

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The chapter explains of some aspects related to the research such as research background, problem identification, research limitation, research questions, research objectives, and research significance.

1.1 Research Background

English language has been used as a communication tool in the world including English-speaking countries and non-English countries as well. English is also being taught in non-English countries as well in schools and universities as a foreign language. Macro Skills and Micro Skills are two things that need to be considered to master in learning English.

Macro skills are the main abilities that a language student must acquire is divided into spoken (listening and speaking) and written skills (reading and writing) (Kusumastiti & Palupiningsih, 2021). Nevertheless, Micro skills are considered as the mastery on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling on the branch of macro skill (i.e. the mastery of grammar and vocabulary) and it is important for learners as micro skills are used to determine the level of learners. As the micro skills must be pay attention of, especially vocabulary, the role of vocabulary in learning a foreign language is unavoidable.

Teaching vocabulary is actually challenging for most teachers. Using interactive and fun method of teaching English must be adapted into learning activities in order to take learning interest of students especially in learning vocabulary (Shabaneh & Farrah, 2019). As students are getting better in vocabulary, it would be easier to introduce them in higher level of learning along

with the increase of their English skills. In learning a foreign language, the importance of vocabulary is foregone, where rich vocabulary will be needed to master four major skills such as listening, speaking, vocabulary, and writing, and it is proven because vocabulary is a language element that links the four major language skills (Nguyen & Nga Thu, 2013). Furthermore, vocabulary is one of the five essential elements that used in reading instruction, along with comprehension and phonological awareness, phonics and phrase study, and fluency vocabulary (Sedita, 2005). Essentially, vocabulary learning is a crucial process of language acquisition in which it engages learners knowledge of word definitions, word formation, collocation, synonyms, and so on (Metom et al., 2019). The learners must ignored the lack of vocabulary because it would make them difficult to follow and understand the teacher's explanation and vocabulary mastery must be limitless (Cesarini et al., 2021). Apart from teachers' initiative, students also should involve more in the learning process; in addition, they will engage their critical thinking and problem solving skills which are the skills that they will need to be succeeding in the future especially in the 21st century (Wiraningsih & Santosa, 2020).

In teaching vocabulary, teachers are required to be creative in utilizing media and tools. Media or tools to make the changes in learning process are required to make learning process more vary. There is a need of creating creative methods and media to boost up students' interest in acquiring vocabulary so that most instructors include media into their teaching and learning processes, but they often overlook the need of enhancing vocabulary development (Ajisoko, 2020). The learning activity must have creative and pedagogical media based strategy in

the teaching English to level up learners' vocabulary in higher education (Metom et al., 2019).

Some students are lacking of confidence and pretend to be passively active while attend English classes because of inadequacy in vocabulary which is can affect their progress in learning English even they are aware of the importance of it (Bakti, 2018; Nguyen & Nga Thu, 2013). In this case, it is referred to passive learners where they do not have initiation to discover the meaning for themselves and only depended on teachers. They were indecisive to practice with the new vocabulary, despite claiming to understand its meaning. (Nguyen & Nga Thu, 2013).

However, students will have difficulties if students do not have a sufficient vocabulary mastery. Based from the preliminary observations that have been done by the researcher at SMP N 2 Singaraja, it is found out that most students' do not master vocabulary mastery. They seem too confused even saying the meaning behind each English words. The teacher had tried any approach and method in teaching English such as play a game, sing a song, quiz, textbooks, and so on. The English teacher also teaches from the basic standard English such as grammar, tenses, pronunciation, and vocabulary because most students do not have adequate basic English skills (speaking, writing, listening, and speaking) in order to understand the material that mostly written in English (A2-B1 Level). Nevertheless, students still lacking of English skills, especially the vocabulary. When teacher asks them to say some words or write a phrase or sentences in English, students still struggling to remember some words even they cannot answer even simple questions such as mentioning parts of house, parts of animals,

things in classroom, etc. The students are afraid to speak up their mind or idea using English in class because the limitation of vocabulary they remember. The teacher mostly delivery material by using Bahasa Indonesia so the students can understand the concept.

This is main problems faced by the teacher because only some students have enough ability to understand some words and sentences in English, so the gap between students who have wider vocabulary comprehension versus students who have poor vocabulary comprehension are not balanced. Innovation and tools that support learning process are needed to solve this problem. They have some obstacles in acquiring new vocabulary especially when it comes to learning in vocabulary and writing context because they need to have adequate vocabulary capacity in terms of English vocabulary and writing subject.

