CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

The aims of this research are to analyze and measure the impact of using Kahoot! application as a learning media on junior high school students' vocabulary mastery, especially on verbs and adverbs. The other objectives are to identify the changes in the level of mastery of verb and adverb after the application of Kahoot! in learning. Besides that, it also provides an alternative interactive and fun learning method to improve vocabulary mastery and becomes a reference for English teachers in integrating digital technology into the learning process.

There are three english components to master when learning English, namely grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (Suyanto, 2010:43). Of all three elements, the first thing that needs to be studied and mastered is vocabulary. Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed (Wilkins, 1972). Also vocabulary is one viewpoint that should be learned and dominated by students because vocabulary is related to the skills contained in English. Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write (Richards and Renandya, 2002). Vocabulary mastery is one of the components that must be mastered in English as a foreign language at the elementary, middle, and advanced levels. Vocabulary mastery is defined as the knowledge or skills a person has in understanding and mastering words. Mastery of vocabulary is important for learning English because the potential for wider knowledge can be known by mastering vocabulary (Schmitt, 2000: 5).

Meanwhile, Berne and Blachowicz (2008:315) argue that one challenge in teaching vocabulary is that teachers are often uncertain about best practices in vocabulary education and, at times, do not know where to begin to build an instructional emphasis on word learning. Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) emphasize the importance of meaningful repetition and rich contexts in vocabulary instruction. Additionally, Nation (2001) suggests that effective vocabulary learning should

address the form, meaning, and usage of words in diverse contexts, which can be facilitated by integrating technology.

Recognizing the importance of vocabulary in language learning and the challenges students and teachers face, the research seeks to address these issues by using Kahoot! as a learning tools. Kahoot! offers an effective and enjoyable way to learn English, particularly in mastering vocabulary. Traditional vocabulary learning methods, such as searching for word meanings in a dictionary and writing sentences, can be tedious and discouraging for students (Palmer et al., 2014). In contrast, technology provides opportunities for interactive and meaningful vocabulary mastery, making learning more engaging and relevant for students (Sharma & Unger, 2016).

One persistent issue in education is the challenge of teaching and learning vocabulary in English. Vocabulary is a crucial component of language learning, yet many students struggle with mastering it. During the research's teaching practicum at private junior high school in Bandung Regency, Indonesia it was observed that students faced difficulties in expressing their ideas or answering questions due to a lack of vocabulary. Learning vocabulary especially verbs and adverbs is often a challenge for students because sometimes they have difficulty understanding the differences in function and use of the two types of words in different sentence contexts. Many mistakes are made when using adverbs because students do not understand the true contextual meaning of adverbs in sentences (Al- Nasrawi, 2014). So more interactive learning methods are needed. Meanwhile, the learning of technology rarely applied in this school. Therefore, the research interested in researching this because it focuses on the use of Kahoot! as an educational game platform that combines competition, visual and audio elements that can increase student motivation and engagement in learning.

For many second language learners, learning English vocabulary is extremely difficult because of a number of intricately linked issues. Major barriers to gaining language fluency include a lack of exposure to real-world

situations, the intricacy of an inconsistent phonetic system, the diversity of polysemous words, unpredictable collocations, and challenges with remembering newly taught vocabulary. An English student must master between 8,000 and 9,000 words in order to comprehend 98% of a normal text, according to Schmitt's (2019) research. This goal necessitates sustained dedication and the application of efficient learning techniques. According to Nation (2013), this difficulty is made worse by the inefficiency of conventional teaching strategies, which frequently downplay the significance of scheduled repetition and learning in relevant contexts.

Furthermore in today's world, people rely on various forms of technology to fulfill their daily needs. One example is the use of mobile phones to facilitate long-distance communication without the need for in-person interaction. Similarly, technology has become an integral part of the education sector. Therefore, innovation is needed in learning media that is not only interesting but also makes it easier for students to understand and remember new vocabulary (Dissanayaka, 2025). In this era of digitalization, technology-based learning is gradually replacing traditional methods, usually these technologies are leveraged for the learning process which significantly impacts the quality and efficacy of education. Learning vocabulary through gamification can give confidence that their value can improve. According to Hamari, et. al (2014) gamification refers to the application of game systems and thinking in a non-game context. One prominent example of gamification in education is the implementation of the Kahoot! application.

