CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to the study of English in countries where it is not used as a medium of daily communication. Unlike English as a second language (ESL), where learners need the language for everyday interactions, EFL is generally learned for academic purposes, professional advancement, or international communication (Kahrs, 1967). It emphasizes that in an EFL context, exposure to English outside the classroom is very limited, making the classroom the primary and often the only source of learning. This condition creates unique challenges for teachers, as they must not only teach grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation systematically but also create meaningful opportunities for communication that simulate real-life use of the language. He further notes that effective EFL teaching requires teachers to combine strong professional training with personal qualities such as patience, adaptability, and cultural awareness, ensuring that learners develop both linguistic and communicative competence despite the limited environment for practice.

The challenges faced by English teachers in promoting learner autonomy, which means helping students become independent and responsible for their own learning in the 21st-century context. Wiraningsih and Santosa (2020) discuss the research involving four English teachers from junior high schools in Singaraja, Bali, Indonesia, using interviews to explore their difficulties and strategies. The findings show that teachers face several major challenges: the school zoning policy, which affects the quality and readiness of students; institutional constraints, such as unscheduled religious events that interrupt learning time; teaching challenges, where teachers lack knowledge of effective methods to build autonomy; and students' background differences, including personality and socioeconomic status, that influence their learning independence. To overcome these problems, teachers used various strategies, such as initiating classroom activities that encourage participation, applying collaborative learning to build teamwork and responsibility, and managing time effectively through careful planning. The study concludes that although EFL teachers encounter many obstacles, through motivation, collaboration, and good management, they can still foster learner autonomy and help students become more active and independent learners in modern education.

In various contexts, especially those countries classified by Kachru (1990) within the Expanding Circle such as Indonesia, Japan, and Brazil, English is mainly taught as a foreign language in schools and universities. It is generally not used in everyday communication, with learners primarily encountering the language through textbooks, media, or formal classroom instruction. Kang (2013) says that in places where English is

learned as a foreign language, students usually don't hear or use English much outside of school. So, they mainly learn English from their classes. One area of research focuses on language learning strategies used by EFL learners. Studies show that learners use different techniques to improve their skills, with much research emphasizing quantitative data to find links between strategies and factors such as proficiency, motivation, and self-regulation. Future research calls for more attention to younger learners, cultural influences, and qualitative methods (Domínguez & Juanías, 2024).

Artini & Padmadewi (2025) explained that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can be defined as the context in which English is taught and learned by students primarily in environments where English is not the native language or commonly used for daily communication. In Indonesian senior high schools, especially amid transitional periods such as during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, EFL teaching involves both face-to-face and technology-based instruction aimed at developing students' English skills. EFL education focuses on creating innovative, student-centered, and technology-integrated learning experiences to foster students' independence and motivation in learning English. Teachers play a crucial role in adapting strategies to fit diverse student characteristics and using various tools including digital platforms, multimedia, and project-based activities to enhance language acquisition. EFL teaching is thus a dynamic process geared towards helping learners effectively communicate in English while overcoming challenges such as limited interaction time and adjusting to shifting curriculum demands.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia is taught primarily in schools and universities, where English serves mainly as an academic subject rather than a language for daily communication (Rahmah, 2023). The language is learned mostly in classroom settings with limited exposure outside school. English learning is compulsory but is often seen as a subject to pass exams rather than a communication tool. Challenges in Indonesian EFL include large class sizes, unqualified teachers, lack of resources, and low student motivation. English proficiency outcomes are often unsatisfactory due to these issues. Additionally, the use of Indonesian language in EFL classrooms is common to clarify difficult concepts and improve student comprehension, especially when students struggle to understand English explanations alone.

2.1.2 Vocabulary Mastery

2.1.2.1 Theory of Vocabulary Mastery

Thornbury (1999) When students have mastered vocabulary, it means they know a lot about words. This includes knowing the meanings of words, how they sound when spoken, how they look when written, and how they behave grammatically. They also understand how words are formed, the common word partners they appear with (collocations), different ways words are used when speaking or writing (registers), the feelings or ideas words suggest beyond their meaning (connotations), and how often the words are used. It explains that having a good vocabulary means more than just knowing words, it means knowing how to use them correctly to communicate well. Being good at vocabulary allows students to speak English more effectively and clearly. The better someone's vocabulary, the better their overall English speaking skills tend to be. Building and improving vocabulary is a very important part of learning any language because it helps students express their thoughts and ideas properly.

