

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the research. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definition, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is an important aspect of learning English, there are several skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills also require a strong vocabulary. According to Feng (2023), vocabulary instruction is integral to the English language learning process. However, vocabulary teaching generally occurs unintentionally in some classes. Ma and Cheon (2018) state that extensive vocabulary knowledge is essential in demonstrating capacity and ability in a foreign language. However, the importance of vocabulary cannot be ignored. For as far back as a couple of years, numerous examinations have been conducted on vocabulary learning, and the realization has emerged that vocabulary acquisition is essential for those who require essential use of a foreign language (Cohen & Wang, 2018). Without a good vocabulary, communication is hindered, making it difficult to express ideas in oral and written form.

Currently, there are still quite a lot of findings related to difficulties in learning vocabulary, one of which is the lack of selection of teaching strategies that are suitable for student conditions. According to Sartika (2017), students in Indonesia tend to prefer using their first language to communicate daily since they lack vocabulary proficiency. Most English teachers still rely on memorizing methods in teaching vocabulary, often using a dictionary as a fundamental step in the English learning process. Thus, Sari et al. (2018) suggest that English teachers seek to incorporate technological media in the learning of English as a foreign language, with the aim of increasing students'

enthusiasm for learning, integrating various language skills, and creating an empowering learning atmosphere for learners. It was related to Ahmad (2012), who claimed that EFL students' response to media technology could improve accentual patterns of individual English words.

One of the media that can help students learn vocabulary is Wordwall because it has many features such as interactive, creation using templates, switching templates, editing any activity, themes, and options, students' assignments, sharing with teachers, and embedding on a website. Çil, (2021) stated that Wordwall.net is an edutainment website in which there are multiple game choices.

Contextually, in this research, previously, the researcher encountered the phenomenon of junior high school students being more involved in learning vocabulary using Wordwall during the “*Kampus Mengajar 4*” activity in 2022. The students used Wordwall as a medium for learning English vocabulary. The researcher used two features in Wordwall, which are Wordsearch feature and Anagram feature. These two features were used because they are flexible, can be used without the internet, and rely only on the InFocus Projector. Therefore, it is essential to explore the perceptions of students who have learned vocab with Wordwall to find out their experiences with Wordwall so that it can provide information for other teachers who will utilize Wordwall in their teaching.

Numerous studies have examined vocabulary learning using Wordwall. Khairi Ramadhan (2021) researched the effect of the Wordwall method on students' writing ability, and there was a significant improvement in students' learning using the Wordwall method since they acquired new vocabulary that helped them write. In addition, Misrawati et al. (2020) finished research to investigate whether the Wordwall technique can improve students' mastery and interest them in learning vocabulary. However, students' perspectives from various abilities (high, middle, lower) are needed. Because students' comfort in learning is still prioritized, it is also an improvement in learning for teachers in using technology to make teaching and learning activities more enjoyable. In

order to fill the gap in the research, this particular research focuses on the perceptions of junior high school students with different vocabulary abilities when using Wordwall. This research explores students' perceptions regarding using Wordwall in English teaching and learning activities in junior high school student's vocabulary skills.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The present study addresses the research question, "What are the students' perceptions of learning English vocabulary through Wordwall?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misinterpretation of this research, here are the operational definitions of each keyword:

1.3.1 Wordwall

Wordwall is a website that is used to learn vocabulary in this research. The features of Wordwall consist of 18 categories. The features that were used in the classroom were Anagram and Wordsearch.

1.3.2 Learning Vocabulary

Learning activities focus on understanding, remembering, and spelling words. The vocabulary materials include nouns in the classroom such as table, eraser, uniform, etc.

1.3.3 Students' Perceptions

Students' perceptions are the students' point of view or understanding toward the use of Wordwall to their vocabulary learning.

1.4 Aim of the Research

The present research aims to describe the students' perceptions of Wordwall in their vocabulary learning.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This research was conducted to add theories related to Wordwall to enrich future researchers and improve the understanding of students' perceptions of the use of Wordwall in vocabulary learning.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

This research provides new strategies for teachers in the use of Wordwall as a vocabulary learning media in the classroom.

1.5.3 Empirical Significance

This research intends to provide researchers with an understanding of empirical awareness regarding using Wordwall to assist vocabulary learning for junior high school students.