

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Vocabulary is the foundation for mastering English. As stated by Li (2016), vocabulary is very important in language learning because it is needed for communication. Every time people communicate with others, vocabulary plays a role in successful communication. It is because the meaning of a message can only be clearly understood through various words by paying attention to the selection and use of the right words. Besides that, mastering vocabulary improves communication skills and clarifies the delivery and understanding of intent in conversation. Vocabulary also influences the development of several other skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as brings up many opportunities in various aspects (Pusparini & Ningrum, 2020; Wati et al., 2023). Recognizing its importance, students need to have adequate vocabulary to be able to meet these important needs.

Although vocabulary has great importance but the most common challenge experienced by students in language learning is limited vocabulary, which EFL students most often face, as English is not their mother tongue (Alfadil, 2020). Students with limited vocabulary often have difficulty improving their language skills, hindering the overall language-learning process, they will have difficulty understanding the material and conveying their ideas (Agazzi, 2022; Surmanov & Azimova, 2020). In Indonesia, many students were not even familiar with 3000 essential words in English (Sudarman et al., 2022). This problem significantly

affects both their English language skills and even Indonesia's ranking in the English Proficiency Index (EPI), which consists of non-native speakers from various countries worldwide. As presented in the EPI survey, in 2021, Indonesia's ranking is in the low proficiency level category. Furthermore, based on data obtained from the newest survey in 2023, Indonesia is still at a low proficiency level, which is ranked 79 out of 113 provinces and countries worldwide. This makes limited vocabulary need to be seriously addressed through appropriate learning.

Problem in vocabulary mastery is affected by several factors. Based on the study by Suardi and Sakti (2019), the most common factor causing students' limited vocabulary is due to less interesting learning. Teachers in Indonesia still have difficulty in presenting words, making students less interested in learning and students become passive in receiving new vocabulary. These difficulties lead teachers to teach simply, for example using traditional methods. However, the traditional method is known to be less effective when applied in Indonesia but many teachers still use it (Josafat Gultom et al., 2021). This method leads to using non-interactive media, such as relying only on books, which can cause monotonous, and uninspiring learning experiences (Hanif et al., 2019). Several possibilities might exist when teaching vocabulary with this method. Students might receive knowledge passively, lose interest in learning, and quickly get bored (Hazarika, 2017). In addition, limited learning resources can also cause students difficulty in receiving new vocabulary because they do not have access to varied and extensive learning, which makes students struggle to understand the context of the words they have learned (Ariyani et al., 2024). Thus, teachers need to determine the right and appropriate learning methods and learning resources that are interactive and

extensive, such as utilizing technology to avoid and minimize those possibilities since it offers multimedia that can create different learning styles, enhance students' understanding, boost students' interest and motivation to learn (Ahmadi, 2018).

Given the importance of technology in everyday life, technology is now increasingly being applied in various fields, including in education. This tool is increasingly important in supporting an effective learning process. Moreover, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is officially required to be implemented in schools in Indonesia, which also emphasizes the use of technology in the learning process (Wahyudin et al., 2024). According to the Kementerian Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, the Merdeka Curriculum is an educational reference designed for learning recovery that prioritizes meaningful, enjoyable, and relevant learning. As stated by Mardati and Maryani (2024), this curriculum requires student-centred and differentiated learning that makes teachers apply and adjust learning methods according to student needs. In addition, teachers are also required to master the material and technology effectively in the learning process. In its implementation, technology becomes one of the bridges as a versatile tool that can be utilized by teachers and students in the learning process because it can encourage innovation, creativity, and broaden experiences. Moreover, increasingly sophisticated technological developments have created various mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops that can be used anytime and anywhere, further facilitating learning (Casmal & Pribadi, 2022). As an interactive learning media, teachers and students can explore various learning resources that can be accessed quickly and easily to enrich their learning styles and experiences (Andriani et al., 2022; Meihan, 2020). Therefore, the government emphasizes Technological

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) as an important element in this curriculum to help teachers integrate technology, pedagogy and learning materials harmoniously so that learning outcomes can be achieved optimally (Wati et al., 2023; Mardati & Maryani 2024).