In essence, vocabulary mastery gives students the tools they need to understand and use English in daily conversation, writing, and other language activities. It forms the foundation for speaking confidently and understanding others. Therefore, teaching vocabulary carefully and helping students practice it through speaking and listening exercises is key to helping them become better English speakers.

In support of this view, (Meyer & Schmitt, 2002) emphasized that knowing vocabulary means understanding many different parts of a word. This includes knowing how the word sounds when spoken and how it looks in writing. It also means understanding the parts that make up the word, such as prefixes and suffixes. Vocabulary knowledge includes the meaning of the word and the connections it has with other words. Schmitt also pointed out that learners need to know with which words a word commonly appears together, called collocations. Additionally, knowing the appropriate situations or styles (register) to use a word and how the word behaves grammatically are important parts of vocabulary knowledge. In short, vocabulary knowledge is made up of many pieces, and understanding all of them is necessary to use words well.

Vocabulary mastery can be defined as the comprehensive ability to understand, use, and retain a wide range of words and their meanings in various contexts (Tantri et al., 2025). It goes beyond simply memorizing word definitions to include knowing how words function phonetically, in writing, grammatically, and semantically within different contexts. Vocabulary mastery involves recognizing and using words appropriately in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and it is considered fundamental to effective communication and language learning. This mastery is developed continuously through diverse, engaging learning strategies tailored to students' characteristics, including the use of technology, social media, multimedia, and collaborative practices to facilitate meaningful and motivating vocabulary acquisition at higher education levels. Effective vocabulary mastery directly impacts students' language skills, motivation, and academic success.

Furthermore Henriksen (1999) proposed a comprehensive model describing vocabulary knowledge through three key dimensions: partial to precise knowledge, depth of knowledge, and receptive to productive knowledge. This model helps explain how learners gradually develop vocabulary competence over time. The first dimension, partial to precise knowledge, reflects the idea that vocabulary knowledge is rarely all-or-nothing. Learners often start with a partial understanding of a word such as a basic recognition of its form or meaning and gradually move toward a more precise, detailed knowledge. This means that vocabulary acquisition is a developmental process where learners build up their understanding of each word incrementally. The second dimension, depth of knowledge, involves how well a learner knows a word beyond its simple definition. This includes the word's semantic networks, such as its associations with other words, collocations, multiple meanings, connotations, and the constraints on its use in different contexts. Depth of knowledge reflects the richness and complexity of how a word is stored and organized within a learner's mental lexicon. In essence, it shows the qualitative aspect of vocabulary learning, focusing on how deeply and flexibly a word is integrated into language use. The third dimension, receptive to productive knowledge, represents the continuum between the ability to recognize and understand words when reading or listening (receptive vocabulary) and the ability to actively use words in speaking or writing (productive vocabulary). This highlights how vocabulary use develops from passive recognition to active production, which is crucial for effective communication. Together, these three dimensions provide a layered and dynamic understanding of vocabulary mastery, indicating that learning new vocabulary is not a simple acquisition of word lists but a complex, ongoing process involving gradual refinement, deeper understanding, and expanding usage abilities. This model aligns with the general view in language education that vocabulary competence grows gradually across different cognitive and use layers as learners engage with language over time. Thus, instructors should consider these dimensions when designing vocabulary teaching methods to support learners at various stages of vocabulary development.

2.1.2.2 Vocabulary Mastery Levels

Mastering vocabulary means that students need to deeply understand many aspects of words not just their meanings but also how they sound and look when written, how they behave grammatically, their origins, common word combinations, levels of formality, connotations, and how often they are used (Thornburry, 1999). In language learning, vocabulary mastery can divide into two categories: productive vocabulary, which is the ability to use words correctly in speaking or writing, and receptive vocabulary, which is the ability to recognize and understand words when reading or listening. Good language teaching methods recognize how these two types of vocabulary knowledge are connected and use that understanding to help students learn effectively.

