will be difficult in doing the exercise and some of them will difficult to understand the meanings.

Vocabulary learning has a purpose to memorize and use the acquired words in various contexts of conversation that may arise (McCarthy, 1984: Teng, 2016). The teaching and learning vocabulary process in virtual class tend to be boring since the lack of media use and monotonous technique. It reasons them difficult to understand texts or when they want to express their words in spoken form.

In this digital era with the development of technology in the world of education, also the use internet as a new technique of teaching has made radical changes in the traditional process of teaching and learning (Wang et al. 2007). These developments have additionally provided practitioners with the foundations students need to better support individual learning processes. Studying English is more interesting when use technology is an essential part to support the process of teaching and learning. Besides that, many students must study at the home during pandemic covid-19. Learning English should be integrated with appropriate media as an assistant on the application in the virtual classroom. Therefore, modern technologies can be used as a supplement to virtual classroom teaching in vocabulary mastery.

In recent years, web educational applications have increasingly supported online learning. Many researchers point out that applications have a great educational value by offering students a non-stressful learning atmosphere and fun. More students use mobile devices to be connected to the web. Mobile learning (or m-learning) is the ability to learn anywhere and anytime with their comfort through their portable. When the learning utilizing cellular technology for education purpose can offer spontaneous, informal, contextual, and portable learning opportunity anywhere.

The application technology that popular learning English in vocabulary mastery is *Duolingo Application*. Jascova (2014) defines Duolingo is seen as a future in learning language and in global communication. Duolingo is an application designed to help students improve language easy and fun. Duolingo itself is a free language learning application created by Luis von Ahn and Saverin Hacker. The application is not only available in the web version but it is also in android, iOS, and Windows Phone operating systems each lesson in this application has many challenges. This application provides writing, listening, translating, answering, and talking multiple-choice questions challenges. Since the instructions of this application are given in Indonesia, students will be able to play more easily and getting much vocabulary than evaluate it for their memory.

Duolingo is a language learning media that can be used to increase levels of active learners in the teaching-learning process stated by Munday (2015, p.88). This application can make the students easier to understand memorize the word, make

their interest, enjoy, and fun in learning because it provided gamification in learning English.

Walgito (2003:87) described the theories of perception by collecting some experts explanation perception is the process of human thinking about a certain phenomenon. Therefore, Perception is among the important cognitive of human behavior or psychological mechanism that allows people to understand their environmental theory. Beside that, perception is influenced by experience past and also influenced by the individual attitude at that time. There is also a perception that has been called an illusion.

Previously, there have been researching conducted by Muddin (2018) entitled "The use of *Duolingo Application* to Improve Students' Vocabulary". He assumed *Duolingo Application* give a positive effect on students' ability in mastering vocabulary through using Duolingo. It makes it students easy to understand the material, getting the opportunity in practicing the material, they enthusiastically in teaching-learning activities. The students showed a positive attitude toward the implementation of the Duolingo application.

Another previous study by Ambara (2020) in his thesis entitled "The Effect of Using Duolingo Application in learning Vocabulary at SMAN 2 Karanganyar". He assumed that *Duolingo Application* has many positive effects for students. It can be used to increase levels of active learners in the teaching-learning process.

Based on my personal experience, learn by using *Duolingo* is an interesting way to increase vocabulary mastery. Duolingo is a very modern-looking gaming application. It can also eradicate boredom in learning English. Most of the

effectiveness in the application is based on translation, dictation, and pronunciation. This application connects lessons with games that can build interest in learning.

Based on the theoretical above, the students have different perceptions on the use of Duolingo as a language learning application to see whether vocabulary mastery helps them to improve their vocabulary or not. *Duolingo applications* can help to support teaching and learning vocabulary in virtual classrooms. Even though the vocabulary is not a subject in the MTsN 8 Kediri, but also it is the basic competence that must be reached by students to get other competence such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Besides it, it is expected the positive atmosphere in their language achievement and proficiency. Realizing this phenomenon above, this research is conducted under a study entitled **"STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE USE OF DUOLINGO APPLICATION IN VOCABULARY MASTERY OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF MTsN 8 KEDIRI"**.

B. Research Problems

Based on the background of this study, the writer has determined the problems of the study that becomes the concern of discussion. The problem is elaborated into a research question as follows:

1. What are the students' perceptions towards the use of *Duolingo Application* in Vocabulary Mastery of the eighth-grade students of MTsN 8 Kediri?

C. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate students' perceptions toward the use of *Duolingo Application* in Vocabulary Mastery of the Eighth Grade Student of MTsN 8 Kediri.

D. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give a contribution to the teachers, students, and researchers:

1. For the teacher

Based on this research, the writer expected Duolingo can be one of the media that will be used by the teachers in terms of teaching English vocabulary and to solve the problems of students' difficulties in memorizing the meaning of vocabulary then it will make the learning process in the virtual classroom more interest and activity. Especially, for students of MTsN 8 Kediri.

2. For the students

For students, this research expected to provide mastering the English lesson by using Duolingo will make them feel excited and enjoy when they learn English in a virtual classroom or at their home. Then, it can increase vocabulary in understanding the meaning of words in the sentence. The students can use the Duolingo everywhere and every time because it will them memorize vocabulary and they can use those in everyday communication.

3. For the next researcher

This study is expected to give some information and experience related to using *Duolingo Application*, so they are expected to conduct better research.

E. Scope of Key Term

This study focuses on investigating the perceptions toward the use of *Duolingo Application* in Vocabulary Mastery of the students of MTsN 8 Kediri. Questionnaires and interviews are used as an instrument to find the data. The study is limited to focus on the eighth-grade students who joined vocabulary mastery and their perceptions toward the use of *Duolingo Application* in vocabulary mastery of the students of MTsN 8 Kediri.

F. Definition of Key Term

To make the readers get easier in understanding this study, it will be defined some key terms that important to understand and the following:

1. Perceptions : Perception is the realization of the human brain process and it appears as a view about the phenomenon. In this process, many factors such as feeling, need, motivation, educational background, experiences, etc are involved. Then the process in which a person's brain arrives at the meaningful interpretation of stimuli. Koentjaningrat (2010:42). It can be concluded that perceptions are a process of human thinking about certain phenomena after they get the sensation from the environment through the sense organ.
2. Application of mobile learning: Mobile learning application is learners' mobility, learning virtually anywhere and anytime, via mobile devices, are the main characteristics of mobile learning.

3. Duolingo : Duolingo is English means multilingual, in *Oxford Dictionary* (2008, p.288) the meaning of multilingual is knowing or using more than one language. That aims to teach language through a sequence of online tasks. As well as a web-based site there is an app available for Android, Ios, and Windows-based mobile. Its purpose to allow access to free language education with no hidden fees.
4. Vocabulary Mastery : Vocabulary mastery as complete integrated word knowledge (knowing is formed, meaning, and use) of certain language.