

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines many problems met by students at Mts Miftahul Falah, a junior high school with little access to technology, and the possible solution to enhance students' vocabulary learning and support their understanding of texts. It also adds the research purposes, significance, questions, scope, and previous studies connected to Quizlet and vocabulary learning.

A. Background of the study

Reading is a complex activity that involves both vocabulary knowledge and comprehension processes. Word recognition, which is closely related to vocabulary knowledge, is the most basic element supporting comprehension. Stanovich (2005) stated that word recognition is the most basic element of reading comprehension. Comprehension is built upon the understanding of words and vocabulary used in texts. This understanding stems from how written words relate to other information that is not directly presented in the text. Vocabulary knowledge and word recognition are essential foundations for comprehension. Decoding ability and word recognition skills are highly predictive of comprehension ability (Perfetti & Hart, 2001; Shankweiler, Lundquist, Katz, Stuebing, Fletcher, Brady et al., 1999). Gunning (2006) made a statement that vocabulary knowledge as a key component in understanding texts.

A few students may struggle with vocabulary understanding, which affects their ability to understand texts. For instance, finding the main paragraph, finding the message of a text, and limited vocabulary knowledge as a major barrier. This means that they are not practicing their English effectively, or they don't find an effective way to develop vocabulary knowledge to support reading. In addition to that, students are taught by teachers how to do it properly, but are improperly practicing the theory.

Quizlet offers an effective tool for supporting vocabulary learning. It improves students' ability to recall vocabulary (Nguyen & Le, 2023), provides better academic performance (Tiang-uan, 2023, and upholds self-directed learning (Nguyen et al., 2021). Preceding research has highlighted some advantages of using digital flashcards compared to traditional paper ones, including offering a variety of practice activities (Nesselhauf & Tschichold, 2002), fostering active and independent study habits (García & Arias, 2000), and promoting both conscious and unconscious vocabulary acquisition (Ellis, 1995).

Although Quizlet is widely used in many countries and has proven effective in foreign language learning, a research gap exists regarding its application in enhancing vocabulary learning in English classrooms in Indonesia, particularly in secondary schools with limited technological facilities, such as Mts Miftahul Falah. Most studies focus on vocabulary learning, but limited research explores students' perceptions and experiences in using Quizlet for vocabulary learning in low-resourced schools.

The integration of digital tools in language learning has gained significant attention in recent years. Studies have shown that platforms like Quizlet can enhance student engagement and vocabulary learning outcomes. For instance, Quizlet's gamification features have been found to moderately correlate with improved vocabulary mastery, which contributes to reading comprehension as students' engagement increases. Additionally, research highlights that low-proficiency learners benefit significantly from gamified vocabulary learning, showing notable improvement in pre- and post-test scores. Furthermore, the use of digital technologies, including Quizlet, fosters learner autonomy and proves more effective than traditional methods in enhancing language skills, such as reading and listening, in online classrooms.

Previous studies done by Maudloh, N. H., and Widyastuti, W. (2024) conducted at a senior high school in Gresik showed an increase engagement and vocabulary learning using Quizlet. Another study from Permatasari, et al., (2025) investigates the effectiveness of Quizlet for EFL (English

as a Foreign Language) learners in 32 Junior high school students in Indonesia found that it enhances student engagement, autonomy learning, and reading comprehension. The findings from Kimhachandra et al. (2024) reinforce prior studies stress that vocabulary acquisition plays a crucial role in improving vocabulary learning, which supports comprehension, and Quizlet plays another crucial role in improving both vocabulary and reading comprehension. The study by Halimi and Avisteva (2021) proposes compelling support for Quizlet to immediately accelerate vocabulary acquisition and support comprehension. Study from Sherly (2022) discovered that Quizlet significantly boost reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition in SCJK (sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina) and SK (Sekolah Kebangsaan). However, future studies focus on elements that mediate as the bridge between reading comprehension and students' engagement.