However, Kahoot! is an online game-based learning platform that can be used in physical or virtual classroom. It allows teachers to create interactive quizzes and facilitates quiz-based learning. Teachers can design a game, generate a unique game PIN, and share it with students who join the quiz session. The teacher starts the quiz once all students have joined, creating an engaging and competitive learning environment. Kahoot! also enables solo or team play, depending on the teacher's preference.

This platform is especially effective in vocabulary learning because it provides

immediate feedback to students and teachers (Stowell & Nelson, 2007). Students can assess their progress, while teachers can evaluate students' vocabulary mastery in real-time. Moreover, platforms like Kahoot! Significantly boost student motivation and foster a competitive but collaborative learning environment (Wang, 2015). Gamification in education enhances student engagement and supports competency-based learning (Dicheva et al., 2015). The using Kahoot! as a student response device also allows anxious or introverted students to participate more openly, making the lesson more inclusive and effective.

Based on the above explanation, the research has decided to investigate whether Kahoot! can improve students' vocabulary mastery and address the challenges in teaching and learning vocabulary. Kahoot! Introduces an innovative, game-based approach that fosters active student engagement, making learning interactive and enjoyable. Gamification, which integrates game-design elements into learning contexts, has proven effective in enhancing motivation, vocabulary retention, and language skills (Batu and Hashim, 2022). Its features address challenges such as students' limited vocabulary mastery due to low motivation and the limitations of conventional teaching strategies. The platform's competitive nature motivates students to participate actively, while its adaptability allows teachers to move beyond static methods and create personalized learning experiences.

Additionally, Kahoot!'s real-time feedback enables students to assess their performance and identify areas for improvement, fostering independent learning. For teachers, the ability to monitor student progress more effectively helps refine intructional strategies, ensuring better support for students' needs. Empirical research indicates that platforms like Kahoot! and other interactive response systems are well-suited for vocabulary instruction and supportive of both student engagement and teacher facilitation (Anggoro and Khasanah, 2023). By bridging these pedagogical gaps, Kahoot! It enhances vocabulary mastery and contributes to improving English language skills, making it a promising tool for addresing persistent issues in education.

The previous study that related to this research is from Putri (2019), The Effectiveness Of Using Kahoot! Games To Improve Students' vocabulary comprehension), the aim of her research is to tested the effects of applying the Kahoot! Game application in enhancing the vocabulary understanding of students in the seventh grade at SMP Negeri 15 Semarang during the academic year 2019/2020. The next research is by Heni et al. (2019), Using Kahoot to Increase Students' Engagement and Active Learning: A Game- Based Technology for Senior High School Students). The aim of the study was to examine how Kahoot can foster active student participation in English learning. And the third research by Almanar (2019), Reviewing Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using Kahoot at Holmesglen in Partnership with the University of Muhammadiyah Tangerang. This research explored the use of Kahoot, a free game-based learning platform, to provide students with continuous feedback on their learning progress.

In conclud this research interested in the use of Kahoot application in improving students' vocabulary. According to Bicen (2018) the Kahoot application is effective for gamification learning, which can have an effect on students so that they are more motivated and ambitious to learn. The subject are the eight grade students. The research method using quantitative data as an instrument, to collect data that aims to find out how the impact of Kahoot! Game on students vocabulary mastery. The research hopes by using this method, the students can make it easier to mastering vocabulary.

B. **Research Question**

Based on the background, this research will find the answer to the questions:

1. How is the level of vocabulary mastery of verbs and adverbs of junior high school students before the Kahoot! game is applied in learning?

2. How is the level of vocabulary mastery of verbs and adverbs of junior high school students after the application of Kahoot! game in learning?

3. What are the significant differences in vocabulary mastery of verbs and adverbs among junior high school students before and after the use of Kahoot! game in learning?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the background, this research will find the answer to the questions from the research question above, this study aims to reveal the expected result as follows:

1. To assess the level of vocabulary mastery of verbs and adverbs among junior high school students before the application of Kahoot! game as a learning tool.

