CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the research, research question, research purposes, research significance, conceptual framework, and previous studies.

A. BACKGROUND

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of word chain application on students' vocabulary mastery. This study examines students' issues in VIII-A class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri. This study determines the context of vocabulary problems faced by students in learning English. As a result, this study discusses the weak English skills of students in VIII-A class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri for three reasons. These reasons include the least number of words, difficulty pronouncing, and memorizing the meaning of words. Furthermore, previous research has led to the current research gap.

In English language learning, vocabulary is one of the skills that students must possess. Based on the observations, vocabulary is a difficult skill for students. The results of observations before this study showed that class VIII-A students of SMPN 1 Gunung Putri had difficulties with three things. These difficulties include the minor vocabulary possessed by students, difficulties in pronunciation of vocabulary, and difficulty in memorizing vocabulary (See Appendix 5).

Generally, the need to master the English language varies according to its purpose. The minimum limit for having daily conversations requires at least 2,000 words (Schmitt, 2000). This study found that students in VIII-A class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri had difficulty absorbing various teacher information due to a lack of vocabulary knowledge. As a result, they have difficulty comprehending the lesson. Vocabulary mastery is essential for students because English is a universal language, besides being often used to deliver information and science (Lewis & Hill, 1995). Therefore, since language requires vocabulary

mastery, mastering vocabulary can help a person understand the lesson well.

English is one of the world's languages that is difficult to pronounce because of inconsistent pronunciation and writing. English pronunciation is considered one of the most difficult skills for acquiring and developing (Gilakjani, 2016). The difficulty pronouncing vocabulary is part of the problem faced by students in the VIII-A class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri. Students feel insecure and are afraid of saying the wrong word for fear of ridicule and insinuation by others. Therefore, students are unwilling to practice the word in daily activities.

Memorizing vocabulary becomes one of the biggest challenges for students. English vocabulary is difficult to memorize because many words have different definitions. Many students misunderstand its meaning. In addition, students do not practice the word in daily activities. In the learning process, of course, students need fun techniques. Carroll (2007) stated that a word chain game is a kind of game that improves the player's ability to master words. It can be used as an easy way to assist students in VIII-A class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri in memorizing the meaning of the words. Therefore, a researcher uses word chain application techniques in English learning.

Two studies on word chains have been completed. First, Hardiyanti, Said, and Hasyim (2017) describe the problems that the students faced: First, the students of SMPN 1 Tinombo are weak in speaking because they lack the vocabulary to express their opinions. It makes them feel confident to express their ideas. Second, they frequently forget the new word's meaning after looking in the dictionary. Third, they are sick of using the same expression to express themselves. Fourth, they couldn't say anything. The last, they are not interested in learning processes that use monotonous techniques. Second, Hasibuan and Lase (2018) found that students in grade VIII of junior high school for the 2017-2018 school year are still weak in English lessons, especially in vocabulary, as seen in the average score of students. As a result, students need learning methods to deal with such problems.

This study considers using word chain applications in English learning

based on existing problems. This study aims to determine the effect of word chain application as an alternative method of improving student vocabulary mastery. This study focuses on helping students in VIII-A class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri master their vocabulary. The research will then be carried out at VIII-A class SMPN 1 Gunung Putri.

Based on the background above, researchers want to conduct research on student vocabulary problems in English language learning with the title "The Effect of Word Chain Application on Students' Vocabulary Mastery: A pre-experimental Study to VIII-A Class at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri".

B.   Research Questions

This research focuses on the effectiveness of word chain application on the student's vocabulary in English. Three issues are investigated in this study. First, students in class VIII-A at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri do not have a large vocabulary. Second, students in class VIII-A at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri struggle with the pronunciation of words. Third, students in class VIII-A at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri struggle to remember the vocabulary. For this reason, three research problems are formulated, namely:

1. How is students' vocabulary mastery before using the word chain application?
2. How is students' vocabulary mastery after using the word chain application?
3. Is word chain application effective for students' vocabulary mastery?

C.   Research Purpose

This research focuses on the effectiveness of word chain application on the student's vocabulary in English. This research aims to determine the effectiveness of word chain application as an alternative way to improve student vocabulary mastery. Based on the issues, three objectives are proposed. First, this study investigates how well students know words before using word chain applications. Second, this study investigates how well students know words after using the word chain applications. Third, this study examines whether the effect of the use of word chain applications on student vocabulary mastery is significant or not.

