CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research background, research question, research purposes, research scope, research significances, conceptual framework, hypothesis, and previous studies.

A. Background

Teaching English to Young Learners or known as TEYL is teaching English to children. Teaching English is taught to children from the age of 5-7 years old to 11-12 years old, or when the children enter the first year of formal school (Ervika, 2021). The aim of teaching English to young learners is to teach them about basics English which will be a provision for future English learning. One of the basics of learning English for young learners is learning vocabulary.

Vocabulary is a very important basis or foundation in a language. Someone who learns English does not only master listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills, but the mastering vocabulary is also very important (Pajo, 2017). Vocabulary is the basis of learning in English because to master a language, one must know the vocabulary in that language so that learning vocabulary is very important for everyone who learns because, by mastering vocabulary, someone can communicate and understand the expressions they see and hear. In addition, teaching vocabulary to young learners in the EFL context has its challenges because the learners do not come from a country where English is an official language for communication, so special and interesting media are required that can support students learning vocabulary. However, not all teachers apply to learn media such as audio, visual, audio-visual, or multimedia to increase students' vocabulary mastery. The existence of textbooks the government provides makes the teacher more fixated on the textbook. They do not provide a variety of other learning media, so students sometimes feel bored and unenthusiastic about learning.

Nurhadi (2012) said that there are several methods to give an activities in English learning to young learner, among others are: 1) Games and songs with actions, 2) Total physical response activities, 3) Tasks that involve coloring, cutting and sticking, 4) Simple repetitive stories, and 5) Simple repetitive speaking activities. And one of media to learn English vocabulary to young learner is through games. In

this modern era, digital games have become one of the games favored by young learners to spend their spare time outside school. Teaching by using media liked by students is an effective way to make learning easier; therefore, using digital games as teaching media is a good idea because students will be more enthusiastic about learning and get more new vocabulary.

According to Richard-Amato (1988), games can make students more focused on learning because they do not feel forced to learn; they enjoy because they feel they are playing, not learning. Game-based vocabulary learning has been carried out a lot to make it easier for students to remember the vocabulary being taught. So learning vocabulary in this era is now more exciting and easier to do, with the note that teachers must be more creative to make the applied games look more interesting because if the games given do not vary, students will feel bored. After all, the games given are the same as previously. The digital game industry is now very famous and attracts the attention of people around the world; for example, in the United States, where the video game industry is predicted to increase by 30% from 2010 to 2019, with total revenue reaching $19.6 billion (Takahashi, 2015). Almost all people fancy digital games, and how to access them is also easy. Digital games offer many games, and consumers only need to choose what kind they want. Apart from being a means of entertainment, digital games can also be a medium for learning languages, for example, English. The models and types of games offered that can be used to learn English are also very diverse; one example is Big City Adventure which can hone and increase students' vocabulary.

Big City Adventure is one of digital game that show about hidden things. Where the things hidden is shown in English vocabulary. The goal of researchers using the digital game Big City Adventure is that it can be a good and appropriate way to improve young learners' mastery of vocabulary skills. In addition, because the game is interesting and can increase vocabulary, young learners will feel challenged and happy to find hidden things and other new vocabularies.

In previous studies, some researchers conducted digital games as an English learning medium. The first research is from Hazar (2020), this study compare the use of digital games with the use of pen and paper in learning English. This study used 27 participants who were divided into 2 classes, where the first class is in an experimental class that contains 20 students, meanwhile, the second class is a control class that contains 17 students. This research used pre-test and post-test

experimental methods and the result from this study is that teaching vocabulary using digital game is effective for learners to improve their vocabulary mastery. The next research is from Rahadianto (2019) who focused on implementing and solving students' problems in learning English vocabulary using a computer-based game. This study used the CAR (Classroom Action Research) method with 25 participants. The result of his study that there is different score between student score on pre-test and post-test, it conclude that the use of computer based game can enhanced student vocabulary mastery. The next previous study was written by Chen and Hsu (2020), this study aims to determine the educational advantages and potential of using Virtual Reality (VR) in learning English with a total of 274 students from the Taiwan University of Science and Technology. This research imply that the interaction feature of the challenges of game-based design and the VR application enable to enhance student motivation to learn.

The following research is from Sri (2017), who conducted research using the 'Guessing' game on grade 5 students at Elementary School Palembang 117, with 40 students in the control group and another 40 students in the experimental group. In this study, students had to guess the names of objects in English. Vocabulary learning using guessing games has proven to be effective. The latest research referenced in this research is from Dharmayasa (2022), which discusses vocabulary learning using the digital game Hangman Game. In this game, students are asked to guess a word in English by filling in the empty boxes provided for the letters of the word that must be guessed. Based on the research results, using the Hangman Game in vocabulary learning is very effective.