Based on the interview with teachers, they seem to lack in variety of teaching methods using ICT. They only know some of the application and exploring new apps infrequently. There is not a frequent training on how utilizing technology in developing learning strategies. Teachers also rarely introduce some applications that seems beneficial because of the obstacles in adopting new strategies especially utilizing technology in ELT. However, apart from the activeness of teachers in preparing learning techniques and media that are used in learning, the effectiveness of an application or media is also tested to find out whether the application is effective enough to use in the learning process.

In terms of that, there are many resources and facilities to help achieve vocabulary mastery, the most popular source now mostly based in technology, especially Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Recent studies

found out that technology especially ICT are beneficial in learning practices in efficient, effective, and innovative notably in vocabulary mastery (Kusumastiti & Palupiningsih, 2021). Innovation in creating media of ELT has been an unstoppable innovation from the centuries. Some studies found out that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) bring the influence in teaching English as English as Foreign Language (EFL) field where experts had done research in basic ICT skills that suitable on EFL classroom (Çakıcı, 2016). In line with that, the main goals of the use in educational technology is to aid the teaching/learning process as well in pedagogical contexts. Collective media in ICT such as images, animation, and videos can help students in learning apart from text screens in appealing way as it is proved that ICT can improve students accomplishment along with students' character (Hidayanti & Diana, 2019) By implementing ICT, the learning process can be level up as it provides many interactive content and appealing media as students can access to many resources which bring the diversity in learning experience. ICT is broken down into several types based on each function and program that runs to it. In ICT, several terms divided again based on the definition and its function, one of them is MALL. Since this study focused on the MALL use and its' effect in language learning, the next paragraph shows what is MALL and what its' function.

The development of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has the urge for researchers to do research in the application in efficacy, because of several; benefits of utilizing of MALL-based learning, where it had been developed for past ten years to its extensive field which had been gained more recognition (Sutrisna et al., 2018). It has been established as one of the well-

known tools in learning and teaching language. MALL is one of the tool to enhance language strategy which is available in form of smartphones, laptops, and tablets where it has several features contains materials needed to facilitate students in language learning (Pratiwi et al., 2020). By utilizing dictionary application on smartphone can help learners to practice their pronunciation and vocabulary mastery as it set up the correct way on how to pronounce it correctly (Chartrand, 2016). Viberg and Grönlund (2012) also stated that the use of mobile technology on second language acquisition has a substantial impact on the process of learning a new language, where it shows in further evidence that mobile technology can improve learners' second and foreign language acquisition. Mobile device help students to actively involved in interesting learning activities that can be beneficial for developing good comprehension, facilitate vocabulary growth, and decrease anxiety (Azli et al., 2018).

Seeing the support of MALL in learning language, it has connection of English vocabulary learning proved in several research. One of them is using mobile games. In terms of learning English, language games helps to break the monotomy and reduce unmotivation among learners by serving innovative and entertaining strategies and creating a pleasant and conducive learning environment which can lead to higher retention of new words (Shabaneh & Farrah, 2019). As a result, games assist learners in remembering new vocabulary, associating new knowledge with their environment, and improving their language and communicative abilities. Nowadays, the smartphone applications are used the most by students in this generation. Recently, many applications offer a wide variety of features that exploited visualization and gamification features such as

images, animations, sound effects, gamification and other advanced features that attract students to entertain themselves by playing a game, but also learning throughout game at the same time. Starting from simple applications such as online translators (Google translate), quizzes and flashcards online (Quizlet and Quizziz), as well as games that combine learning and playing features such as Duolingo, Cake, Hello English, RealLife, Scrabble and so on. The application certainly has different features from each other. One of the most downloaded tools in Android/iOS for language learning is Duolingo. Duolingo, known as a learning applications and websites platform, has become a popular language learning application that provides over 59 different courses in 23 languages for more than 150 million learners (Huynh & Iida, 2017). It is founded in 2012 by Luis von Ahn and Severin Hacker with the main purpose of “tailoring” learners’ language learning pace by acquiring repetition in order to reach each “tree” level. Duolingo provide different kinds of topic in each language. It also runs the educators forum for users to discuss anything related about languages whether as students or teachers to learn (Ajisoko, 2020). It can assess learners progress and give accomplishment through learners dedication in pleasant ways. According to Krashen (2014) the apps provides information like point earned, overview tree (summary), the streak, and the time spent that it makes the practices are so numerous and easy for novice learner to learn a new language. The apps are very simple to use, the procedures and steps are easy to understand. Duolingo is approachable for all ages from children, teenagers, parents, and others (Bustillo et al., 2017). According to Krashen (2014), the application featured information about extra points collection, overview trees (summaries), streaks, and play