This study aims to fill the research gap by exploring how Quizlet can explore students' vocabulary learning using Quizlet among students at Mts Miftahul Falah. It also focuses on how Quizlet can be implemented to create a more interactive and engaging vocabulary learning environment while increasing students' interest in learning vocabulary. Additionally, this study examines how teachers and students at Mts Miftahul Falah address the barriers to technology use and leverage Quizlet optimally despite existing limitations.

By implementing Quizlet at Mts Miftahul Falah, the findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into effective ways of integrating technology to overcome challenges in English vocabulary learning. This study also aims to contribute significantly to the literature on technology-based English learning in Indonesia and offer practical guidelines for teachers who wish to use digital tools like Quizlet in their teaching activities.

B. Research Questions

Based on the description of the background above, the research question can be outlined in the following description:

1. What are students' perceptions of the implementation of using Quizlet in vocabulary learning?
2. How do students describe their experiences when using Quizlet to support vocabulary learning?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the description of the research question above, the research purposes can be outlined in the following description:

1. To investigate the use of the Quizlet application to practice vocabulary learning
2. To identify the students' perception of vocabulary learning using Quizlet

D. Research Significance

From a theoretical standpoint, this study highlights the following:

1. To contribute to the heart of knowledge in English language teaching
2. To add objective support for the implementation of multimodal learning approaches, where lots of kinesthetic, visual, and auditory activities are linked to boost in-depth understanding and retention
3. To serve as a reference for future studies

From a practical standpoint for students, this study highlights the following:

1. Offers different methods to boost vocabulary using digital tools such as Quizlet.
2. Helps in mastering vocabulary through tools like flashcards, quizzes, and games.

3. Encourages a more positive attitude towards learning and helps reduce stress while learning vocabulary.

From a practical standpoint for teachers, this study highlights the following:

1. Assists in incorporating technology into lessons, making the learning experience more interactive and engaging.
2. Offers tools that help systematically strengthen vocabulary as the main skill and comprehension as a secondary.
3. Allows teachers to track students' progress and performance using Quizlet's features.

E. Research Scope

The research was conducted at Mts Miftahul Falah, a secondary school with limited technology access & limited ways of teaching, with participants that consist of one English teacher and a class of 20 students. The reading texts for learning and tasks consist of a theme: Indonesian folklore. The Quizlet feature used for teaching will only be flashcard. students' vocabulary learning and their perceptions of using Quizlet as a learning tool, as well as addressing challenges in technology use in low-resourced schools. Vocabulary learning was emphasized as a fundamental component that supports students' understanding of reading texts. It would be held for approximately 1 month every Tuesday and Thursday.

F. Conceptual Framework

In this section, lies a table of conceptual framework contains 3 main topic that covers this thesis, which are:

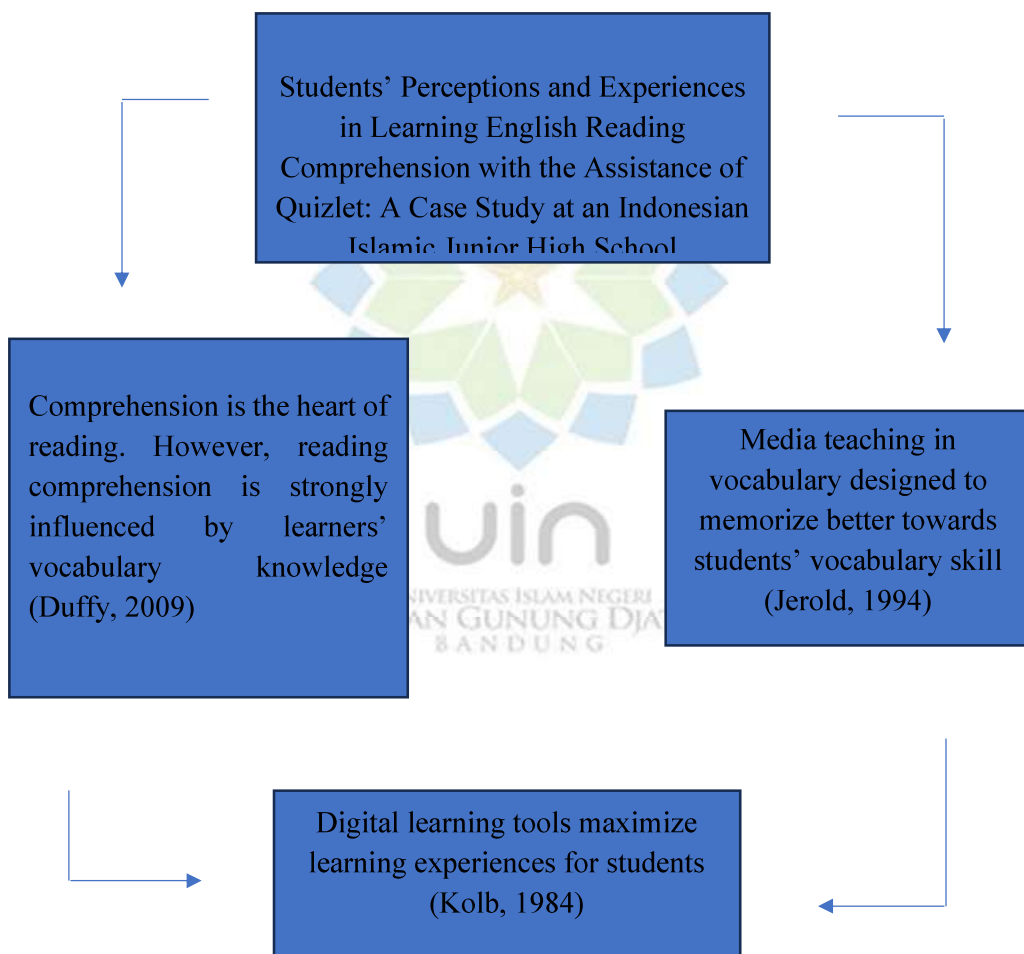


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

This study describes and connects three grand theories: Duffy's (2009) reading comprehension theory, Mayer's (1997) theory of multimedia learning, and Kolb's

(1984) theory of learning experience. These theories have a different focus on the role and provide a concrete foundation. Duffy focuses on how meaning is constructed in reading, which is closely related to students' vocabulary knowledge, Mayer focuses on the procedures of learning using Multimedia, and Kolb focuses on the need for students to experience learning continuously. Combined, these frameworks explain how vocabulary learning can be supported in EFL contexts and how it contributes to students' language development.

From Duffy's (2009) viewpoint, says that understanding is the most important part of reading, and it is strongly influenced by students' vocabulary knowledge. Reading is not only about recognizing words, but also about how vocabulary knowledge helps learners construct meaning. It's about thinking deeply, like figuring out what the writer is trying to say, guessing what's coming next, understanding the main points, and seeing the bigger picture. This idea suggests that teaching should emphasize vocabulary development as a foundation for understanding texts on helping students understand the meaning of what they read, not just on learning how to read words. In EFL classes, this is especially important because students often have difficulty understanding texts due to limited vocabulary knowledge that go beyond simple words. By using Duffy's idea, the study highlights the importance of developing students' vocabulary knowledge to support meaning construction in reading.

Jerold's (1994) teaching reading media is a systematic approach to designing effective learning experiences, including in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classes. The model emphasizes a cyclical process involving components such as understanding requirements, setting goals, developing materials, and evaluating outcomes. Its flexibility allows educators to adapt the system based on specific needs and contexts, making it suitable for language learning environments like EFL classes. In the context of EFL, this model can help teachers create engaging lessons that enhance students' vocabulary learning and language development by integrating various elements. The model's iterative nature ensures continuous improvement of teaching materials and methods, which is crucial for language acquisition. Research indicates that applying Kemp's model in EFL settings can

lead to increased student interest and better vocabulary learning outcomes, which can support reading comprehension, as evidenced by improved vocabulary mastery, test performance, and engagement levels.

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory suggests that people learn best when they experience things and then think about what they've learned. Learning happens through a cycle of doing something, reflecting on it, making sense of it, and then trying it again. In this study, Quizlet is used as a tool that lets students experience learning. Through activities like flashcards, matching games, and quizzes, students practice reading words and strategies in a fun and engaging way. These activities help them understand better and also make learning more enjoyable and meaningful.

