

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the foundation and general overview of the study. This introductory chapter consists of background of the study, research questions, research aim, scope of the research, significances of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Vocabulary is an essential part of becoming a proficient user of language (Alqahtani, 2015; Kezhen, 2015; Wright, 2016). It assists the learners to produce and understand a speech or a text. Nevertheless, learning a foreign language is not easy for the learners (Gass & Selinker, 2008). They sometimes find it hard to understand the vocabulary and its meaning (Barr, 2016; Taglieber et al, 1988, cited in Mihara, 2011), because they need to learn a language which is not used for daily conversation. This has an impact on the number of students' vocabulary which is still limited (Barr, 2016). Even vocabulary mistakes are considered the most serious among EFL learners (Santos, 1988, cited in McLean, Hogg, & Rush, 2013).

Vocabulary learning has not received sufficient attention (Ashcroft & Imrie, 2014), whereas vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of linguistic development (Qian, 1999, cited in Ashcroft & Imrie, 2014). Besides that, the learning process of EFL learners is different (Hsu & Yang, 2013). The limitations of vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners lead to difficulties in reading because vocabulary is correlated with reading comprehension (Anjomshoa & Zamanian, 2014; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997, cited in Wanzek, 2014). EFL learners face difficulties in reading English because of some aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, and sounds, in which those are the major components of language. This has an impact on their understanding of the text, because without the recognition the meaning of the words, the learner is impossible to produce or perceive the language (Anjomshoa & Zamanian, 2014). In fact, reading a language requires sufficient vocabulary (Anjomshoa & Zamanian, 2014), because it builds up the comprehension of the readers to

the text. In other words, vocabulary is a prerequisite in comprehending a certain text.

The lack of changes in the conventional approaches might be the reason of students' difficulties in vocabulary learning. Thus, the integration of technology in language teaching can optimize the learning process. Since technology has been evolving and it becomes more accessible to different population, it can bring benefits to the language education fields. In addition, the increasing of smartphone ownership provides opportunities for education program (Dizon, 2016; Yang, 2013). Therefore, it is undeniable that current language learning is being mediated by computers, internet, and mobile devices. The integration of these technologies could bring successful learning experience for the learners.

In regard to its integration, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is suggested as effective strategies for foreign language teaching (Azabdaftari & Mozaheb, 2012; Dizon, 2016; McLean, Hogg, and Rush, 2013). It is considered as a potential and convenient way to language learning method because of its spontaneous and ubiquitous (Miangah & Nizarat, 2012) portable, real-time, and cooperative (Kukulaska-Hulme, 2009). Besides, mobile technology provides flexibility, low cost, small size, and user-friendliness (Traxler, 2005). In addition, Taj et al. (2016) stated that mobile devices bring out interesting, engaging, and motivating learning activities. Dizon (2016) was implementing mobile-assisted language learning to 9 Japanese university EFL students to learn academic vocabulary. The result of the pre-test and post-test showed that the students gained significant result. Besides that, the students found it easy and useful tool to learn vocabulary. In 2018, Sanosi examined the effectiveness of web-based learning to the low-level EFL learners at Prince Sattam bin Abulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. Sanosi was included Elementary Vocabulary by Thomas as a teaching materials. The result showed that students' grade increased between pre-test and post-test. In addition, it allows the learners to do different learning tasks and assess their vocabulary acquisition.

As exemplified in the previous explanation, it can be seen that mobile-assisted language learning provides advantages for vocabulary teaching and learning. However, the previous studies have not explored the use of MALL as a vocabulary builder to assist certain skills such as writing, reading, listening, or speaking. Therefore, this study intended to fill the gap by implementing the MALL as vocabulary learning tool to assist students' reading English text.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Based on the background of this research, the purpose of the study is intended to answer the questions:

In what ways does the implementation of Quizlet help EFL students' to learn vocabulary?

## **1.3 Research Aim**

Based on the research questions, the study aims to investigate the use of Quizlet in helping the students' to learn vocabulary in EFL classroom within reading comprehension.

## **1.4 Scope of the Research**

The study focuses on exploring the use of Quizlet in helping EFL learners' to learn vocabulary within reading comprehension. The vocabulary taught focuses on verb and noun which were taken from recount text. The SAMR model from Puentedura (2006) is used to teach the vocabulary that is integrated with technology. This study was conducted in tenth grade of senior high school in Kabupaten Bandung, Indonesia.

## **1.5 Significance of the Research**

Congruent with the purpose of the study, this study is expected to give contributions for those who have a role in pedagogical areas theoretically, practically, and professionally.

Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to enrich theoretical information and studies related to MALL in developing students' vocabulary mastery.

Practically, this study can inform the teacher or education practitioners about the implementation of MALL in the classroom. It can be one of the options to vocabulary teaching strategy to develop students' vocabulary mastery in EFL context.

Lastly, this study hopefully can be beneficial for the other researcher to do the similar or related research.

### **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

There are several terms in this study that needs to be clarified. The definitions of the terms are explained below:

a. **Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)**

MALL is a technology-language learning program that assisted and enhanced the language ability of learners through the use of handled-mobile devices. The learning process is supported by the mobile devices and the application which can be accessed from students' mobile devices. It is considered as effective as language learning tool because mobile devices are portable, personalized, and comfortable to use by the students.

b. **Vocabulary Mastery**

Vocabulary learning means the process understanding knowledge of vocabulary and how to use it comprehensively. Mastering the vocabulary enables the learners to grasp the idea and become more informed to the particular content.

### **1.7 Organization of the Paper**

The organization of the paper consists of five chapters. Each chapter has subtopics which presents detail information. The paper is organized as follow.

The first chapter is Introduction. This chapter points out the background of the research, research question, research aim, scope of the research, significances of the study, clarification of related terms, and organization of the paper.

The second chapter is Literature Review. This chapter provides the elaboration of relevant theories to the research topic.

The third chapter is Research Methodology. This chapter elaborates the research methodology in detail including the research design, the site and the participants, the data collection, and how to analyze the data.

The fourth chapter is Findings and Discussion. This chapter reports the results of the data and discusses the findings.

The fifth chapter is Conclusions and Suggestions. This chapter presents conclusion based on the research findings. The suggestion for the future research is explained in this chapter.