In language learning, especially vocabulary learning, implementing technology as a media is commonly used. As stated by Budiyani and Sujarwo (2020), students can gain new experiences and remember vocabulary longer than if they do not use media. For that reason, teachers can integrate technology into language learning since it offers various interactive digital media. Moreover, digital media can be accessed easily through mobile devices commonly used in school areas to make learning more effective and efficient. Through digital media that can be accessed through websites, web-based applications, and mobile applications, teachers and students can experience different and interactive learning because interactive features and media such as images, audio, and videos make the learning process more fun and enhance their understanding (Elisa, 2023). Moreover, the power of technological advances has given rise to various applications used in the world of education, which can be accessed easily via mobile devices (Maulina et al., 2022). This makes it natural for many teachers and students to use applications in their language learning nowadays (Rosell-Aguilar, 2016). The applications commonly used are DuoCard, Duolingo, Busuu, Mobile Dictionary, and social media such as Facebook and Twitter (Thedpitak & Somphong, 2021; Váradi & Hladonik, 2023). Besides that, web-based applications or applications that can be accessed only via websites, such as Wordwall, are also frequently used to practice

new words in language learning. This proves that technology plays an important role in vocabulary learning.

Technology, as a digital media that facilitates language learning for both teachers and students is becoming commonly increasingly common in schools. Based on the preliminary observation shows that one of the favorite schools in Seririt, and as part of the “Sekolah Penggerak Angkatan 1”, SMP Negeri 1 Seririt has also already used several digital media, one of them is Liveworksheets. This school permitted their students to use their smartphones in the learning process with the teacher's consent to make the learning process more effective and efficient. As a role for other schools, this junior high school also successfully used various interactive technology-based media, such as educational applications, to help teachers and students during the learning process. One of the educational media was the Liveworksheets application. This application has been implemented as an interactive learning media in vocabulary learning. An English teacher at this school stated that she used the Liveworksheets application, apart from attracting students' interest in learning English due to the lack of motivation among many students, it also focused on improving the language aspects of 8th-grade students because they still have limited vocabulary. The reason was that most students only started learning basic vocabulary intensively in 7th grade because while they were in elementary school, most students were taught using traditional methods, which were considered monotonous, such as relying only on books and note-taking without using appropriate and interactive media. For that reason, in 8th grade, the teacher used the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning because it is

easy to use and has interactive features that can be used to improve their English skills and increase their motivation to learn.

In line with the results of reviewed previous studies, for instance, Le and Prabjandee (2023) Liveworksheets application offers potential benefits for both teachers and students. Liveworksheets is an online platform or smartphone application that provides various digital worksheets. This web-based application is easy to use because it only can be accessed via the link. Thus, teacher and students can use it whenever and wherever they want as long as in the good internet connection. Besides that, Liveworksheets also offers various types of exercises such as drag and drop, multiple choice, match, and word search to make the learning process more valuable in improving students' language skills and language aspects such as vocabulary because it encourages the repetition process, allowing users to practice the vocabulary learned repeatedly, thereby improving understanding and memory (Khalid & Aziz, 2022). This application also supports teachers' creativity in creating their worksheets with various features offered. They are not only free to choose the task type but can also combine their worksheets with interactive texts, audio, pictures, video, and links from another platform to make the worksheets more interactive. Moreover, worksheets can be used online, downloaded in the form of JPG, PNG, and PDF, or printed, depending on the teacher and student's needs (Sulistiani et al., 2023). Since this application facilitates interactive worksheets for students, the teacher can assess to track students' ability. The score will also be immediately visible due to auto-scoring, and students can receive feedback and see the errors that need to be corrected (Retno, 2022). With this application, the learning process can be carried out more effectively because it can help teachers find

different learning styles, prevent students from feeling bored, enhance students' understanding, and also increase their motivation to learn, ultimately fostering a more engaging language learning experience.

