CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Vocabulary is crucial for anyone aiming to learn a foreign language. Cameron (2001) emphasized that vocabulary was a significant component of language knowledge, playing a vital role in language acquisition. Without a solid foundation in vocabulary, success in language learning was nearly impossible. Harmon and Kiser (2009) reinforced this by stating that vocabulary was a critical element in language development. Similarly, Thornbury (2002) pointed out that while grammar allowed limited communication, vocabulary was indispensable for conveying meaning. This underscored the importance of vocabulary in enabling effective communication in a foreign language, particularly in English. Consequently, teachers needed to recognize the importance of vocabulary to support their students in achieving academic success in language learning.

Cummings et al. (2018) defined vocabulary as more than just knowing a word's definition; it was about understanding how it integrated into the world around us. Vocabulary knowledge could be categorized as receptive (gained through listening and reading) and productive or expressive (used in speaking and writing). With an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 words in the English language, acquiring new vocabulary was an ongoing endeavor. Stahl (2005) emphasized that vocabulary knowledge could not be fully mastered; rather, it continued to grow and deepen over a lifetime. Teaching vocabulary extended

beyond simply looking up words in a dictionary or using them in sentences. It was often learned incidentally through exposure and also deliberately through explicit teaching of words and strategies for learning them. According to Yokubjonova (2020), expanding vocabulary enabled individuals to communicate their thoughts with greater clarity and precision.

Qudsyi et al. (2018) emphasized that a strong sense of unity was essential to enhance student participation in the teaching and learning process. When designing learning activities, teachers and schools had to consider students' needs. In EFL classrooms, students often wished to engage actively; however, since the learning design was structured by the school, it became the teacher's responsibility to ensure students were included and encouraged to take an active role (Anita & Susilawati, 2018). Additionally, teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) presented various challenges for educators. Research by Setiawan et al. (2022) revealed that many students struggled with learning English vocabulary, which made them hesitant to engage actively in lessons. Moreover, comprehension difficulties with the teacher's explanations further impeded students' participation. Consequently, these barriers prevented students from achieving the desired objectives of English instruction due to insufficient involvement in the learning process.

Teachers played several roles in vocabulary learning, such as facilitators, guides, and designers of learning strategies tailored to students' needs (Co-superv, 2022). In developing English vocabulary learning strategies, various methods could help students enrich and improve their vocabulary. Teachers had to choose the appropriate teaching method because teaching English,

especially vocabulary, was challenging without the proper approach. Teaching vocabulary, like teaching other social sciences, required effective methods for successful learning. Vocabulary instruction had been presented through various methods and needed to be taught in multiple ways to ensure students could understand and develop an interest in learning vocabulary.

Many strategies could be used for vocabulary teaching. However, the National Reading Panel (2000) suggested that students should be taught vocabulary using a variety of approaches, as no single method was considered the best. Even with strategies like direct instruction, students required repeated encounters with new vocabulary to enhance learning. With this understanding, it was essential for teachers to be trained not only in selecting effective teaching strategies but also in considering students' prior vocabulary knowledge (Syafrizal & Haerudin, 2018). Awareness of students' existing vocabulary knowledge enabled teachers to decide which words should be introduced in the classroom. It was crucial to thoughtfully evaluate which new words were appropriate for instruction. Therefore, the learning methods applied had to facilitate these challenges effectively.

One effective medium for vocabulary learning was the use of songs. Songs were commonly used in learning and teaching English (Adnyani & Dewi, 2020). Certain songs were believed to enhance brain function during the learning process. Additionally, when teaching foreign languages, particularly English, songs could serve as effective tools for teaching various language skills and elements (Lems, 2001; Puasa, 2003). Using songs in English vocabulary instruction evoked positive emotions in students, making it easier

for them to retain vocabulary as it became familiar through auditory exposure. This approach also helped them learn and comprehend new vocabulary effectively through contextual understanding provided by the songs.

According to Cebula in Gasma et al. (2017), students who engaged in learning through songs often expressed themselves more freely and acquired a significant number of new words. Additionally, listening to music not only brought enjoyment but also boosted students' motivation to learn. This implied that when students listened to their favorite English songs, they were intrinsically driven to understand the lyrics, uncover word meanings, and expand their vocabulary. Consequently, the inclination to listen to English songs was anticipated to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition.

Popular songs that students frequently listened to, such as those on the TikTok application, were believed to increase students' vocabulary. In the context of education, TikTok was highly effective for explaining, describing, demonstrating, or outlining processes step-by-step. This platform offered students a unique opportunity to showcase and apply their learning in a creative and engaging manner (Budhai, 2021). Research conducted by Mana (2021) titled "Student Responses to the TikTok Application as an Indonesian Language Learning Medium" explained how TikTok was used as a tool for learning Indonesian. The study also explored students' responses to the TikTok application and their academic performance. First, most students believed that TikTok was suitable, beneficial, and entertaining. Second, students agreed that TikTok should be used as a learning medium. Third, several essential competencies in learning Indonesian were observed through TikTok, including

narrative text, procedural text, exposition text, explanatory text, and anecdotal text. Fourth, because of its user-friendly interface and various features, TikTok could be used as an effective learning tool.