This study has similarity with previous studies which focused on vocabulary mastery by using game media. Meanwhile, the difference between the current research and previous research is the game used. The game used in this research is Big City Adventure and the research took place in a private school in a village far from the urban areas. Therefore, the researcher decide to investigate "Investigating Digital Game 'Big City Adventure' for Teaching English Vocabulary to Young Learner: A Pre-Experimental Study on Vocabulary Mastery to One of Elementary Schools in Lamongan".

B. Research Questions

This research has three questions, there are:

1. What is the students' vocabulary mastery before using Big City Adventure digital game media?

2. What is the students' vocabulary mastery after using Big City Adventure digital game media?

3. Are there any significant differences in students' vocabulary mastery before and after using Big City Adventure digital game media?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research questions above, the purposes of the research are as follows:

1. To find out the students' vocabulary mastery before using Big City Adventure digital game media

2. To find out the students' vocabulary mastery after using Big City Adventure digital game media.

3. To determine the significant differences in students' vocabulary mastery before and after using Big City Adventure digital game media

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is that this study uses the digital game "Big City Adventure" to find the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary to young learners in an EFL context. This vocabulary focused on simple vocabulary about objects in public places such as; bus stops, shops, bridges, parks, etcetera, as shown in the "Big City Adventure" game.

The researcher focused on the effectiveness of the application of the Big City Adventure digital game media in vocabulary learning by comparing it to vocabulary learning by using the conventional method.

E. Research Significances

Theoretically, the result of this research may give people more information about the Big City Adventure digital game can increase interest in learning and increase students' knowledge of English vocabulary and knowledge of English.

Practically, Students can be more active and enthusiastic during learning because the media used is interesting, so the material being taught is more easily remembered and meaningful. Meanwhile, the significance for the teacher is that the teacher can be more creative in finding a suitable game model for future materials. However, it can also increase the knowledge of teachers and researchers themselves on technology that continues to develop. This research could be better and must be tested and updated frequently to test its effectiveness.

F. Conceptual Framework

Vocabulary is a list of words in a language used by an individual to speak (Hatch & Brown, 1991). According to Taylor (1990), vocabulary is as important as the name of a person or thing. Because if something does not have a name, it will be difficult for people to name an object, event, or feeling.

Vocabulary is a very important basis or foundation in a language. Someone who learns English does not only master listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills, but the mastering vocabulary is also very important (Pajo, 2017). According to Hornby (1948: 959), vocabulary cannot be separated from the four language skills, namely reading, speaking, writing, and listening. So, vocabulary becomes very important learning to do. If they understand the vocabulary, they will be able to understand speech, reading, and what they heard and wrote. Because if someone needs to learn and understand a word (vocabulary), they will find it difficult to communicate. Vocabulary is the basis of learning in English because to master a language, one must know the vocabulary in that language. Vocabulary is very important for everyone who learns a language to master because, by mastering vocabulary, one can communicate and understand and understand the expressions and expressions they see and hear.

According to Lado, as cited in Mardianawati (2012: 11), vocabulary consists of several aspects, among others are; meaning, spelling, pronunciation, word classes, and word use. Meanwhile, words are classified based on their function, referred to as part of speech (Hatch & Brown, 1995). The part of speech that students must know include; nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

In learning vocabulary, a teacher must have creative ideas and methods when teaching vocabulary. An interesting method and strategy is key to gaining

more attention from students because when the methods and strategies are interesting, students will be more enjoyable to learn and more easy to remember the vocabulary given, also the vocabulary will keep longer in the memory because the methods that the teacher used was interesting and memorable. According to Brown and Payne in Hatch and Brown (1995: 373), the strategy model that can be used in teaching vocabulary consists of 5 essential stages, including; 1) Encountering new words, 2) Getting the word form, 3) Getting the word meaning, 4) Consolidating word form and word meaning in memory, and 5) Using the word. So, based on Hatch and Brown theory above, that vocabulary learning is not only ask students to remember it, but students are also able to apply the vocabulary they have learned in their daily conversation.

In teaching English vocabulary, we need media to help the students in the learning process. Media is all forms of intermediaries used by humans to convey ideas and opinions so that they can be accepted by the intended person (Arsyad, 2002: 4). Media in education is referred to as learning media, where learning media are tools that can support the learning process and serve as a means of expressing information that has been conveyed so that the goal of education can be achieved (Surayya, 2012). In this study, the researcher used digital games as a medium that will be used to improve students' vocabulary mastery. According to Mulyawan (2002), digital games are all forms played using electronic devices, both online and offline. Electronic devices can be computers, cellphones, game-bot, Playstations, etcetera.