As one educational application that can be used as a language-learning media. The Liveworksheets application has been widely implemented and effectively used in learning that has a positive impact on the language aspect and language skills of students in English at various levels of education. In level of primary school found that Liveworksheets can increase student vocabulary and enthusiasm for learning after using interactive worksheets regularly (Khalid & Aziz, 2022). Similarly, in the study by Febiola and Za (2022), the Liveworksheets application was successfully implemented in an international elementary school in West Jakarta. The results of this study showed that students' vocabulary improved through the use of e-worksheets in brainstorming and games activities. Researchers also used audio such as music. In this study, Liveworksheets received positive opinion from students. They felt comfortable, motivated, and even engaged in the learning process. Meanwhile, the use of Liveworksheets is also reported in the secondary level of education, both in junior high school and senior high school level. Based on the study by Wati et al. (2019), Liveworksheets were used as interactive worksheets that focus on improving students' understanding in class 7H at SMPN 1 Paparan during the Covid-19 period as a formative and summative assessment. The result of this study indicated that Liveworksheets was effective in expanding students' understanding of vocabulary. It can be seen that the majority of students managed to achieve scores above KKM with an increased in scores. Positive opinions were also given by students because this application was easy to use.

Therefore, this application also has an important role in students at the secondary level. Research by Hidayah and Asari (2022) found that the Liveworksheets applications play a role as a learning media in 2nd-grade junior high schools in Thailand by using the combinations of several questions and videos to overcome students' low scores in listening. The results of this study showed that students' listening skills were improved and the auto-scoring of this application also helped the teacher to see the students' scores easily. Apart from that, several studies at the senior high school level also show good results on students' language skills and aspects. Based on the study by Teresa and Febria (2023), to overcome students' problems with their confidence and motivation in speaking, Liveworksheets were used by adding media to their worksheets. As a result, Liveworksheets not only boost their confidence but also improve their fluency, pronunciation, and motivation to learn. In line with that, the use of the Liveworksheets was important as a learning media in the form of interactive worksheets to improve students in writing and reading skills. Armaditya et al. (2024) observed that combining questions and media in Liveworksheets could increase students' ability to write Hortatory Text. It also enhanced their understanding, motivation, and interest during English lessons. Compared to these findings, other studies by Elena et al. (2022) report that by using interactive worksheets, the student's grammar skills are successfully improved, and this application entertains the students to learn English grammar. Furthermore, in the context of the University level, the used of Liveworksheets was considered to be a promising one. Research by Yusuf and Ali (2022) revealed that the feature-added media, such as video and audio, greatly helped the lecturer because it used to enhance students' listening skills at Makassar

University. By adding the various media, the students feel happy and enjoy while also improving their listening skills when using the application. Thus, from the previous research. It can be concluded that Liveworksheets was an effective platform that offers various features and plays a crucial role in improving students' language skills and aspects in various field of education. This application also gains positive responses from students.

From several previous studies, Liveworksheets have been proven effective in language learning, as demonstrated by research at various educational levels in various countries, from elementary school to college. Various activities were done by using features and interactive media from Liveworksheets have received full attention because of their satisfying results, including increasing students' interest and motivation to learn, improving language skills, and even language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary. Liveworksheets have also made one junior high school in Buleleng, namely SMP Negeri 1 Seririt, implement this application in vocabulary learning in 8th grade. Considering that previous study showed that the used of the Liveworksheets application only focused on students' vocabulary at elementary and junior high school levels, which has only been carried out in 7th in Indonesia during online classes, and there has been no research at SMP Negeri 1 Seririt. Thus, this current research was essential to fill the gap from previous studies by describing the implementation of the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning by an English teacher in SMP Negeri 1 Seririt because the teacher already used the Liveworksheets that more focuses on vocabulary learning during offline classes. Besides that, the implementation of the Liveworksheets as a learning media by the

teacher was certainly driven by the various benefits that might be felt by students. However, there may be challenges faced, as every implementation of applications, including Liveworksheets, must have advantages and disadvantages that can affect the learning process. These benefits and challenges could be seen from the responses of students as direct users of the application. Each student certainly has a different view based on their respective experiences. Thus, it is important to also explore the opinions of 8th-grade students regarding using the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning since they were the direct users of the application. Therefore, an analysis of the implementation of the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning of 8th grade at SMP Negeri 1 Seririt by using descriptive qualitative research was important to be conducted.