D.   Research Significances

This research examines the effectiveness of applying word chain applications to students' vocabulary in English. This research can be beneficial to those who need it theoretically and practically for their problems in vocabulary mastery. Theoretically, the results of this study can be used as a reference to develop the mastery of student vocabulary in the process of education and learning. Practically, the results of this study can be used as consideration material for teachers in determining learning techniques that can encourage students to be more active. Teachers can use word chain applications to maximize learning without boredom. Teachers can use this game as a learning medium because it can help students understand and remember vocabulary. Students should realize that vocabulary mastery is essential to learning English. And the last, researchers hope that future researchers can conduct similar research on other discussion topics, adding broader information about word chain applications and moving this research forward.
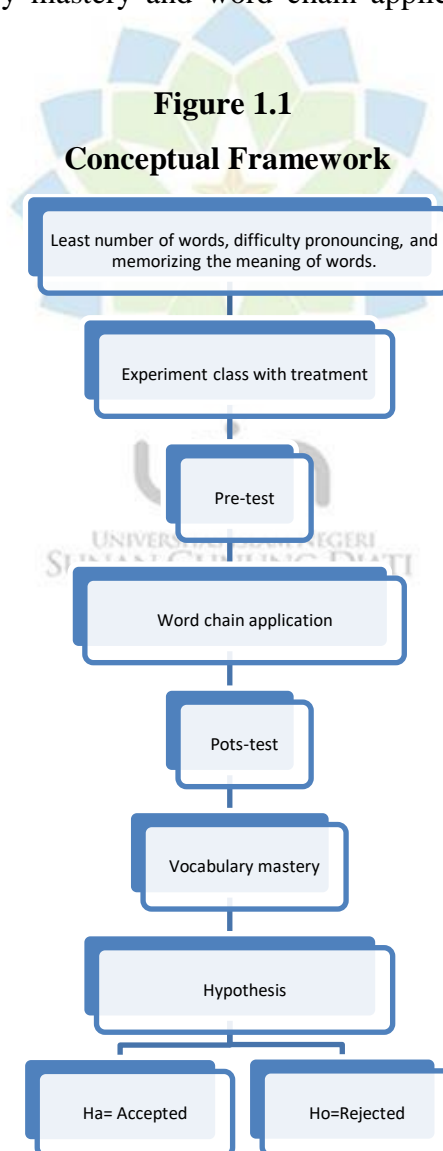
E.   Research Scope

The scope of this study is students' vocabulary mastery for grades VIII-A at the Junior high school level. English is one of the most significant languages globally and certainly has a vast vocabulary coverage, some of which are nouns,

pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The researcher limits the scope to only grade VIII-A students of SMPN 1 Gunung Putri. This study attempts to investigate the effect of using word chain applications on improving students' vocabulary mastery at the junior high level in an Indonesian context.

F.   Conceptual Framework

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of word chain application on students' vocabulary mastery. A conceptual framework describes the relationships between the concepts that will be developed. The conceptual framework of this study covers vocabulary mastery and word chain application, as shown in the following *Figure 1.1*:

Figure 1.1
Conceptual Framework

Least number of words, difficulty pronouncing, and memorizing the meaning of words.

Experiment class with treatment

Pre-test

Word chain application

Pots-test

Vocabulary mastery

Hypothesis

Ha= Accepted   Ho=Rejected

5

Vocabulary is an essential element in the formation of a language. Hornby (1995) defines vocabulary as the number of words combined with their meanings and rules to form a language. Vocabulary mastery is essential for students (Lewis & Hill, 1990). Without mastering vocabulary, a person will have difficulty using English. Therefore, researchers apply word chain applications to assist students in improving their vocabulary mastery. Two studies on word chains have been completed, first by Hardiyanti, Said, and Hashim (2017) and second by Hasibuan and Lase (2018).

In the learning process, of course, students need fun techniques. A word chain application is an application-based word game in which the player finds words from a specific category that start with a letter and end with the previous word. Carroll (2007) stated that a "word chain game" is a kind of game intended to improve the player's ability to master words. The game's goal is to form the longest chain of words that may have the same letters in the same position. It can be used as an easy way to improve a student's vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the researcher applies word chain application in English learning.

This research aims to determine the effectiveness of word chain application as an alternative way to improve student vocabulary mastery. This research benefits students by applying fun games to the English learning process. When games and education are combined, it can be educative and educational environments can be entertaining (Kuzu and Ural, 2010). This is one of the best ways to improve student vocabulary mastery. Thus, this study looks at how word chain applications can help students improve their vocabulary in English lessons.