Therefore, the researcher was interested in conducting an experimental study on a teaching method that had not been previously explored. This study, titled "The Effect of Popular English Songs on TikTok in Teaching Vocabulary at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng: A Mixed-Methods Study", aimed to investigate the impact of using TikTok-based English songs as a vocabulary learning tool.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on research conducted by Marni Bawawa (2020) on the use of English songs to enhance students' vocabulary at SMP Negeri 3 Merauke, the findings demonstrated that English songs were effective when applied in English lessons, particularly in vocabulary learning. The results of both the pre-test and post-test indicated significant progress. This was evident from the percentage scores, where the pre-test showed an achievement of 40.66%, while the post-test increased to 87.83%. These findings suggest that incorporating songs can enhance the English vocabulary proficiency of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Merauke. Additionally, students showed greater interest in learning English vocabulary through songs compared to traditional methods. This was supported by the questionnaire responses, where the majority of students affirmed that using songs increased their enthusiasm for learning.

Similarly, a study by Daniar Sofeny et al. (2022) investigated the use of popular TikTok songs to improve students' vocabulary. The collected data

revealed that the average score for students' vocabulary mastery before using the TikTok application was 55.00, whereas after implementing TikTok-based instruction, the average score increased to 86.87. Statistical analysis using the T-test showed a calculated value of 14.586, which was significantly higher than the table value of 2.03951 at a 0.05% significance level. This result confirmed that the alternative hypothesis was accepted, while the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings indicated that students' vocabulary scores improved significantly, rising from 55.00 to 86.87, demonstrating a substantial difference between the pre- and post-treatment scores. Thus, the use of TikTok songs proved to be an effective method for enhancing students' vocabulary mastery.

However, despite the positive results of both studies, several limitations remain. First, it is unclear whether the songs used were educational or simply popular English songs. Second, the studies were conducted at the elementary and junior high school levels in a general educational setting. Therefore, this research aims to explore the same theme—using popular TikTok songs for teaching English vocabulary—but within an Islamic-based junior high school (madrasah) context, where the use of songs as a teaching tool is still relatively uncommon.

Based on preliminary observations conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng, several characteristics of students in learning English were identified. First, students in the class quickly became bored with the teacher's explanations, as they tended to be monotonous. Second, students struggled to maintain focus during lessons and were easily distracted, particularly when the teacher did not engage in two-way communication. However, they enjoyed

working in groups rather than individually. As noted by Sokip (2018), children of all ages generally enjoy listening, singing, and learning. Given that students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng are in a developmental stage transitioning from childhood to adolescence, they not only enjoy learning through play and singing but are also attracted to other engaging activities. Another notable characteristic is their ability to quickly memorize words frequently encountered in songs, games, conversations, or social media content. However, they find it challenging to memorize vocabulary consisting of three or more syllables. Additionally, they tend to remember unusual or unique words more easily than common vocabulary.

The preliminary observations also revealed several vocabulary-learning challenges faced by students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng. One major issue was understanding word meanings. The majority of students found it difficult to grasp word meanings due to a lack of prior knowledge or engagement during study sessions, which hindered their comprehension. This often resulted in decreased motivation and satisfaction with learning. Additionally, many students relied on translating words into Indonesian, frequently referring to dictionaries for assistance. Another challenge was distinguishing between the spelling of foreign words. Some English words and sounds appeared similar, causing confusion among students. Lastly, students often struggled with retention, frequently forgetting previously learned words, making it difficult for them to construct sentences effectively.

Based on the research background, there were several problems faced by students in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng when learning English

that was related to the ability to master Vocabulary. For this reason, the researcher formulated the problem formulation as follows:

1. Students need more vocabulary, which makes it easier for them to understand words in English.

2. The media teachers could be more effective in increasing students' Vocabulary.

3. Distinguish the spelling of foreign words.

4. They quickly need to remember when they want to speak, fear making mistakes, and lack the use of words and grammar practice.

1.3 Research Limitation

Based on the problem identification above, the researcher focused on one specific issue encountered during the English learning process. Therefore, this study was limited to examining the effect of using popular TikTok songs in teaching vocabulary. Additionally, the research was restricted to students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng.

1.4 Research Question

The purpose of this research was to provide an answer to the question:

1. How did the use of popular TikTok songs as a medium for teaching vocabulary affect the improvement of vocabulary mastery scores among students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng?

2. How were students engaged in learning vocabulary using popular songs on TikTok?

1.5 Research Objective

1. The primary objective of this research was to examine the impact of using popular TikTok songs as a medium for teaching vocabulary, with a focus on the improvement of vocabulary mastery scores among students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Buleleng.

2. This research aimed to determine students' engagement in learning Vocabulary using popular songs on TikTok.

1.6 Research Significance

Hopefully, this research provided theoretical and practical benefits to English teachers, researchers, and students. The benefits that were expected to be provided include:

a. For Students

Using popular songs on TikTok as a medium for teaching vocabulary is an effort to stimulate students' interest in learning English and help them master English vocabulary.

b. For Researchers

The results of this research provided insights into the use of popular TikTok songs as a medium for teaching vocabulary and as a tool to effectively support vocabulary learning in various ways.

c. For school

The results of this research have been used as a consideration for enhancing learning facilities, which has positively impacted the quality of students' learning outcomes.