

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the research, the statements of the problem, the objectives of the research, and the significance of the research.

#### 1.1. Background of the Research

The international language is the English language which is used by many people around the world. English also has a part in learning science and technology in the face of globalization. By mastering English, the possibility of misunderstanding communication with others can be minimized. The essential vocabulary needed in a language is one of the important functions to be developed. Vocabulary is an important component of learning English. Anyone will struggle with speaking, reading, listening, and writing if they do not have sufficient vocabulary. In different words, the primary ability that language learners, especially those who are learning English, need to master is vocabulary. According to Richard & Renandya (2002), Vocabulary is a fundamental component of language abilities and serves as the foundation for how successfully students speak, listen, read, and write. It indicates that when learning vocabulary, people must comprehend the meaning of the words as well as how to utilize them in context.

In reality, the majority of Indonesian students struggle to learn English vocabulary. Because gaining vocabulary fluency is difficult. Many students were discovered to have limited vocabulary mastery. The difficulties that students frequently encounter when learning vocabulary make it difficult for them to comprehend all of the material that the teacher has explained, such as grasping the meaning of words. Most students struggle to understand the meaning of words since they may not know it when they learn, making it difficult for them to understand the lesson and making them feel frustrated and discouraged to study English. Furthermore, students may feel confused if they come across some similar words and sounds in English.

The usage of new technologies by teachers has improved learning environments and teaching approaches (Ahmed, 2016). Every English teacher

must employ technology to help their students learn when teaching vocabulary. Using the software is an essential component of student-acceptable interactive learning. Many of them are familiar with a variety of modern technology, including laptops, applications, and social media platforms. Hence, they are inclined to accept their use for educational reasons (Handrianto et al., 2021).

Because of those problems, teachers should devise a strategy to pique students' interest in learning new words and phrases. The rapid advancement of technology is linked to the way individuals study at the current time. As technology improves, it is employed more in the classroom and has a significant impact on how well students perform in school (Jaelani, 2020). According to prior knowledge, several games for education make use of technology that may be utilized to help educate and learn English. According to Ewa (2016), the games provide benefits such as making it simpler to talk to people and encouraging people to utilize language in creative and natural ways. Furthermore, Saputra et al. (2021) stated that increasing motivation and supporting learner-centered approaches is sufficient to help students improve their English outside of class.

Duolingo is an excellent tool for learning a foreign language. Every teaching strategy should incorporate a set of scientific components to ensure that students learn well. Tracking growth, encouragement, feedback, and vocabulary are just several examples (Purwanto, 2023). Duolingo was founded by crowdsourcing pioneers Luis von Ahn, Ph.D., and Severin Hacker, Ph.D. Having more than 100 million learners, Duolingo has naturally become a highly popular way to study languages online in just a few years. Duolingo is the largest online language learning program in the world. Duolingo is a tool for practicing English and assisting English learners who want to learn English practically and enjoyably (*Guide for Leaders in Education*, n.d.). Duolingo is a digital platform that can be used for student learning both inside and outside the classroom. The platform can be accessed as an online learning tool on the website or can be downloaded through the Google Play Store. The platform can be accessed via PC, Laptop, Android App, and iPhone. It can be used by teachers as an English

learning tool, and students can access it anytime and anywhere. In addition, this platform can also be used to assess students' English proficiency (Yana, 2021).

Based on the researcher's experience during the internship teaching practice at SMAN 1 Pecangaan, the researcher taught English class X4. They still have difficulty understanding the material because their vocabulary is still low, they usually learn vocabulary through making small notes writing difficult words and listening to songs or watching movies. But they sometimes feel bored with such methods. Therefore, the researcher tries to take advantage of this digital era by teaching vocabulary using the Duolingo application as a learning medium. Based on informal interviews with students of class X4, some of them stated that learning English through Duolingo is effective, but some of them did not. In this study, the researcher wants to describe students' perceptions of English vocabulary learning through Duolingo application.

From the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting a study entitled "Students' Perceptions in Learning Vocabulary Using The Duolingo Application of the Tenth-Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Pecangaan Jepara in the Academic Year 2022/2023".

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background above, the writer is conducting the statement of the problem: "What are the Students' Perceptions in Learning Vocabulary Using Duolingo Application of the Tenth-Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Pecangaan Jepara?".

### **1.3. Objective of the Research**

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of conducting this research is: "To describe the Students' Perceptions in Learning Vocabulary Using Duolingo Application of the Tenth-Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Pecangaan Jepara".

#### **1.4. Significance of the Research**

##### **1. For the Teacher**

Hopefully, this research will be beneficial to teachers. Specifically, through utilizing the Duolingo application as a medium in the vocabulary teaching and learning process as well as becoming one of the alternative approaches for pleasantly improving students' vocabulary mastery.

##### **2. For the Students**

Hopefully, this research will provide encouragement and interesting experiences to combat boredom in vocabulary learning.

##### **3. For the Readers**

The writer hopes that this research will be useful for the readers in their learning vocabulary using the Duolingo application and can also be a reference in increasing knowledge about students' perceptions of using Duolingo applications in English language learning to improve their vocabulary skills.

#### **1.5. Operational Definition**

Based on the context of this research, the writer separates the operational definition into three parts, they are:

1. Perception is the process in which an individual's ability to express his or her own opinion and compare it to the research being presented in class.
2. Vocabulary is the connective tissue between the other four skills required to become competent in a foreign language: reading, speaking, listening, and writing.
3. Duolingo is a practical and useful application that can help students expand their vocabulary knowledge.