1.2 Problems Identification

Since vocabulary is the most important component of English, students must pay more attention to their vocabulary knowledge. However, some problems, such as limited vocabulary and lack of motivation to learn, were experienced by 8th-grade students at one of the favourite junior high schools in Seririt and as part of the “Sekolah Penggerak”, namely SMP Negeri 1 Seririt. The main reason why students still have limited vocabulary even though they are in 8th grade was that most of them only start to learn basic vocabulary intensively in 7th grade because when they were in elementary school, vocabulary learning using traditional methods that are known to be less effective was very often used which made it difficult for them to remember the vocabulary longer and learning became monotonous. Thus, it can reduce motivation and cause them to be uninterested in

learning English. However, in this digital era, technology in education encourages more effective learning. As a learning media, technology provides a variety of interesting learning resources. For that reason, SMP Negeri 1 Seririt applies many learning media to improve the quality of learning by allowing their students to use their smartphones in the learning process to make learning more effective and efficient because they can find interactive learning resources such as educational applications that can be accessed easily via their mobile devices. This is also a realization to achieve the goals of the Merdeka curriculum. One educational application that has already been implemented by an English teacher in SMP Negeri 1 Seririt is the Liveworksheets, which play an important role in vocabulary learning. Previous studies have also proven that this application has played an important role in students' language skills and language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary through various activities that can be done with the use of a combination of multiple features and interactive media. Several researchers use interactive worksheets in various activities and use a combination of media such as pictures, audio, and video to enhance students' understanding and increase students' interest and motivation to learn. Thus, since this application is also used by an English teacher in SMP Negeri 1 Seririt, and from the previous research, there is still limited research on the implementation of the Liveworksheets application in Indonesia that focuses on vocabulary learning at 8th grade in SMP Negeri 1 Seririt during offline classes. Thus, investigating how the teacher implements this application and also exploring students' opinions is essential, as they are the direct users of this platform. Understanding student's views can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the application that can be seen from the benefits and challenges that they faced

while using the application in vocabulary learning. Therefore, it is essential to describe the implementation of Liveworksheets application for vocabulary mastery by an English teacher in the 8th grade and explore the 8th-grade students' opinions regarding the implementation of the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning.

1.3 Scope of The Study

This study only focuses on investigating how the teacher implements the Liveworksheets application for vocabulary learning in 8th grade and explores the 8th-grade students' opinions regarding the implementation of the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning at SMP Negeri 1 Seririt, which is located on Udayana Street, No 25 A Seririt, Buleleng Regency, Bali, Indonesia.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the research problems, several research questions arise, including the following:

1. How does an English teacher implement the Liveworksheets application for vocabulary learning in the 8th grade?
2. What are the 8th-grade students' opinions regarding the implementation of the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the two research questions, the following research objectives are identified:

1. To describe the implementation of Liveworksheets application for vocabulary learning by an English teacher in the 8th grade.
2. To explore the 8th-grade students' opinions regarding the implementation of Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning.

1.6 Significance of The Study

Research significance means that the research done must be beneficial. The research significance of this study can be classified into the following two types:

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This research is expected to be evidence of technological developments in education, with the existence of technology through the use of the Liveworksheets application in vocabulary learning at the junior high school level. This research also supports the theory that the Liveworksheets application can be used in language learning, especially in vocabulary learning at the junior high school level in Indonesia.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

1. For Teachers

This research is expected to motivate teachers who want to use interactive educational applications such as Liveworksheets in vocabulary learning.

2. For Students

The result of this research can be used as an option for junior high school students who need to learn vocabulary through Liveworksheets application.

3. For Other Researchers

This research can be used as a reference for other researchers who are conducting research on the use of educational applications in language learning.