When combined, these three major theories form a complete framework for understanding the topic. Duffy (2009) describes what makes reading comprehension effective, Mayer (1997) explains how multimedia resources help with understanding, and Kolb (1984) shows why hands-on learning through tools like Quizlet is important for real learning. By bringing these ideas together, the study builds a strong theoretical base to explore how Quizlet affects students' views and experiences in EFL reading comprehension. This approach recognizes that understanding, using media, and having good learning experiences are all connected parts of successful language learning, especially in classrooms that use technology.

G. Previous Studies

Previous research has shown that Quizlet is effective for learning languages, particularly in building vocabulary and improving reading skills. Studies by Dizon (2016), Sanosi (2018), and Waluyo & Bucol (2021) indicate that Quizlet helps learners remember vocabulary better and boosts their motivation. Additionally, Nguyen & Le (2023) found that Quizlet positively affects long-term memory of vocabulary. These results support the current study, which aims to understand how students view and experience using Quizlet to improve their English reading comprehension.

Research on the use of Quizlet in English language teaching is in demand. The first research was done by Maudloh and Widyastuti (2024), and Ma, X. (2024) examined a correlation between students' engagement and reading comprehension by using Quizlet for vocabulary learning. The study found a huge moderate correlation, indicating that students' engagement and reading comprehension with Quizlet increased. This suggests that incorporating gamified tools like Quizlet can enhance both engagement and reading comprehension skills in vocabulary learning.

The second research conducted by Waluyo and Bucol (2021), and Baptist, S. C. (2018), examined the effects of gamified vocabulary learning using Quizlet on low-proficiency students, students using special needs, and students without special needs. Their study revealed significant improvements in students' vocabulary scores before and after using Quizlet activities. The findings suggest that Quizlet can be an effective strategy for addressing key challenges in vocabulary acquisition, particularly for students with lower proficiency levels. Therefore, it is crucial to give multiple strategies for learning vocabulary.

The third research conducted by Pratiwi and Waluyo (2023) and Nguyen et al. (2022) investigated the role of autonomous learning in online English classrooms, with a focus on the use of Quizlet. The results showed that Quizlet was more impactful than traditional classes, making even greater self-reliance, learner autonomy, and improved learning outcomes in listening and reading skills. The study marked the potential of digital technologies in supporting independent learning.

Wahyuni and Styaningsih (2023) taught reading comprehension in SMPN 4 in Kediri, class VIII, researching 34 students using Quizziz as a medium and another 34 students using Google Forms. What they found was that Quizziz acts as a perfect teaching tool for learning reading comprehension than Google Forms. Students review Quizziz as more passionate, active, and motivated since it attracts students' attention.

Ho and Kawaguchi (2021), Dizon, G. (2016), and Lees, D. (2015), compared the effectiveness of Quizlet and paper flashcards (PFs) in improving receptive vocabulary for EFL learners. The study found that both methods were effective, but

Quizlet proved to be more effective than paper flashcards in acquiring a vocabulary, particularly in terms of remembering aural and written forms of target words.

Although numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits of Quizlet and other tools like Quizziz in enhancing vocabulary mastery, learner autonomy, and student engagement in EFL contexts, much of the existing literature remains rooted in quantitative frameworks, focusing predominantly on measurable outcomes such as test scores, vocabulary size, or reading accuracy. These studies, while valuable, often overlook the nuanced, lived experiences of learners who interact with digital tools like Quizlet in real-time classroom settings. Furthermore, there is limited exploration into how students emotionally and cognitively respond to the integration of gamified learning tools during reading instruction. Particularly absent is research that investigates how Quizlet's specific features—such as flashcards, live quizzes, and matching games—shape students' motivation, critical thinking, and reflective engagement in reading comprehension tasks.

This study aims to fill this gap by offering a qualitative, student-centered perspective, capturing the personal reflections, perceived benefits, and potential challenges students encounter while using Quizlet to support English reading development. By centering student voices, this research contributes a richer understanding of how technology-enhanced reading instruction is experienced from the learner's point of view—something that remains underrepresented in current literature.