

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This first chapter of this thesis presents research background, research problem, research objective, research hypothesis, research significances, research scope and limitations, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Research Background

English is the most widely spoken language globally, surpassing native speakers (Crystal, 2018). Access to scientific and technological knowledge is crucial for national growth. Demand for more according to David Crystal (2016), English plays a vital role in advancing science and technology globally by providing access to knowledge. Furthermore, it promotes international contact and idea exchange, leading to positive relationships with countries worldwide (Patel & Jain, 2008).

In Indonesia, English is taught as a vital foreign language, fostering mastery in four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These core competencies are further reinforced by crucial sub-skills, including pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (Wulandari & Fadhilawati, 2019). Of the three sub-skills mentioned, vocabulary is the most critical sub-skill to master (Apriandari, 2019). Vocabulary, as asserted by Nugroho (2017), constitutes an assemblage of English words endowed with meaningful significance when employed in communication.

Fadhilawati et al. (2022) assert that vocabulary is a crucial pillar of language, forming the foundation for mastering listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. In addition, Humairoh et al. (2023) stated that extensive vocabulary directly enhances an individual's communication prowess. It unequivocally posits that the quality of one's language skills undeniably hinges on the quantity and caliber of their linguistic repertoire. Furthermore, Alqahtani (2015) said that the paramount significance of vocabulary is vividly showcased daily both within and within the confines of the school environment. Inside the classroom, it is unmistakably evident that students who excel possess the most comprehensive and adept vocabulary (Alqahtani, 2015).

Despite the importance of vocabulary, many students need help learning vocabulary (Wulandari & Fadhilawati, 2019). Rohmatillah (2015) stated that the obstacles in learning vocabulary manifest in various dimensions, such as mastering the pronunciation of words, honing proficiency in writing and spelling words, words discerning the intricacies of grammatical inflection, accurately selecting the nuanced meanings of words, employing contextually fitting vocabulary, and deciphering idiomatic expressions within specific contextual frameworks.

Sriati et al. (2023) emphasized that students face significant challenges in vocabulary acquisition, including an inability to master word definitions, difficulties in identifying synonyms and antonyms, and struggles to apply vocabulary effectively in context. An obstacle frequently encountered in the education journey is the mastery of vocabulary, as articulated by (Rachmah,

2023). Syafawani (2023) asserted that students often grapple with the comprehension of words during the learning process due to their markedly deficient mastery of vocabulary. Lubis (2017) systematically delineated that the multifaceted factors contributing to students' challenges in acquiring vocabulary, such as an absence of motivation and interest in the learning process, adverse attitudes directed towards teachers, lessons, and learning environments, misguided study habits, and a misalignment between the objective conditions of individual diversity and the objective instrumental impulses within their surroundings.

The challenges students face in learning vocabulary are also evident among the students of class VII-5 at SMPN 4 Blitar, particularly when it comes to vocabulary in descriptive texts. Descriptive texts are designed to convey the characteristics of people or things (Sari Wijayanti & Setyowati, 2023). During an insightful interview with Mrs. Weni Widiанти, the dynamic English teacher for seventh grade at SMPN 4 Blitar, conducted on December 15, 2023, the Block test results on descriptive text material were disappointing, with an average score of only 59.21 (see Appendix 1 for detailed test results). This score drastically underperforms, falling well below the school's stringent benchmark of 72.00. Mrs. Widiанти also highlighted that the students' difficulties predominantly lie in comprehending descriptive texts, particularly in defining vocabulary, identifying antonyms and synonyms, and applying vocabulary in context:

Q: "... okay Mrs. Weni, thanks for the score of block test I really appreciate your help, further, if you do not mind, please tell me what kinds of students' difficulties in learning vocabulary that your students have?"

T: "Based on my analysis in block test, students' difficulties in learning vocabulary such as on descriptive text, especially in defining the words, finding antonym and synonyms, and using vocabulary in context."

