

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Vocabulary is a part of language that is needed by someone in learning a particular language that is used to communicate effectively. According to Linse (2005), understanding is a collection of words that are known by someone. Vocabulary is known to be used by someone to communicate effectively in a particular language. Bintz (2011) said that vocabulary is words that someone must know to communicate. Vocabulary is very important because it is used for effective communication, which allows individuals to express their thoughts and feelings in both oral and written forms.

Vocabulary acquisition in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is very important to support communication and understanding between students. The use of strategies in vocabulary learning, such as using games and interactive or digital media, is needed to create effective learning and improve students' vocabulary learning. The materials chosen must also be authentic, such as films, everyday life, music, and books, to provide meaningful contexts for students to improve their understanding. Learning with peers by discussing can also make a positive contribution to mastery of understanding and support the use of knowledge in real contexts.

Vocabulary acquisition is a critical component of language learning, particularly for students at the middle school level, where the transition to more complex language use occurs. For seventh-grade students, having a strong vocabulary is essential not only for language arts but also for success across subjects. Traditional methods of teaching vocabulary, such as rote memorization and worksheets, can disengage students and limit their ability to apply new words in meaningful contexts. This challenge has led educators to seek more interactive, technology-driven solutions that can enhance vocabulary learning.

However, problems faced by the seventh-grade students regarding vocabulary are monotonous teaching methods. It is common for students to lose interest in learning new vocabulary. Students can lose interest in learning new terminology. Every English lesson should also include vocabulary targets for the students. This helps students remember vocabulary, but too many teacher targets will overwhelm students and not be stored in their long-term memory. As a result, a tool is required to encourage students to be enthusiastic about acquiring vocabulary; for example, employing *Word wall* media.

One such tool that has gained popularity to solve the problems above is Word-wall, an online platform that allows educators to create interactive activities, quizzes, and games tailored to specific vocabulary lessons. According to Almekhlafi (2020) classrooms that are equipped with technology have been found to enhance students' enthusiasm to learn. *Word wall's* customization format enables teachers to design activities that are both engaging and educational, appealing to students' diverse learning styles. The platform's features include matching games, word searches, and fill-in-the-blank exercises, which transform traditional vocabulary drills into interactive experiences that promote active learning.

The *Word Wall application* is a visual teaching tool designed to engage students and facilitate vocabulary learning. To implement the *Word Wall application* effectively, teachers can follow several key strategies. First, it is important to create an engaging environment by setting up the *Word Wall application* in a prominent location where it is easily visible to all students, incorporating colorful illustrations and visuals to capture their attention. Regular review sessions are crucial for reinforcing learning. Thus teachers should frequently conduct interactive activities like matching games or quizzes to make these reviews fun and engaging.

The *Word Wall application* is a powerful tool for teaching vocabulary acquisition among seventh-grade students. By providing a visually engaging and interactive way to learn new words, it enhances student motivation and retention. The application's effectiveness has been supported by various studies, which

highlight its potential to improve vocabulary mastery and correlate with increased learning motivation. By implementing the *Word-Wall application* with engaging strategies and regular review sessions, teachers can create an environment conducive to effective vocabulary acquisition, ultimately benefiting students' overall language proficiency.

Word-wall application learning media presents a systematic arrangement of words that resemble the terms necessary to construct sentences (Arsini et al., 2022). The words displayed on the *Word wall application* will be easy for students to comprehend and remember when they participate in face-to-face instruction using Word-wall media (Monita & Sihombing, 2015). To create an engaging environment by setting up the Word-wall in a prominent location where it is easily visible to all students, incorporating colorful illustrations and visuals to capture their attention.

To investigate the role of *Word-wall application* in enhancing vocabulary learning among seventh-grade students, evaluating is effective in making vocabulary acquisition more engaging and efficient. Teachers can involve students in the creation of the Word-wall by asking them to contribute example or illustrations for the words and making them more invested in the learning process. The utilization of instructional media will help teachers enhance the efficacy of the distribution and the learning process, as well as increase student engagement and comprehension (Altayani, 2021).

This research was conducted at the internship location, SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Bandung. Researchers chose this school due to the challenges teachers faced when teaching English using traditional methods and the lack of student motivation to learn the English course. Therefore, *Word wall application* as an interactive learning media can help students to make learning fun and become a solution for them to learn vocabulary with enthusiasm.