In language learning, vocabulary mastery is mainly divided into two types: productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. Productive vocabulary refers to the words a learner

can actively and correctly use when speaking or writing. On the other hand, receptive vocabulary includes the words a learner can recognize and understand when reading or listening. Effective teaching strategies rely on understanding how these two types of vocabulary relate to each other. According to Webb (2005) exercises focused on receptive vocabulary are more effective when their duration is based on the actual time it takes to complete them. Receptive vocabulary plays a key role in comprehension, as it helps learners grasp the meaning of spoken and written language even if they are not yet able to produce those words themselves. This distinction between recognizing words and using them actively is central to how vocabulary is acquired in a new language.

Research indicates that students generally perform better on tests that measure receptive vocabulary the words they can recognize and understand than on tests requiring productive vocabulary, which involves actively using words in speaking or writing (Segura et al., 2022). Productive vocabulary consists of the words students can confidently use to express their thoughts and ideas, making it essential for clear and effective communication. This suggests that while understanding words is often easier, being able to use them correctly takes more practice and effort.

Studies show that having a strong productive vocabulary the words learners can actively use helps second language learners understand sentences faster and more easily. This highlights just how important it is for language learners not just to know words, but to be able to use them confidently in real communication (Allal-Sumoto et al., 2023).

2.1.3 Educaplay as Learning Media

Educaplay is defined as a web-based learning platform that utilizes gamification principles to support interactive learning. It offers various activities such as adaptive quizzes, crosswords, audio-visual exercises, and educational games designed to increase student engagement and motivation in the learning process (Nurhayati & Hamdu, 2025). Educaplay aligns with educational theories like social cognitive theory and constructivism, emphasizing active participation and meaningful interaction with learning materials. It integrates multimedia elements including visual, auditory, and interactive components to enhance cognitive processing, conceptual understanding, and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, Educaplay facilitates instructional differentiation by allowing teachers to customize tasks according to students' levels and provides real-time monitoring of student progress, making it an effective and adaptive digital learning media especially suitable for primary school education. The effectiveness of Educaplay in helping students understand lessons better can be explained by Cognitive Load Theory, developed by

Sweller (2011). According to this theory, learning works best when new information is presented in a clear and engaging way that doesn’t overwhelm the brain. Educaplay structures content in a way that lightens students’ mental load, making it easier for them to

absorb and process new material. Research by Booth (2006) supports this by showing that combining visuals, text, and sound in multimedia learning boosts understanding and helps students remember information longer. With its interactive features, Educaplay lets students enjoy learning without feeling overloaded or bored by complicated or repetitive content.

Furthermore, the characteristics of Educaplay make it particularly suitable for enhancing English language learning among first-grade children. Young learners are naturally curious, energetic, and tend to have short attention spans; therefore, they learn best through multisensory, game-based, and visually engaging activities (Cameron, 2001; Brewster, Ellis,
& Girard, 2020; Pinter, 2017). Educaplay's interactive features such as matching games, word searches, crosswords, and quizzes align with these developmental needs by turning vocabulary practice into play-like experiences. The platform provides immediate feedback, colorful visuals, and simple navigation that maintain learners' focus and motivation while supporting self-paced exploration (Surachmi & Sison, 2021). In addition, its auditory and visual modes stimulate multiple senses simultaneously, reinforcing vocabulary retention through repetition and association (Booth, 2006). Because first graders are still developing their reading and writing skills, the multimodal and scaffolded structure of Educaplay helps them comprehend and remember new words more effectively (Artal-Sevil et al., 2020). Thus, Educaplay is pedagogically appropriate for early EFL instruction as it harmonizes with young learners' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral characteristics.

2.1.4 Educaplay as Learning Media In Tefl

Educaplay is an innovative technology that dramatically improves the process of learning English, particularly in terms of vocabulary development. (Taghizadeh & Ejtehadi, 2023) reports a study conducted in Turkey, involving pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers enrolled in teacher education programs and their teacher educators. The purpose of the study was to examine how these two groups perceived the use of Educaplay as a digital gamification tool in language teaching and whether it could be effectively integrated into teacher education and classroom practice. Data were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights. The findings indicated that both pre-service teachers and teacher educators held positive perceptions of Educaplay. They found it to be a motivating and engaging tool that could enrich language lessons by making them more interactive and enjoyable. Pre-service teachers reported that Educaplay helped them develop creativity in designing language activities such as quizzes, crosswords, listening tasks, and matching exercises.