(For further information about interview with English teacher see appendix 2)

To gain deeper insight into the challenges students face when learning vocabulary in descriptive text, the researcher conducted a class observation on December 22, 2023. During this observation, it became evident that the teacher's approach lacked the use of engaging and interactive media, which is critical for effective vocabulary instruction. This absence of stimulating tools highlighted a key barrier to students' vocabulary acquisition. (For further information, see appendix 3).

Based on the findings of the preliminary study, it is evident that students in class VII-5 at SMPN 4 Blitar face significant challenges in mastering vocabulary related to descriptive text, hindering their overall language development, especially in defining the words, finding antonyms and synonyms, and using vocabulary in context. One factor in students' challenges in vocabulary sub-skills is the need for more exciting media. Apart from that, Intisari (2017) says that teachers must have creativity to create something new in learning. Learning resources must be equipped with learning media that are easy to understand and interesting for students so that the learning process is successful. Therefore, digital technology is needed in this case, especially regarding the use of learning media.

The Baamboozle provides a comprehensive exploration of words and their meanings, a powerful tool to enhance students' understanding (Nabila, 2023). The game offers a fun and engaging platform and proves instrumental in reinforcing critical thinking skills, improving reading comprehension, and mastering vocabulary or grammar. By incorporating various language learning elements into the game, students are more inclined to perceive the relevance of their vocabulary acquisition within broader contexts, thus establishing meaningful connections across different facets of language learning.

Baamboozle is a transformative educational tool, seamlessly blending comprehension assessment with dynamic information acquisition. It emerges as a highly effective strategy for instilling vocabulary in young learners, injecting an element of enjoyment into the process. The gamified platform captivates students and elevates the entire learning experience, turning vocabulary acquisition into an engaging journey. Minh et al. (2023) highlight Baamboozle's role in enhancing vocabulary and refining conversational skills, enabling students to use English with flexibility and adaptability. Baamboozle is a beacon of innovation, ushering in a dynamic paradigm shift in language education.

Several studies highlight the transformative impact of using Baamboozle in the teaching and learning process, such as (1) Irma and Rukmana (2021) conducted a groundbreaking study titled "The Impact of Game-Based Learning Modules Assisted by Baamboozle on the Duplication Activity Abilities of Primary School Students." This experimental research, carried out at Al Hidayah Elementary School, utilized a single-group pretest and posttest design to assess the effectiveness of Baamboozle. The results were striking: the Wilcoxon test

revealed a significant improvement in student performance, with mean scores soaring from 63.33 before treatment to 91.90 after. (2) The study conducted by Elisti Tuti Winaningsih (2022) explored "The Effectiveness of Baamboozle and PAI Teacher Communication Patterns in Increasing Students' Learning" at Islamic Sinar Cendikia Serpong Elementary School in Tangerang. This study employed quantitative research methods to analyze how Baamboozle, combined with strategic teacher communication, enhanced students' learning outcomes. The research shed light on the pivotal role of teacher communication in leveraging Baamboozle to inspire and engage students effectively. Using Baamboozle media is regarded as effective since students are passionate about participating in teaching and learning activities. To determine the effectiveness of a PAI teacher in enhancing students' learning motivation, the researcher gathered data through interviews. (3) Hoang Binh Minh (2023) conducted a study titled "Using Baamboozle To Improve Non-Major Students' Vocabulary Retention." The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. After analysis, numerous conclusions might be drawn. Evaluating Baamboozle's impact on students' vocabulary acquisition and language learning journey using post-questionnaire data. Baamboozle's interactive and engaging nature significantly improved pupils' vocabulary skills, as shown in the post-test results.

The researcher seeks to investigate the impact of using Baamboozle as a dynamic tool to significantly escalate the vocabulary acquisition of seventh-grade junior high school students. Therefore, she will conduct pre-experimental research entitled "The Effectiveness of Baamboozle to Escalate Students' Vocabulary Learning Outcomes in SMPN 4 Blitar". For research facilities, apart from schools

that have computer laboratory facilities that can help students access the Baamboozle application quickly and effectively.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background above, the research problem is formulated as follow:

- 1) How is the effectiveness of Baamboozle to escalates seventh-grade students' vocabulary learning outcomes in SMPN 4 Blitar?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research problem above, this paper has the following research objectives.