2. To identify the level of vocabulary mastery of verbs and adverbs among junior high school students after the application of Kahoot! game as a learning intervention.

3. To find out whether there is a statistically significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery of verbs and adverbs before and after using Kahoot! game as a learning tool.

D. Research Significances

This study has several significances, including:

1. Theoretical Significance
This research can be a reference source for future studies on teaching vocabulary, mainly using innovative methods to enhance learning outcomes.

2. Practical Significances

   a. For Teachers

   The findings of this study are expected to contribute to improving the practice of foreign language teaching, specifically by providing practical strategies for teaching vocabulary skills to students.

   b. For Students

   This research aims to provide valuable insights and motivation for students to enhance their English vocabulary, supporting their language learning process.

   c. For Other Researchers

   This study hopes to be a helpful resource for other researchers exploring similar topics, encouraging further innovation and development in vocabulary teaching methodologies.

E. Research Scope

This study focuses on testing the impact of using Kahoot! on students' vocabulary scores, specifically by comparing the results of classes before and after using Kahoot! as a learning tool. This study covers subjects, objects, and locations. First, this study

examines eighth-grade students. Second, this study examines how eighth-grade students can improve their English vocabulary proficiency by using the Kahoot! learning application. Third, this study focuses on vocabulary, specifically verb forms and adverbs. Fourth, this study employed the Problem-based learning (PBL) learning model. Fifth, the research location is SMP Al-Amanah Cileunyi, Indonesia.

F. Conceptual Framework

The focus of this research is to improve students' vocabulary mastery through the use of the Kahoot! learning application. This approach emphasizes interactive and engaging learning to improve vocabulary mastery. The conceptual framework illustrates the process from initial assessment, through treatment using Kahoot!, to the final outcome of improved vocabulary mastery.
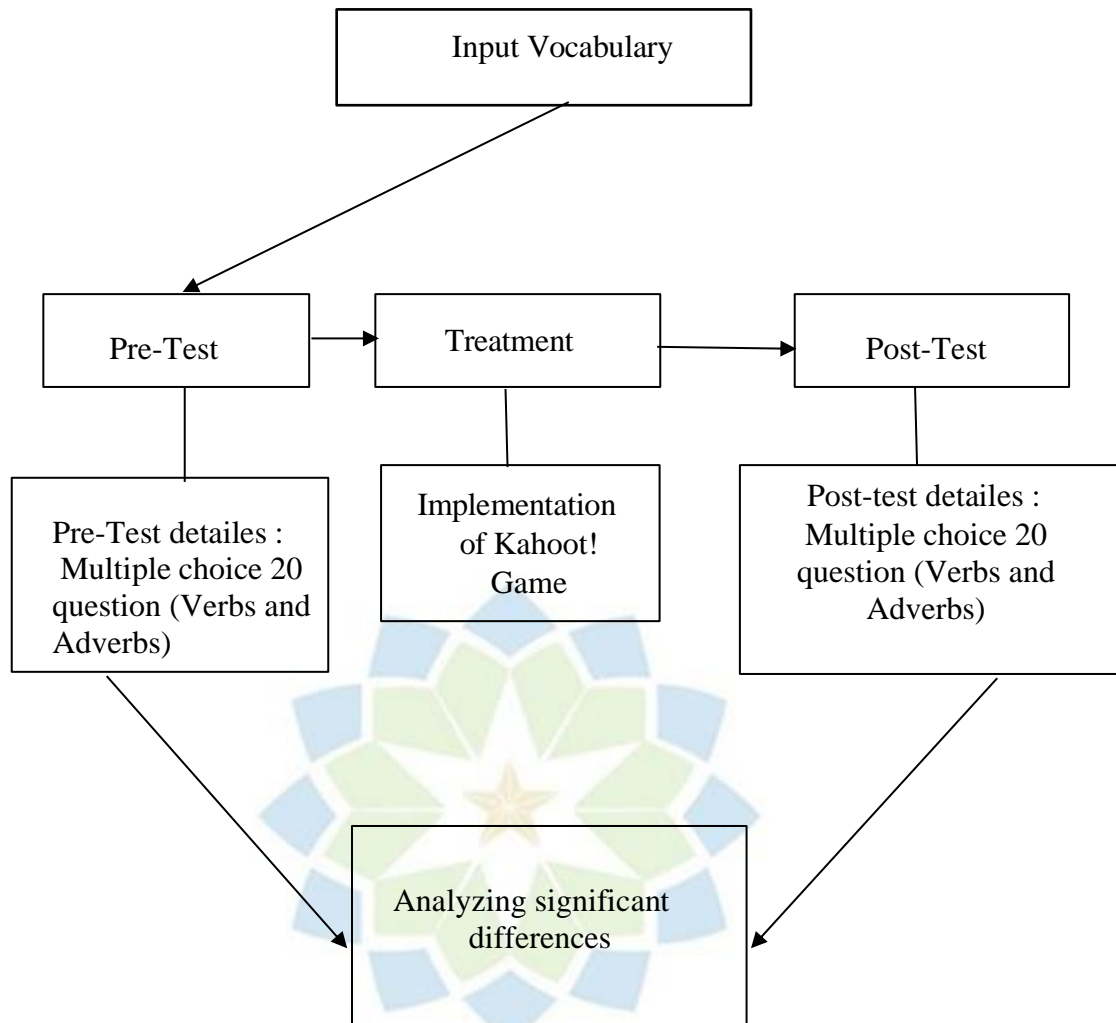
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                    │  Input Vocabulary   │
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│ Pre-Test detailes :│ │   Implementation   │ │ Post-test detailes:│
│ Multiple choice 20 │ │   of Kahoot!   │ │ Multiple choice 20 │
│ question (Verbs and│ │   Game   │ │ question (Verbs and│
│ Adverbs)   │ │   │ │ Adverbs)   │
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│ Analyzing significant │
│   differences   │
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Figure 1. 1 Outline Conceptual Framework