duration that makes the practice opportunities for beginners are abundant and simple. The application surface are easy to use with clear steps and processes while using. Duolingo can be used for people from any ages from the children until adults (Bustillo et al., 2017).

Many studies confirmed that using ICT tools especially Duolingo in terms of the effects of in acquiring new learning skills brought positive impacts. First, the study by Ajisoko (2020) is focused on the investigation of the use of Duolingo apps to affect the improvement student's vocabulary in Borneo University of Tarakan. Second, a study by (Aulia et al., 2020) was investigated the significant effect of Duolingo application on students' vocabulary mastery using quasi-experimental research design through post-test. The next, a study by Astarilla Liya, (2020) examined the effect of Duolingo on EFL university students' vocabulary mastery using experimental method. Another research conducted by Hidayanti & Diana, (2019) was investigated on motivation in learning English while using Duolingo. Next, the study by Karjo and Andreani (2018) compared the efficiency of two learning apps, Duolingo and Memrise in learning two foreign languages. The study conducted by (Astarilla, 2018) examined students' perception towards the use of Duolingo application in learning English. Furthermore, Kusumadewi and Widyastuti (2018) conducted a study on the effect of Duolingo application in students' vocabulary mastery. The next study by Putri & Aulia Islamiati (2018) investigated Duolingo in teaching listening skills. Ahmed (2016) was investigated Duolingo in helping beginner students to acquire two or more language continuously.

Based from those studies that related of the use of MALL application (Duolingo) and its' impact in vocabulary mastery. Some previous researchers given several suggestions based from their research. Duolingo is recommended as the tools for learning language as teachers must modify their teaching skills with current technology and provide learning materials based on students level (Ajisoko, 2020). Duolingo can be one of the effective apps in improving English language learning especially vocabulary because learners found it interesting as they showed great responses toward this application, it is useful to begin self-learning and encourage them of new idea in learning and students admitted that the material are easy to understand, also Duolingo can reduce boredom in learning vocabulary (Munday, 2015). Duolingo application can be one of alternative media to learn English for young learners as it is also considered effective in teaching vocabulary for students in Junior High School (Matra, 2020). Due to the WebCAPE assessment's limitations in evaluating Duolingo's performance as a language learning tool, more in-depth and comprehensive evaluations of Duolingo are required as it is popular as learning platform worldwide (Vesselinov & Grego, 2012). Therefore, future research throughout learners' outcome is needed (Crowther et al., 2017). Based from findings on another research, the researcher recommends to the teachers and lecturers to apply Duolingo for developing their students' vocabulary because this application can support the students' vocabulary learning and motivate students to learn English anytime and anywhere (Amin, 2021). Furthermore, it prompts the desire of learning a new language (Ahmed, 2016). On the other hand, another researcher suggested to continue conducting future researches regardless to the use of Duolingo on other English skills

(Astarilla Liya, 2020). In this way, the tool can be thought of as support for the foreign language teacher with the features of data usability, ease of access, interactive and inclusivity for non-native learners as it need further research regardless of qualitative content analysis in second stage of the research (De Araújo & Eddine, 2020). Thus, more studies in any case of Duolingo implementation for English language learning are recommended as every learning context is unique and has its own characteristics (Hidayanti & Diana, 2019). In conclusion, implementing Duolingo is highly suggested to be implemented at schools to help students while learning and it is proved indeed that Duolingo is beneficial as the language learning app.