B. Research question

There are three questions to be answered in this research:

1. How is the implementation of *Word-wall application* to improve student's vocabulary in seventh grade EFL students?

2. How do *Word-walls application* engage seventh-grade students in developing vocabulary?
3. What are students' perceptions towards the use of Word-wall for their vocabulary improvement?

C. Research purposes

Following the research questions above, this research aims:

1. To investigate the process of teaching vocabulary using *Word wall application* to improve students' vocabulary in seventh grade EFL students.
2. To identify *Word wall application* that can engage seventh grade students in developing vocabulary
3. To know students' perceptions towards the use of *word wall application* for their vocabulary improvement.

D. Research Significances

The research findings contribute to the development of effective vocabulary using word-wall and enhancing English language proficiency among EFL learners. The significance of this study can be viewed from the following:

1. Theoretical Contribution

This research will contribute to the theoretical understanding of the vocabulary acquisition process in EFL contexts, informing future research and pedagogical frameworks.

2. Practical Contributions

- a. For Teachers

This research will help teachers in teaching English, especially vocabulary, because it uses technology-based learning media that is attractive and provides many features for long-term teaching. Therefore teachers may employ interactive media to

engage students and keep them motivated, especially using word-wall application.

b. For Students

Students will acquire interesting vocabulary and quickly retain it through the use of Word-wall application, which allows for interactive and two-way learning with the teacher.

E. Conceptual Framework

In this research, the researcher use qualitative methods to find out students' responses about learning using *Word wall application*. Where the author conduct classroom observations by teaching and interviewing one of the students. The general description of the conceptual framework of this research is as follows:

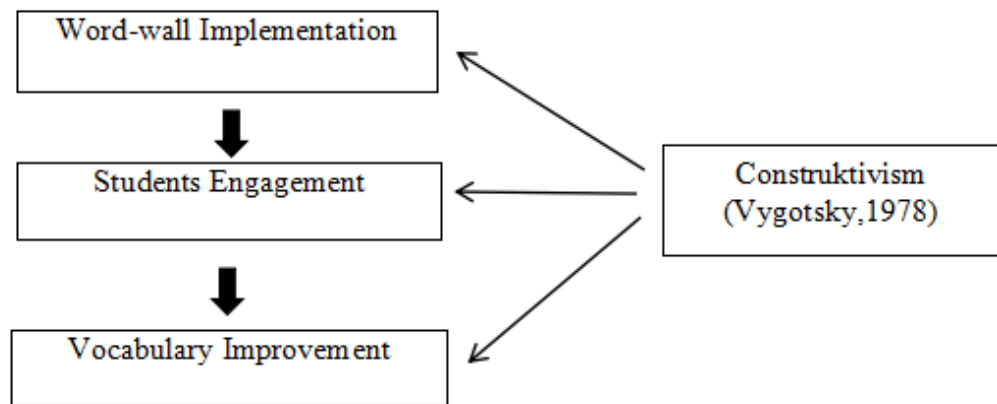


Figure 1.1 Research Framework

Lev Vygotsky (1968) established constructivism, an ideology that supports for a two-way connection between students and teachers. Vygotsky stated students learn more efficiently and effectively when they work together with each other in a supportive setting, guided by someone more capable, such as a teacher or adult. This theory supports this research because Vygotsky argues that individuals develop knowledge through social interaction rather than passive experience, whereas students must

learn vocabulary interactively with other students because *Word wall application* is a game-based application.

Learning media is something that can be used to convey learning that can stimulate students' attention, interest, thoughts, and feelings when they learn, which aims to achieve a learning goal. Media is one of the important components in the learning system and plays an important role. Learning media is used to help students understand the material. Therefore, the type of media to be used must be considered because it provides understanding to students, and they participate actively and effectively when learning takes place. Miarso (2004) argues that "teaching media are everything that is used to direct messages and can stimulate the learner's thoughts, feelings, attention, and willingness to encourage the learning process". The implementation of media in learning is using word-wall which is a gamification-based media.