- 1) To find out the effectiveness of Baamboozle to escalates seventh-grade students' vocabulary learning outcomes in SMPN 4 Blitar.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

Based on the research objectives above, this paper has the following research hypothesis.

1.1.1 Ha (Alternative Hypothesis)

There is an effectiveness of Baamboozle to escalates seventh grade students' vocabulary learning outcomes in SMPN 4 Blitar.

1.1.2 Ho (Null Hypothesis)

There is no effectiveness of Baamboozle to escalates seventh grade students' vocabulary learning outcomes in SMPN 4 Blitar

1.5 Research Significances

The results of this study are expected to provide several important meanings for:

1.5.1 For teachers

Hope does Baamboozle tools effectiveness affects English teachers in seventh grade to acquire clear and thorough information about how the use of the “Baamboozle Application” can escalate vocabulary learning outcomes for junior high school students especially in SMPN 4 Blitar.

1.5.2 For students

This research is expected to be useful input for students, especially in vocabulary learning for junior high school students, to encourage them to understand quickly.

1.5.3 For further researchers

This research serves as a valuable resource for academics seeking to explore the impact of the "Baamboozle Application" on enhancing vocabulary acquisition among junior high school students, offering critical insights into its effectiveness as a learning tool.

1.6 Research Scope and Limitation

This research aims to assess the impact of implementing Baamboozle on enhancing seventh-grade students' vocabulary learning outcomes at SMPN 4 Blitar. By introducing this innovative tool, we seek to determine its effectiveness in significantly improving students' vocabulary acquisition and retention.

The scope of this research is specifically concentrated on evaluating the effectiveness of Baamboozle in enhancing vocabulary learning outcomes for seventh-grade students at SMPN 4 Blitar. This includes improving their abilities to define words, identify synonyms and antonyms, and apply vocabulary contextually within descriptive texts—particularly in describing individuals as outlined in "English In Mind," Unit 14, "Things Change," during the second semester (for further information about the CP see appendix 4).

1.7 Research Definition of Key Terms

To clarify the critical terminology utilized in this research title, the following definitions are presented:

1.7.1 Baamboozle Application

Baamboozle is an application that can be used as an alternative to learning vocabulary. It is also an online teaching platform that uses games for learning. Baamboozle has many games that students can play to help them complete the assignments they have been given and for teachers to create their assignments. With a free account, Baamboozle has a wide variety of games that are great for homework assignments, classroom use, and distance learning. Students can access it via their devices to play and learn almost anywhere.

In this study, researchers will examine the use of the Baamboozle application to escalate the vocabulary learning outcomes of seventh-grade students at SMPN 4 Blitar, especially in mastering adjectives in descriptive text. Students can use this media through Android and web-based devices.

1.7.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the entire collection of words a person understands and uses. It encompasses both individual knowledge and the vast network of words tied to a specific field of expertise. On a larger scale, vocabulary includes words' meanings, the language's structural framework, and how individuals acquire, store, and utilize words. It also explores the intricate connections between words, phrases, and word categories, highlighting how language is learned and organized. This shows that vocabulary is a learning process that includes more than just a collection of words that we remember and understand their meaning.

In this study, vocabulary focuses on adjectives in person, which includes defining the words, finding antonyms and synonyms, and using vocabulary in the context of descriptive text in seventh grade at SMPN 4 Blitar.

1.7.3 Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a vibrant form of writing designed to vividly depict or provide an immersive account of both imagined and real events (Hammaira, 2024). A descriptive paragraph explains what a person or item is like. It seeks to describe and disclose a certain person, location, or thing based on our experience and senses. In this study, the descriptive text refers to a chapter in the second semester, "Things Change," which covers the use of adjectives in describing a person.