In the teaching process, teachers must experience some difficulties and be faced with various challenges, as faced by English teachers who teach vocabulary. Several factors make English teachers experience difficulties in teaching vocabulary. According to Said et al (2019:58), the difficulties faced when teaching vocabulary can be lack of motivation, media and methods are not vary, laziness, uncomplited facilities and infrastructures, unconfident student, and the lack of teachers knowledge about classroom management and media.

In this research, researcher using Big City Adventure as the media to teaching English vocabulary for young learner. Big City Adventure is an adventure game in a big city where players who play the game have to look for items hidden in a place that is the player's destination. The theme of the game is based on an English

learning guidebook. For example, the theme of part of the level is about gardens, so players have to look for garden-related items such as flowers, leaves, shovels, etcetera (Niswah, 2013).

G. Hypothesis

Hypothesis is a statement by a researcher in quantitative research, where the statement contains predictions or conjectures from researcher regarding to the results of the relationship between attributes or characteristics (Creswell, 2008). In a research, a variable is needed. Variable is something that researchers need to learn, so that information can be obtained related to the problem being studied. In this research, the researcher used two variables, namely the Big City Adventure game as variable X (independent variable), and vocabulary mastery as variable Y (dependent variable). In other words, the researcher what to examine the influence of the Big City Adventure game on students' vocabulary mastery.

In this research, the researcher makes temporary assumptions about the results of the research being carried out. The hypothesis from this research are as follow:

H_0: There is no significant differences in students' vocabulary mastery after using Big City Adventure digital game media

H_a: There is significant differences in students' vocabulary mastery after using Big City Adventure digital game media.

H. Previous Studies

In previous studies, the research of Andreani and Ying (2019) was located in one of the Salatiga Elementary Schools, with a total of 119 students; they used a game named "PowPow" to increase students' knowledge of English. The study's result is that all students agree that this game motivates them to learn English.

Meanwhile, Alfadil (2020) research was using a quasi-experimental design and conducted his research on high school students with a nonrandom convenience sample of (n = 64) male students divided into an experimental and a control group. Each group contained (n = 32) students. In his research, the study explored the influence of the virtual reality (VR) game *House of Language* on the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary acquisition of intermediate school students. This study showed that students using the VR game *House of Language* had greater

achievement in vocabulary acquisition than those using the traditional method of vocabulary acquisition.

The next previous study is form Alex John (2015), the research was conducted on non-English BNEPT students using the Sega Genesis Video Games. This research explores the respondents' vocabulary learning, mainly focusing on using four Sega Genesis video games within the Digital Game-Based Learning experience. The research was conducted at Binus University, where respondents were 75 non-English department students whose BNEPT scores were ≥500. The form of the test in this research is a vocabulary assignment which contains a list of keywords in each game. In each game, there are ten words or phrases starting from character design, first level design, and gameplay. The list of vocabulary will filtered from each four video games. The result of this research is that playing the four Sega Genesis video game can help the EFL learners to gain more vocabulary.

Previous research used as a reference for researchers was from Anggraini (2021), which discussed the use of Electronic Word Guessing Games to teach vocabulary to young learners. In her research, Anggraini found that the facilities used to learn vocabulary still needed to be improved; apart from that, the techniques used were also less varied, so the level of student enthusiasm could have been higher. However, when Anggraini used the Electronic Word Guessing Game in learning, students became very enthusiastic about learning vocabulary; this can be proven through the pre-test and post-test results, where the mean post-test score was higher than the pre-test.

The next previous study is research from Safitri et al. (2022), which discusses vocabulary learning for SMP Negeri 1 Tellu Siattinge students using digital game applications. This research aims to determine the effects of using digital games in vocabulary learning. In their study, they explained that after using digital games in learning vocabulary, students became more enthusiastic and attractive; they were also motivated to know more vocabulary in English, so the use of digital games in learning vocabulary for students at SMP Negeri 1 Tellu Siattinge was very effective, proven by t-test is higher than t table.

The similarity of these previous researches and this research is that the research focused on English vocabulary learning using game. While the differences between this study and several previous studies are that this study focuses on students who study in rural areas far from urban areas, with low levels of learning

English, media that does not vary due to inadequate school facilities, and a small number of students. In addition, the technology and tools used and provided by schools in previous studies have been very advanced, while the technology and tools provided by schools where researchers conduct research still need to be completed; in other words, they are still limited. This study focuses on elementary school students, and in this study, the researcher used Big City Adventure game to increase students' vocabulary.