Teacher educators also recognized its value in promoting student participation, enhancing attention, and supporting skill development, especially vocabulary learning and

listening comprehension. Additionally, the study found that Educaplay contributed to pre-service teachers' professional development, as it encouraged them to integrate technology into pedagogical practice and to reflect on how gamified activities could foster better learning outcomes.

However, the study also highlighted certain challenges. Some participants pointed out the need for technical support and training to design more effective and cognitively demanding activities. Others noted that infrastructural issues, such as internet reliability and limited access to digital devices, could hinder the widespread use of Educaplay in real classrooms. Despite these limitations, the overall conclusion was that Educaplay had a clear positive influence on language teaching and teacher education. It was considered a useful digital tool not only for improving learners' engagement and skills but also for preparing future teachers to adopt technology-enhanced approaches in their professional practice.

Arsyad (2025) asserts that Educaplay is an effective teaching and learning tool for beginner EFL students when combined with PBL. It enhanced students' vocabulary retention, made learning more interactive, and fostered collaboration and active participation. The gamified nature of Educaplay (e.g., quizzes, word searches, crosswords) made lessons enjoyable, while the PBL approach contextualized vocabulary in real-life problem-solving situations, leading to meaningful learning experiences. The synergy between Educaplay and PBL not only improved academic outcomes but also boosted students' confidence, motivation, and overall interest in English learning.

2.2 Empirical Review

Several studies conducted by lecturers from the English Language Education Department at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Undiksha) have focused on integrating technology into English language learning. These studies collectively emphasize the development of digital learning materials, teacher training in digital pedagogy, and students' perceptions of online learning environments. However, although these works have contributed valuable insights into technology-enhanced learning, most of them remain at the developmental or descriptive level and have not yet examined the measurable effects of digital tools on students' language mastery. A study by Santosa et al. (2020) entitled *Developing Android-Based English Vocabulary Learning Materials for Primary School Students* aimed to design and develop Android-based vocabulary materials for young learners. Using the ADDIE model, the researchers produced an interactive mobile application that integrated vocabulary games, visuals, and audio. The findings indicated that the Android-based materials were valid, practical, and effective in motivating students to learn vocabulary independently. This study highlights the importance of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) in supporting vocabulary acquisition; however, it focused primarily on product development and validation rather than on testing its effectiveness through an experimental approach. Similarly, Wijayani, Nitiasih, and Budiarta (2022) developed a *Game Website-Based English Learning* platform for fourth-grade students.

Their research, which also followed the ADDIE model, resulted in a gamified website containing exercises such as matching games and fill-in-the-blank tasks. The product was evaluated as highly engaging and effective in improving student motivation and creativity. Despite its strong pedagogical design, the study did not provide empirical data measuring the extent of students' learning improvement, leaving a gap in understanding the actual learning outcomes of game-based instruction. In another study, Utami (2024) implemented a *Design Thinking Framework in English Language Teaching* to improve teachers' digital literacy and creativity in integrating technology. The research involved 23 elementary school teachers and emphasized the process of empowering teachers to use digital tools such as Powtoon, PowerPoint, and Adobe Premiere. The findings demonstrated that Design Thinking could enhance teachers' problem-solving abilities and innovation in digital material development. While the study successfully improved teacher competence, it did not directly measure the effect of technology integration on students' English learning performance. Further, Santosa, Padmadewi, and Dewi (2023) conducted a need analysis study titled *The Implementation of Technology-Based Project-Based Learning Model in Teaching English at University Level*. The research explored how technology could support projectbased learning (PjBL) in higher education. Results revealed that students and lecturers required greater technological and pedagogical support to implement technology effectively. The study contributed to the conceptual foundation of technology-assisted active learning; however, it did not involve an experimental evaluation of the model's impact on students' achievement. Sintya Dewi et al. (2021) investigated *Higher EFL Students' Perspectives toward the Implementation of Google Classroom* during remote learning. The study showed that students appreciated Google Classroom for its accessibility and organization, but also reported challenges such as limited interaction and engagement. This research emphasized user perceptions and platform usability, yet did not assess the quantitative effect of using such platforms on language proficiency or vocabulary growth.

