

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the research, statement of the problem, the objective of the research, the significance of the research, the scope of the problem, and operational definition.

A. Background of the Research

English is taught as a foreign language to Indonesian students. English has four primary skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and also the components. In language learning, among the language skills that any learner needs, vocabulary is the key component, (Guaqueta et al, 2018; Aulia et al., 2020). Wilkins on (Thornbury, 2004) stated that without mastering grammar, there is only a small subset of languages obtainable but without vocabulary, there's nothing we can say. According to a recent study, teaching vocabulary may be difficult since many teachers are confused about the best practices in vocabulary teaching and, at times, do not know where to begin to develop a developed word learning (Alqahtani 2015).

According to the researcher's teaching experience with tenth-grade students at SMK N 1 Kudus, several factors make vocabulary learning hard. The first factor is that the students have difficulty using words. They found it difficult to apply the words they had learned since they just remembered the meaning, not how to use it in a sentence. There are also many words with the same meaning. The second is students struggle or lack motivation to engage in these learning activities since they are bored while studying and are simply provided repetitive assignments. The use of various teaching methods and media by the teachers is advised as a solution to this issue so that the students can enjoy studying English, particularly when it comes to vocabulary mastery.

Duolingo is one application that may be used to teach vocabulary. It is an educational mobile application as well as a website that includes a variety of activities such as listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, and the opportunity to speak. "Mobile assisted language learning apps such as Duolingo and Memrise indeed help users who want to learn a new language" (Karjo, 2018).

(Aulia, 2021) in her research on eighth graders using Duolingo got a significant increase. It was possible to conclude that utilizing the Duolingo application significantly improved vocabulary ability.

Studies on the use of Duolingo have been conducted by some researcher entitled “The Effect of Duolingo Application to Develop Students’ Vocabulary Knowledge” by (Fatah, 2017) and “The Effect of Duolingo Application on the Students’ Achievement in Vocabulary” by (Amalia, 2019). The results indicated that using the Duolingo app might help students' vocabulary knowledge expand in a good way. Most of the students were agree that using Duolingo Application could be made them more interested in the English teaching learning process especially when learning vocabulary. The two studies above still using the Duolingo application with the old version. However, the researcher wants to use the application with the latest version and different learning topics.

From the explanation above, the writer is to do research by the title “The Effectiveness of Duolingo Application for Teaching Vocabulary to The Tenth Grade Students of SMK Negeri 1 Kudus in The Academic Year 2023/2024”

B. Statement of The Problem

Based on the background of the research above, the writer is formulating the statement of the problem:

“Is there any significant difference between the student's vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by using the Duolingo application?”

C. The Objective of The Research

Based on the statement on the problem above, the objective of conducting this research are:

“To find out if there is a significant difference between the student's vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by using the Duolingo application?”

D. Significance of The Research

By conducting this research, the writer expects that this research be beneficial theoretically and practically as follows:

1. Theoretically

This study can be used as a resource for other researchers interested in teaching English about the new type of media for teaching and the causes of students' vocabulary mastery through it. It can also be used as the foundation for further research by other researchers interested in teaching English.

2. Practically

a. For the Teacher

Hopefully, it will provide the teacher with more information about a new type of learning media application that may be applied or used in teaching vocabulary and improving the teacher's quality in English teaching.

b. For the Students

The Duolingo application is a unique and very enjoyable way of learning. It is designed to help students improve their interest in studying vocabulary as well as their knowledge of it.

E. Scope of The Research

This study focuses on using Duolingo to teach vocabulary to the tenth-grade students of SMK Negeri 1 Kudus in the academic year 2023/2024. The subjects of this research are the tenth-grade students of SMK Negeri 1 Kudus in the academic year 2023/2024. The writer explains using the Duolingo application in the English descriptive text and gives pre-test and post-test to collect the data.

F. Operational Definition

Based on the focus of this research, the writer is dividing the operational definition of this research into three:

1. Duolingo is a language learning tool that can be used by students and teachers as a gamified way to grasp new languages. Not only English there are many language options to pick from, and the process of getting started is very simple and it is all free. This tool works online across a host of devices and focuses on teaching four types of language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
2. Vocabulary refers to the knowledge of words, including their structure (morphology), use (grammar), meanings (semantics), and connections to other words (word/semantic linkages).

3. The Tenth Grade Students of SMK Negeri 1 Kudus are the 1st year students who are currently registered as students in academic year 2023/2024.
4. Effectiveness is the capability of producing a desired result to produce desired output. When something is considered to be effective, it means to have the desired or expected result or to produce a deep and vivid impression.