Vocabulary is a fundamental element of language skills, impacting all aspects of speech activity listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Abdullagevna, 2020:325). This means that vocabulary is crucial for mastering language, as it directly influences the development of these four skills. In vocabulary also, there are nouns, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and adjectives. To be proficient in these areas, students must first build a strong vocabulary, as it positively affects their ability to speak, listen, read, and write. Hummer and Rohimajaya (2018:169) emphasize that a student's vocabulary plays a key role in both language learning and skill development. Furthermore, vocabulary shapes how students communicate with others; effective communication is achieved when students have a solid grasp of vocabulary. Neuman and Dwyer (2009:385) definevocabulary as the set of

words students need to know to communicate effectively, encompassing both the words they speak and the words they hear.

From Thornbury's Theory on Vocabulary Importance, Thornbury (2002) states, without grammar, little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. Vocabulary is at the center of English language teaching, because without sufficient vocabulary, students cannot understand or express their ideas. Learning vocabulary effectively supports all-round reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. This theory supports the importance of vocabulary mastery as a foundation for improving overall English language skills.

In reality, many students continue to face challenges in language mastery, particularly in expanding their vocabulary. A common issue is that students struggle to learn new words because traditional teaching methods are not effective. Typically, students are asked to look up difficult words, find their meanings in dictionaries, and memorize them. However, this approach does not always lead to a strong understanding or retention of new vocabulary. To address this, teachers should implement more engaging techniques for teaching vocabulary. One effective method is using games, such as those offered through the Kahoot application, to enhance vocabulary mastery. According to Licorish (2018), Technology- based student response systems (GSRSs) like Kahoot! foster students' engagement, enhance classroom dynamics, and improve the overall learning experience. While, research by Mansur and Fadhilawati (2019), demonstrates that this application improves students' vocabulary achievement. Thus, Kahoot serves not only as an evaluation tool but also as a practical learning media.

