CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the 21st century, technology has become deeply integrated into every aspect of life, fundamentally reshaping how we live, work, and interact. Digital communication tools like smartphones and social media have transformed how people connect, The influential of technology on the transfer of information making the world more interconnected than ever before (Akarsu and Dar 2014). During the early 2010s, there was a massive migration from traditional print media reading to e-reading on mobiles (Shimray, Keerti, and Ramaiah 2015). Consequently, the process of transferring information nowdays becomes completely easy to access and share with people, regardless of where they live in.

In today's globalized world, effective communication in English has become a crucial skill, particularly for academic, professional, and intercultural purposes. Mastery of English requires not only grammatical accuracy and pronunciation, but also a rich and contextually appropriate vocabulary. Vocabulary plays a key role in expressing ideas clearly, understanding nuanced meanings, and participating in meaningful interactions, especially in complex or professional settings. Richards and Renandya (2002) assert that developing a rich vocabulary is essential because it supports all aspects of language use, those are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All of these skills are tightly connected to the process of communication.

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Vocabulary is one of the keys to be succesed in learning a foreign language, especially English. Vocabulary is the basic foundation of language. Vocabulary involves not just knowing words and their meanings, but also understanding a word's form, significance, and contextual usage, making it a more intricate concept than simply knowing definitions (Nation, 2013). It helps us communicate our thoughts, exchange information, comprehend others, and form personal connections. It supports all the other language abilities like reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

The basic aspect of language, a rich vocabulary helps learners understand spoken language, including conversations, learning, and presentations. A comprehensive vocabulary is fundamental for advanced learners to grasp the nuances of spoken English across different scenarios (Nguyen, 2024). Without a solid foundation of words, learners may struggle to follow and participate in discussions. The learning occurs is not necessarily optimal in increasing students' level of interest in learning, especially vocabulary. However, many advanced English learners still face difficulties in expanding and applying their vocabulary effectively. Learners often recognize more words than they can actively use, which indicates a discrepancy between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge even at advanced levels (Schmitt, 2020). Traditional vocabulary learning methods such as memorizing word lists or translating definitions have been criticized for lacking depth and contextual richness. Webb and Nation (2017) argue that such shallow processing is unlikely to promote durable learning or enable communicative use of vocabulary. Similarly, Laufer (2005) highlights that these

methods lead to passive knowledge, often insufficient for active language use. This disconnect can lead to passive vocabulary knowledge, where learners recognize words but struggle to use them actively and appropriately in spoken or written discourse.

As mentioned above, the one of important aspects in english is vocabulary. In some case, vocabulary become an obstacle one to learn. This happens because English learners lose interest in learning Vocabulary. Based on research conducted by Wulandari and Lestari (2019), English learners perceive Vocabulary as one of the most challenging things in learning English. This happens because they have difficulty interpreting the Vocabulary, which is very large and varied. On the other hand, the best solution to overcome the issues is presenting something extraordinary and having things that make English learners interested in learning Vocabulary (Csabay, 2006).

To address the limitations of traditional vocabulary instruction, there is a growing need for learning media that present vocabulary in meaningful context and encourage authentic, engaging language use. Contextualized input has been shown to promote better vocabulary retention and usage (Schmitt, 2008). One such medium with promising pedagogical potential is digital comics, which combine visual elements with narrative structure to support word learning through both contextual clues and multimodal engagement (Cary, 2004).

Research suggests that comics offer an interactive and motivating environment for vocabulary acquisition, especially when learners are exposed to target language within dialogues, expressions, and situations that mimic real-life

communication (Yang, 2022). As a form of digital storytelling, comics can support incidental vocabulary learning while enhancing learner interest and reducing anxiety, making them an effective medium for advanced English learners aiming to expand and apply their vocabulary in context (Morrison, Bryan, & Chilcoat, 2002).