G. Hypothesis

The hypothesis used in this study focuses on the efficiency of word chain applications to students' vocabulary mastery in English. There are two problem formulations in this study. First, this study examines the influence of word chain applications on student vocabulary mastery. Second, this study looks at how well students know words before and after using the word chain applications. In this research, the researcher proposes the following hypothesis:

1. H_0 :

The word chain application is not effective in helping students' vocabulary in class VIII-A at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri.

2. H_a :

The word chain application is effective in helping students' vocabulary in class VIII-A at SMPN 1 Gunung Putri.

H.   Previous Study

This research examines the effectiveness of applying word chain applications to students' vocabulary in English. Therefore, this study aims to determine how well word chains work as an alternative way to improve students' vocabulary mastery. There is information from various sources, such as journals, for selected theories related to the use of word chains to improve student vocabulary mastery. Several relevant previous findings support this research in both Indonesian and non-Indonesian contexts. Furthermore, previous studies result in gaps in the current study.

In a non-Indonesian context, one study was conducted related to student vocabulary mastery. Octaviani, Handayani, and Hamer (2019) examine student vocabulary mastery using board race games at Uttayan Suksa Krabi School. Their study investigated the use of board race games to assist teachers in improving student vocabulary mastery. This research focuses on improving vocabulary mastery. Mastery of student vocabulary before being given treatment is very weak. With the implementation of treatment using board race games, the mastery of student vocabulary is improving because this game effectively improves student vocabulary mastery. The purpose of the research is the same, which is to improve students' vocabulary mastery by giving different treatments.

In the Indonesian context, four studies were conducted on the effectiveness of applying word chains to students' vocabulary mastery. First, Hasibuan and Lase (2018) examine the influence of word chain games on vocabulary mastery in seventh-grade students of SMP Negri 1 Pandan. This research aims to determine the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery with word chain games. In this

study, researchers collected data using tests. Researchers tested students' vocabulary mastery in experimental classes after and before. The results showed that post-test values were more significant than pre-test values, which proved that word chains can improve vocabulary mastery. This research is the same as the current research in that it looks at how word chains help students improve their vocabulary mastery.

Second, Hardiyanti, Said, and Hashim (2017) examine the effectiveness of applying word chain applications to students' vocabulary mastery. This study aims to determine the significant influence of word chain games on students' vocabulary mastery. In this study, researchers compared students' vocabulary mastery after and before implementing word chain games. Comparison results using pre-test and post-test showed that word chain games positively improved vocabulary mastery. This research led to the same research, examining the effectiveness of word chain games on student vocabulary mastery.

Third, Fitriani, and Sitepu (2018). By title "The Effect Of Word Chain Game On Students Vocabulary Mastery Of The Tenth Year Students Of Smk Swasta Abdi Negara Binjai In Academic Year 2018/2019". The objective of this research was to get empirical evidence about the effect of word chain game on Student's Vocabulary Mastery and to identify the students' achievement in learning vocabulary through word chain game. This research used quantitative method. The sample of this research was the first grade of SMK Swasta Abdi Negara Binjai at academic year 2018/2019. With the total number 25 students from each class. The research conducted experiment in two different classes with word chain game was employed in an experimental class and other technique was employed in a controlled class. The data were collected through the achievement of pre-test and post-test from two classes. The result showed that teaching vocabularies by using word chain game was more effective than using conventional method. word chain game has served a positive influence. So, it can be concluded that word chain game has positive effect to the first grade students of SMK Swasta Abdi Negara Binjai in teaching vocabulary.

Four, a study conducted by Ummulkhair (2021). By title "The Effect of

Using Vocabulary Quiz Game Media on English Vocabulary in Elementary School". The purpose of this research is to make learning English more favorable for students and easy to understand because it uses the learning while playing method. The type of research method used is Quasi Experimental Design research. The research design used in this study is a quasi experimental design and uses a nonequivalent control group design model. Research results The implementation of this research was conducted in two classes. The first class is the control class and the second class is the experimental class. The two classes held 3 x meetings. On the first day, pretest activities or initial tests were carried out to determine students' basic abilities regarding the material to be delivered. The second day is the provision of treatment which is carried out by different treatments for the two classes. The first class, the control class, received learning treatment using the lecture method, while the second class, the experimental class, received learning treatment using the vocabulary quiz game media. On the third day, a final test or PostTest was carried out to find out the effect of using the vocabulary quiz *game media*.

Previous research have a similar purpose of improving vocabulary mastery. Researchers use the same treatment with different problems, applying word chain games. The gap between this research and previous studies lies in game selection. This research uses online-based games in English teaching. This examines the professionality of the game in the mastery of vocabulary in English learning. This research is based on the circumstances and results of the survey of student vocabulary mastery in English learning.