Collectively, these studies reveal a consistent trend in Undiksha's technological research in English education: most focus on developing or implementing digital tools, yet lack empirical evidence on their direct impact on learners' English performance. In addition, none of these studies have examined Educaplay, a web-based gamified learning platform that enables teachers to create interactive tasks such as quizzes, matching games, and listening activities. While previous research has confirmed the motivational potential of game-based learning, there remains limited empirical evidence showing its effect on specific language skills particularly vocabulary mastery among primary school students. Therefore, the present study,
"The Effect of Implementing Educaplay on Students' English Vocabulary Mastery," addresses this gap by shifting from development-oriented to effect-oriented research. It employs an experimental design to investigate whether the implementation of Educaplay significantly enhances students' vocabulary mastery. In doing so, this research extends previous Undiksha studies by providing empirical data on the effectiveness of gamified digital tools in improving EFL learners' achievement. The findings are expected to strengthen the evidence base for technology integration in language education and

demonstrate how interactive learning platforms like Educaplay can create a more engaging and effective vocabulary learning experience for young learners.

The purpose of a study by Nurhayati et al. (2025) title “The Use Of Educaplay In Primary
School Learning” was conducted in Indonesian primary schools by researchers from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Using a qualitative exploratory descriptive design, data were collected through interviews with teachers and students, classroom observations, and documentation such as lesson plans and pretest–posttest results. The findings revealed that Educaplay was integrated into learning activities through interactive quizzes, crossword puzzles, word matching, simulations, and educational games. Its use enhanced student engagement, supported differentiated instruction, and provided real-time feedback for teachers.

The pretest–posttest results showed a significant improvement in students’ conceptual understanding, with scores increasing from 62.4 to 85.6 in classes using Educaplay compared to 61.8 to 74.3 in conventional classrooms. Students with longer access to the platform also achieved higher gains than those with limited access. Beyond academic performance,

Educaplay improved students’ critical thinking skills, such as problem-solving, reflective thinking, and hypothesis development, while also encouraging collaboration and metacognitive awareness. Moreover, the platform increased student motivation, as learners perceived the activities as enjoyable and game-like, leading some to voluntarily repeat exercises outside of class. Despite these positive outcomes, challenges such as limited infrastructure, unequal access to devices, teachers’ lack of digital literacy, and resistance to new methods were identified. The researchers concluded that Educaplay has a significant positive effect on learning outcomes in primary schools, but its successful implementation requires teacher training, better infrastructure, and stronger policy support.

Another study by Chimba & Tigasi (2024) The article “Use of Educaplay-ICT in Teaching English to University Students” reports research conducted at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, “Aleksandër Moisiu” University, Durrës, Albania. The study explored the integration of Educaplay, an ICT-based gamification platform, into English language teaching at the university level. Data were collected through surveys, classroom observations, and analysis of students’ performance to evaluate its effectiveness. The findings revealed that the use of Educaplay significantly increased students’ motivation, engagement, and participation in English classes. Students showed greater interest in learning because the activities were interactive and game-like, which reduced monotony and made lessons more enjoyable.

Moreover, Educaplay enhanced students’ vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and overall language skills, as the platform provided diverse learning tasks such as quizzes, crosswords, and interactive exercises. Teachers also benefited from its features, as it allowed them to track progress and adapt instruction more effectively. Overall, the research demonstrated that Educaplay had a positive impact on the teaching and learning of English at the university. It not only improved learning outcomes but also fostered a more

studentcentered classroom environment. However, challenges were noted, including the need for reliable internet access, sufficient digital literacy among both teachers and students, and adequate institutional support for ICT integration. Despite these limitations, the study concluded that Educaplay is a valuable tool in higher education English teaching when supported by proper infrastructure and training.

A study titled “Educaplay as a Tool to Develop English Language Skills” by (VargasSaritama & Espinoza-Celi, 2024) reports a study carried out in Mexico, at a public university with undergraduate students, where the researchers investigated the impact of Educaplay on developing English language skills. The main purpose of the study was to explore whether incorporating interactive, technology-based tasks into the classroom could enhance learners’ acquisition of vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading skills. To address this, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach that combined quantitative assessment of students’ progress with qualitative insights from surveys and classroom observations. Educaplay was used to design a variety of interactive activities, such as multiple-choice quizzes, crosswords, word-matching tasks, listening comprehension exercises, and interactive games that were later integrated into English classes. These activities were intended not only to reinforce language knowledge but also to promote student motivation and active learning.