From the investigation from preliminary and literature studies, it is proved that Duolingo is a convenient tool for learning vocabulary. Therefore, the novelties from this research is only few has conducted research in English as Foreign Language (EFL) field, mostly research focused on Duolingo as tools of teaching ESL (English as Second Language). There are also a few research applied in investigating effectiveness in Duolingo for improving vocabulary mastery especially in junior high school levels in Bali and Buleleng regency area. The previous suggestion from the researchers also supports the urgency of conducting this research to find out if Duolingo is still relevant in acquiring vocabulary. In terms of that, the researcher wanted to investigate the effects of Duolingo implementation in students' vocabulary mastery.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background research of the study, there are three major problems found, such as:

1. There is the deficiency of interactive and fun classroom activities that students need, the lack of confidence that students have in vocabulary mastery which caused anxiety.
2. The students lacked of basic knowledge in vocabulary skills mastery.
3. The students are less interested in studying vocabulary.

These problems is identified based from preliminary study from previous researchers. There is a need of using interactive tools in order to investigate the cause and effect in students' vocabulary mastery.

1.3 Research Limitation

The result of this proposed research is limited only in implementing Duolingo to know the effect in testing vocabulary mastery on the students at 7th in SMP N 2 Singaraja.

1.4 Research Questions

From the explanation above, the researcher states several research problems, such as:

1. Is there any effect after the implementation of Duolingo on students' vocabulary mastery at SMP N 2 Singaraja ?
2. How does the implementation of Duolingo affect the student's vocabulary mastery?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the research problem above, the research objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate any effect after the implementation of Duolingo on students' vocabulary mastery at *SMP N 2 Singaraja*.
2. To describe students' opinion on the implementation of Duolingo during vocabulary learning process.

1.6 Research Significance

The theoretical significance of this research would be useful for another researcher in the same field of the study. This research also useful for English teacher in providing theoretical knowledge of developing learning activity to improve vocabulary skills through Junior High School students.

In practical Significance, it will impact EFL students in improving English Vocabulary mastery by using Duolingo as the implementation of ICT in learning language inside and outside classroom also teachers in improving teaching quality by providing tools that can be used in the classroom activity. It will provide more data for future researcher when it comes to do depth research on the effectiveness of Duolingo as language learning tools.

1.7 Key terms

In context of EFL learning using technology, there are Key terms. These are used to define some important terms that consists of conceptual definition and operational definition which will be explained in-depth at the next chapter.

1.7.1 CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning)

CALL is the concept used when a teacher used technology in English as a Foreign Language learning activity that utilize a computer as the source and the internet as the support (Derakhshan & Davoodi Khatir, 2015). In order to

examine the impact of the technologies, including Duolingo, on the students' vocabulary skills, the researcher used a laptop and a smartphone in this study.

1.7.2 MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning)

MALL stands for Mobile learning or M-learning that utilize materials that can accessed by teachers and students via mobile devices such as handphones, tablets, smartphones and so on. Mall are available in internet and accessed through some tools categorized as blogging, WiKi, Podcast, Digital Portfolios, and Virtual Learning Environments to engage students in improving accurateness, effortlessness, and applicable learning environments (Cakir, 2016). MALL has the possibility through promoting activity to boost learner's language growth, diminish anxiety, rising motivation and positive attitudes towards learning through promoting activity if it used appropriately and learners can learn to take accountability for their learning progress by creating "learner pace" independently (Cakir, 2016; Munday, 2015).

1.7.3 Vocabulary Mastery

Richard as stated in (Ajisoko, 2020) defined vocabulary as the main aspect in achieving language proficiency where it become the fundamental of how precise learners can speak, listen, read, and write additional Vocabulary skills refer to a person's ability to read, grasp, interpret, and decode written language and texts. Vocabulary mastery is the dependent variable in this research. Otherwise, the researcher divides students from seventh grade classes into two groups.

1.7.3 Duolingo

Duolingo is a commercial language-teaching platform that offers free courses on the web and on mobile apps. Duolingo offers various of features

with the main focus of learning language from a very beginner level (Jiang et al., 2020). It utilized many models of test, such as defining vocabulary, arranged sentences, speaking test, listening test, translate test, choose correct vocabulary, quiz based on stories, etc. Duolingo also provide vocabulary lists and how to pronounce it. It is the tools that being utilized in this research as a treatment support only for experimental group that comes from students in seventh grade.

1.7.4 Junior High School

Junior high school is a bunch of students that placed a level below high school. In certain systems, junior high school provides three years of study; as a result, a ninth grade student is categorized as the junior high school students. For this research, the seventh grade are come from two classes that consists of 68 students is chosen as the samples of this study.