Digital comics combine visual storytelling with dialogue and narrative elements that reflect real-life communication. They offer learners the opportunity to see how vocabulary is used in various social and emotional contexts, including formal, informal, humorous, and expressive interactions. Based on study conducted by Khoiriyah (2010) shows that Comic Strips facilitates learners in vocabulary growth through visual media (pictures) or illustration. Another study by Efendi (2021) showed that Digital comics helps english learners in learning vocabulary through visual media since it has an illustration that helps students to understand the storyline easily without looking up the words that not familiar in a dictionary.

Moreover, digital comics are widely accessible across various platforms and devices, making them a highly convenient and attractive option for learners. Their interactive and multimedia-rich features such as animations, clickable vocabulary, and audio support, enhance learner engagement and promote deeper cognitive processing (Yang, 2022).

Through the combination of visual storytelling and contextualized language, learners acquire vocabulary more naturally by following characters, plots, and dialogues. This narrative immersion supports incidental vocabulary acquisition, which has been shown to be more effective and enduring than decontextualized study methods (Liu, 2004). Additionally, comics often reflect

cultural nuances, social expressions, and communication styles, enabling learners to not only expand their lexicon but also develop pragmatic competence in the target language (Ranker, 2007).

Based on statement above, Using digital comics for learning makes education more engaging and fun. It helps explain complex ideas in a simple way, encourages creativity, and makes learning more interactive and accessible for everyone. According to Gumelar (2011), comics are sequences of images with text arranged according to the creator's purpose. Comics enhance students' understanding by blending visuals and text, providing a powerful tool for learning. The combination of images and words helps overcomes complex concepts into simpler, while also serving to different learning styles. This interactive approach not only captures students' attention but also strengthen comprehension, making learning more effective and enjoyable.

There have studies concerning comic that showed result significant. First, according Dewi (2022), "the use of comic strip was significant to improve student"s reading comprehension of narrative text". Second, Darmawan (2013) point out that " using comic strip was more effective in developing student"s ability in writing. Third, Savora (2012) asserts that "using comic strip recount text more effective to improve student"s writing ability".

Based on the background description above, the researcher conducted research with the title " EXPLORING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION IN USING DIGITAL COMICS TO IMRPOVE THIER VOCABULARY MASTERY ".

1.2 The Objective of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the researcher intends to explore the students' perception of using digital comics for learning vocabulary and to explain How the students use comics in learning vocabulary.

1.3 Research Question

1. How do students perceive a digital comics for vocabulary learning?
2. How digital comics used by students for learning vocabulary?

1.4 The Significance of the Study

This research is significant as it addresses the growing need to explore innovative and engaging methods for enhancing vocabulary acquisition, a crucial aspect of language learning. By investigating students' perceptions of using comics in vocabulary learning, the study contributes to a better understanding of how visual and narrative-driven materials, such as comics, can be integrated into educational practices.

1.5 Definition of Key Term

Digital Comic: Digital comics are comics that have been specifically designed or adapted for display on digital devices. According to Goodbrey (2013), They often incorporate features such as animation, sound, and interactivity, using the digital platform not just for distribution but as an integral part of the narrative experience. Goodbrey stresses that digital comics use the capabilities of digital devices (like

tablets and smartphones) to enhance the reader's experience through multimedia and interactivity.

Vocabulary: Vocabulary is a collection of words used in language, especially English, there is a lot of vocabulary that must be mastered so that during oral communication or writing texts we can do it smoothly. Learning vocabulary is expected for students not only to learn about the word but also to learn how the vocabulary is used in the right way. According to Hatch and Brown (1995), vocabulary is a set of words with meanings and definitions that a person expresses in language and uses in communication. Learning vocabulary is important for developing English language skills such as understanding words and their meanings.

Perception: Perception is a process of an individual receiving information through interpretation, review, selection as an individual's ability to receive and interpret information to society. experience, cultural background, beliefs, and emotions become a stimulus in a perception process. Mcdonald (2011) stated that Perception is an individual's view making it a powerful driving force for action. Perception is never objective. It is an individual's or group's unique way of viewing a phenomenon that involves the processing of stimuli, and incorporates memories and experiences in the process of understanding.