The results revealed that the use of Educaplay had a clearly positive effect on students’ learning outcomes. First, learners expressed strong enthusiasm toward the platform, emphasizing that its gamified format made lessons more dynamic, enjoyable, and less monotonous compared to traditional methods. This higher level of motivation was accompanied by an increase in class participation and engagement, with students willingly collaborating in group tasks and even repeating some exercises voluntarily outside class. From the perspective of language acquisition, Educaplay was found to enhance several key skills. Students improved their vocabulary retention through repetitive yet engaging games, reinforced their grammar knowledge by applying rules in interactive contexts, and developed their listening and reading comprehension thanks to multimedia-based activities. Teachers also observed that students were more confident in practicing English because the platform created a non-threatening environment that encouraged trial and error without fear of failure. Quantitative data supported these observations, as performance assessments showed noticeable gains in students’ scores after the integration of Educaplay. Teachers further highlighted that the platform allowed them to adapt content to different proficiency levels, making it useful for differentiated instruction in heterogeneous classrooms. At the same time, several challenges were identified. The study pointed out the need for stable internet connectivity and access to digital devices as prerequisites for implementing Educaplay effectively. Additionally, not all instructors initially felt prepared to design or manage digital activities, suggesting that teacher training and digital literacy are essential to maximize the platform’s benefits. The research conducted in Mexico demonstrated that Educaplay is a powerful ICT tool that can significantly improve the process of English language learning at the university level. By integrating interactive and gamified tasks into the classroom, the platform promoted higher motivation, stronger engagement, and measurable improvements in linguistic performance. Although

infrastructural and pedagogical challenges remain, the overall findings confirm that Educaplay has a positive influence on developing students' English skills and can be considered a valuable resource for modern language education when supported by appropriate training and institutional support.

The study titled "The Development of Game-Based Learning Media by Using Educaplay to Increase Student Motivation and Participation" from (Mukni'ah et al., 2025) was conducted at State Islamic Senior High School (MAN) 1 Jember, East Java, Indonesia, by researchers from the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember.

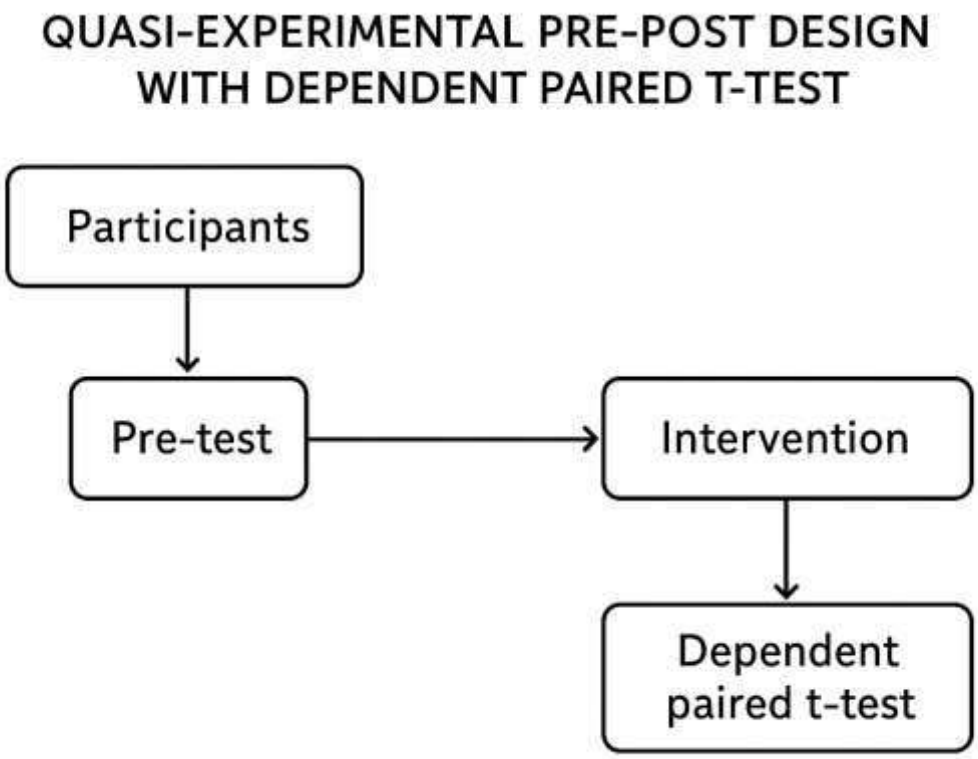
The research aimed to design and test game-based learning media using Educaplay for the subject of Al-Qur'an Hadith, with the primary goals of increasing student motivation, participation, and comprehension. Employing the ADDIE model (Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate), the researchers conducted a needs analysis with both teachers and students, created game prototypes, and validated the media through material experts, media experts, and classroom testing. The research subjects were 11th-grade students, along with teachers and expert validators who ensured that the learning media aligned with the curriculum and pedagogical goals. The findings demonstrated that the Educaplay-based learning media was considered highly feasible and effective. Expert validation supported this claim, with material experts giving an 89% "Very Feasible" rating and media experts providing a 93%
"Very Feasible" evaluation. The media's design, user interface, navigation, and instructional content were judged to be appropriate for students' needs. Moreover, student responses indicated an 85% acceptance rate, showing that the games were engaging, easy to use, and effective in supporting learning. Trials conducted in small and large classroom settings confirmed that students found the media enjoyable and helpful, particularly in addressing difficulties with memorization and comprehension of Qur'anic verses and Hadith. The use of Educaplay not only improved students' understanding but also significantly boosted their motivation and classroom participation. The gamified features, such as lives, scoring, and interactive challenges, made the lessons more interesting and provided a sense of reward and achievement. Observations showed that students became more active and confident, shifting from passive learning behaviors to enthusiastic engagement. Importantly, the integration of Educaplay helped learners to better grasp difficult material by presenting it in a playful, visual, and interactive format. Teachers also reported that students were more focused during lessons and that their participation increased compared to conventional teaching methods. This research highlights that Educaplay-based game learning media has a clear and positive impact on both motivation and comprehension in religious education. While technical issues such as internet stability and device access were noted, as well as suggestions to improve the cognitive depth of some questions, the overall evidence confirms that Educaplay is a valuable tool for modernizing instruction. The researchers recommend that such media be integrated into the teaching of Al-Qur'an Hadith on a broader scale, supported by teacher training programs, workshops, and institutional policies that promote digital innovation in learning. This study strengthens the growing body of evidence that gamification platforms like