During the treatment, Kahoot! will be used as the main tool, incorporating interactive games such as multiple choice and true or false games on Kahoot! to improve vocabulary. This is relevant to the opinion

of Stowell and Nelson (2007), who said that Kahoot! is a game-based learning platform with a student response method, provides an attractive way for students to practice their newly learned vocabulary. The ability to use Kahoot! as a student response device can enable students who are anxious or introverted to participate more openly, making the lesson more successful for them. This method was chosen to measure not only the effectiveness of the tool but also its practicality in an actual classroom setting. The post-test assessed improvement, with a comparison of before and after tests highlighting Kahoot!'s effectiveness. This framework guided the introduction of the app to students at SMP Al-Amanah Cileunyi and is expected to provide valuable insight into how digital tools can support vocabulary learning.

G. Hypothesis

The hypothesis focuses on the impact of the independent variable, namely the use of Kahoot!, on the dependent variable, which is students' vocabulary mastery. Statistically, the research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

1. H$_0$ (Null Hypothesis):

    There is no significant impact of using the Kahoot! application on junior high school students' vocabulary mastery.

2. Ha (Alternative Hypothesis):

    There is a significant impact of using the Kahoot! application on junior high school students' vocabulary mastery

H. Previous Study

Some relevant studies on this topic will be discussed in order to understand the distinctions between prior study on this topic. According to Putri (2019), The Effectiveness of Using Kahoot! Games To Improve Students' vocabulary comprehension. The aim of her research is to tested the effects of applying the Kahoot! Game application in enhancing the vocabulary understanding of students in the seventh grade at SMP Negeri 15 Semarang during the academic year 2019/2020. The data analysis revealed a significant difference between the two groups.

The experimental group's pre-test and post-test mean scores grew more (from 74.45 to 86.81) than the control group's (from 72.10 to 81.04). It indicates that the accomplishment of students who were taught using the Kahoot! Game application differs substantially from that of students who were taught using traditional methods of teaching vocabulary for seventh grade students at SMPN 15 Semarang during the academic year 2019/2020.

The second study, conducted by Heni et al. (2019), Using Kahoot to Increase Students' Engagement and Active Learning: A Game-Based Technology for Senior High School Students. The aim of the study was to examine how Kahoot can foster active student participation in English learning. This research is classified as classroom action research. Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that Kahoot is an effective alternative tool for enhancing student engagement, especially in teaching and learning. Students' experiences with Kahoot help to boost their effort and motivation to participate, with the platform offering an interactive environment that supports learning and encourages active involvement in the classroom.

The third study, conducted by Wang (2020), The effect of using Kahoot! for learning- A literature review. This research comprehensive review of Kahoot's impact on vocabulary learning accross multiple contexts. Wang & Tahir conducted a systematic literature review by analyzing 93 research articles on the use of Kahoot! in learning at Asian countries (Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines and China). They applied a rigorous data selection and analysis methodology to identify trends, benefits and challenges in the use of the Kahoot! platform. The study population included students from different education levels of primary school, secondary school and college/university. The findings of this study were mainly impact on Learning: 83.3% of studies reported positive learning outcomes with the use of Kahoot! Increased student motivation (86% of studies), increased engagement in class (74% of studies), improved academic performance (70% of studies).

The last study in the journal was conducted by Ahmed et al. (2022), An

An Empirical Study on the Effects of Using Kahoot as a Game-Based Learning Tool on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Recall and Retention. This research investigated the effectiveness of Kahoot, a game-based learning platform, in enhancing vocabulary recall and retention among EFL learners. The study used an experimental design with control and experimental groups, including pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test to measure outcomes. The findings revealed that Kahoot had a significant positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery. Students in the experimental group outperformed the control group both in immediate recall and in long-term retention. The interactive features of Kahoot, such as instant feedback, competitiveness, and engagement, were found to be crucial in motivating learners and improving their vocabulary learning outcomes.

Based on the relevant studies mentioned above, the research concludes that the use of the Kahoot application has a positive impact on enhancing students' vocabulary mastery. There are several similarities between this research and the theoretical framework, particularly in terms of utilizing the Kahoot application. However, the differences in the research design, data, sample, curriculum and the location of the study.