Maghfiroh (2018) argues that *word-wall application* can create beneficial interactions for students where *word-wall application* is a collection of vocabulary that is organized systematically. For student attraction in learning vocabulary, word wall media is very suitable media to be applied. Where students will learn vocabulary with available templates. Therefore, its implementation in learning is felt to be easier. As stated by Musfiquon (2012), media can be described as a tool used by teachers to provide material to pupils more effectively and efficiently, both physically and virtually. The utilization of learning media is anticipated to increase student learning materials' speed of acceptance and draw students into the learning process.

As stated by Richard and Renandya (2015) vocabulary is an essential component of language acquisition and serves as the basis for students being able to talk, listen, read, and write well. As a result, having a large vocabulary helps students learn languages more easily. To increase engagement and interaction between students, *Word wall application* is a suitable medium to use during learning. *Word wall application* uses many

themes and favorite words and also presents many activities that can be done. There are 18 features that can be used in an effort to improve vocabulary through *Word wall application*; for example, there are match-ups, quizzes, open the box, etc. From these features, students can easily create and memorize vocabulary because of interactive learning.

Sanjaya et al. (2022) cite vocabulary as a key component of language competency, supporting mastery of English abilities such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Improving pupils' vocabulary has several advantages, especially in terms of language mastery growth (Ana, 2018). Understanding language improves pupils' ability to write, read, and comprehend what they hear. They can effectively communicate their thoughts, ideas, and desires. This suggests that language is vital for communication (Uspa, 2020). Word walls may effectively motivate students to acquire vocabulary through entertaining activities. *Word wall application* is particularly appropriate to be utilized as a supporting media for educating young students since they have traits that become bored fast and lack concentration span when learning (Jannah, 2019).

F. Research Scope

This research carried out at the internship location, namely SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Bandung, especially in class 7C. The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of vocabulary for 7th-grade EFL learners. The goals of this study are to determine how Word-wall affects students' capacity to acquire vocabulary and how students and instructors perceive learning using Word-wall media. The study's disadvantage is that it focuses on one school and only includes seventh-grade students in one class. This is due to the usage of Word-wall as a teaching media to track the progress of students' vocabulary acquisition.

G. Previous studies

In recent years, various research projects on *Word wall application* have been conducted, particularly for the purpose of educating young learners. Ismiyati, et al (2020) found that *Word wall application* is a game and technology-based learning tool that can help students acquire vocabulary in English as a foreign language. *Word wall's application* numerous elements, such as matching, quizzes, and even flashcards, have been used to create interactive games that engage students' long-term memory in acquiring vocabulary. *Word wall application* research also demonstrates that the use of digital resources as learning aids may boost student motivation in learning by creating a pleasant and fascinating atmosphere and increasing student engagement and interest in vocabulary exercises.

Specific studies reveal that learning using word-wall requires teacher adaptation to tailor learning activities to different proficiency levels, is collaborative, and results in high retention rates compared to traditional methods. For seventh graders, the research will highlight the effectiveness of visually appealing, interactive word-walls in vocabulary instruction (Nurammida, et al: 2024). In general, the research will highlight the potential of *word-wall application* as an effective tool for vocabulary development in the EFL classroom especially for seventh graders who are transitioning from elementary school.

Word wall application is effective in helping students learn vocabulary because it employs interactive media. According to Magasvaran, Vanisa, et al., C&K (cognitive and kinesthetic) strategies for learning can assist students in becoming more engaged in their learning. It happens because such strategies combine deep understanding with learning experiences gained through physical and hands-on activities. As a result, it encourages students to be more challenged and excited about learning and engaging in vocabulary learning since they must recall, analyze, identify problems, and experiment while learning.

The difference between this research and previous studies is this research focuses on students' perspectives and employs a case study methodology. A case study is employed in this study because it presents an opportunity to see how students' perceptions change after developing vocabulary and analyze cases in more depth. The goal is to investigate the unseen phenomena of students' loss of interest in studying English by gathering thorough data through observations and interviews. Many previous studies have looked at how well *Word wall application* help students develop vocabulary, but most of these studies have focused on the learning outcomes of these media or students' academic outcomes. There has not been as much research on how using word walls affects students' emotional involvement and motivation, especially for seventh graders who are moving from primary to secondary school. Most studies have used a quantitative technique, but this one used a qualitative approach to learn more about the personal experiences of the students.