Educaplay can successfully transform student learning experiences, making them more interactive, engaging, and effective.

Furthermore, Zahra (2025) asserts that Educaplay is an effective teaching and learning tool for EFL students. The study, conducted at SMKN 7 Samarinda, Indonesia, used a quantitative quasi-experimental design with pre- and post-questionnaires to measure students' motivation in learning English vocabulary. The results revealed a statistically significant improvement in motivation after the use of Educaplay, with a t-score of 5.772 ($p < 0.001$) and a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.443$). Students' mean motivation scores increased from 20.375 before treatment to 51.375 after treatment, confirming the tool's effectiveness in boosting engagement. Educaplay was effective because it transformed traditional vocabulary learning which is often repetitive and monotonous into a more interactive, game-like experience. The platform offered quizzes, riddles, and matching games that made students feel more engaged and motivated. According to the survey, students found Educaplay useful, easy to use, and enjoyable, which increased their intrinsic motivation to participate in class and practice English vocabulary. The tool also provided a dynamic environment that catered to different learning styles, allowing students to interact with content in visual, auditory, and kinesthetic ways. The study concluded that Educaplay is effective for EFL students because it enhances motivation, engagement, and consistency in learning outcomes. By integrating gamification into the classroom, the tool helped overcome challenges of low participation and lack of interest that often occur in vocabulary learning. While the research suggested the need for further exploration of its long-term effects and broader application, the immediate findings confirm that Educaplay can be a valuable and effective tool in EFL teaching and learning.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is constructed based on the insights from the preceding literature review.



2.4 Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a tentative assumption proposed by the researcher to anticipate potential relationships among two or more variables, which is then examined using empirical data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2012). In research, a hypothesis helps guide the study and gives a clear focus to see the effect between variables. It is made based on the research problem and related literature, the hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows:

H_1 (research): Implementing the intervention of Educaplay will improve students' vocabulary mastery measured after the intervention compared to before the intervention.

H_0 (research): Implementing the intervention will not improve students' vocabulary mastery; there will be no change or scores will decrease.

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