

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Problem

In the current era of rapid technological advancement, information and communication technology (ICT) has become increasingly integrated into various sectors, including education. ICT-based innovations have transformed traditional teaching practices into more interactive and student-centered learning environments (Meldia, P., & Zakir, 2022). In English language learning, ICT provides opportunities for teachers to present materials more creatively and for students to engage with lessons through digital platforms. The shift from conventional to technology-supported learning is aligned with the needs of 21st-century learners, who tend to be more responsive to digital content, interactive activities, and visually appealing learning tools (Nugroho, 2024). Thus, integrating digital media into English instruction is not merely an option but a necessity to support effective learning outcomes.

One of the essential components of English language proficiency is vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary serves as the foundation upon which the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing are built (Rahmah, N., et. al., 2023). Students with limited vocabulary knowledge often struggle to comprehend texts, express ideas, or communicate

effectively. This issue becomes even more significant in Indonesian junior high schools, where English is taught as a compulsory foreign language subject. Many students experience difficulties in remembering new words, understanding word meanings, or using vocabulary in context. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students may fail to progress in higher-level language tasks such as reading comprehension or writing descriptive paragraphs (Quines, 2023).

However, despite the importance of vocabulary learning, many English teachers in Indonesia still rely on traditional teaching methods such as lecturing, rote memorization, dictionary-based assignments, and repetitive drills. These practices often make learning monotonous and less engaging, especially for students who have grown up in a digital environment (Shakirzyanova, R. M., et.al., 2021). As a result, students frequently lose interest and become passive learners, which negatively affects their vocabulary acquisition. Teachers who do not utilize interactive learning media may find it difficult to maintain students' motivation and participation, particularly when dealing with vocabulary, which many students perceive as difficult or uninteresting.

In response to these challenges, the Merdeka Belajar (Independent Learning) curriculum encourages teachers to implement creative, varied, and student-centered instructional

strategies that align with learners' needs. Digital game-based learning (DGBL) has emerged as one of the most promising approaches to support vocabulary teaching. Game-based platforms provide enjoyable learning environments that can increase students' engagement, motivation, and willingness to practice vocabulary repeatedly (Rajendran, M., et.al., 2025). Through elements such as competition, rewards, interactive visuals, and real-time feedback, digital games can reduce students' anxiety toward learning English and help them memorize vocabulary more effectively.

Among the many digital games available for educational purposes, Blooket has gained attention for its interactive features and user-friendly interface. Blooket is an online game-based learning platform that allows teachers to create or import quiz-based activities and present them through various game modes such as Tower Defense, Gold Quest, Café, or Factory. Each mode offers different mechanics that promote student engagement, ranging from strategy-based gameplay to fast-paced quiz competition. The combination of learning and gaming supports both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, enabling students to participate actively while reinforcing vocabulary retention. Studies have shown that Blooket can enhance learning engagement by integrating repetition, immediate scoring, and collaborative competition, making

vocabulary learning more enjoyable (Sartika, K. D., et. al., 2023).

Based on observations conducted at SMP Negeri 5 Kota Bengkulu, it was found that the English teaching and learning process is still largely dominated by conventional instructional practices. Classroom activities mainly rely on printed textbooks, teacher explanations, note-taking, and translation-based exercises, resulting in limited variation in learning activities. Although the school is equipped with basic information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, such as projectors and limited internet access, these facilities have not been optimally utilized to support interactive or digital-based teaching strategies and are mostly used only to present text-based materials. Preliminary interviews with English teachers revealed that limited familiarity with digital learning platforms, a lack of confidence in using technology, and insufficient training opportunities are among the main factors hindering the integration of technology-based instructional media, including digital game-based learning applications such as Blooket. Classroom observations also indicated that many students tend to be passive during English lessons, show low learning motivation, and easily feel bored. As a result, students often experience difficulties in understanding and remembering the lesson, especially when

the learning activities are repetitive and not supported by visual or interactive media.

Given these limitations, the use of Blooket as a vocabulary learning medium has the potential to address students' learning problems at SMP Negeri 5 Kota Bengkulu. Blooket can help create a more dynamic learning environment by encouraging students to participate actively and by presenting vocabulary in ways that are both meaningful and entertaining. Additionally, the competitive features of the platform can motivate students to improve their performance, while the repetition embedded in game play promotes vocabulary retention (Sulistyanto, I., & Asyhar, 2024).

The effectiveness of Blooket in supporting vocabulary learning has been demonstrated in several previous studies. For instance, Durrotunnafisah (2025) found that Blooket significantly enhanced students' vocabulary mastery by increasing motivation and active participation. Her study revealed that students were more enthusiastic and confident when learning vocabulary through game-based activities. Similarly, Nabila (2025) conducted research at SMPN Islam Al-Azhar 52 Bengkulu City and concluded that the experimental group taught using Blooket achieved higher vocabulary test scores than the control group that received traditional instruction. Their findings showed that Blooket effectively increased students' engagement and comprehension

of new vocabulary. In another study, Sulistyanto, I., & Asyhar (2024) examined the use of Blooket in English vocabulary learning and found that its interactive modes successfully improved students' vocabulary mastery. The study highlighted that students became more motivated, less anxious, and more active in participating during English lessons.

Although these studies indicate the potential of Blooket for improving vocabulary learning outcomes, research specifically conducted in Bengkulu, particularly at SMP Negeri 5, remains limited. Each school has different student characteristics, learning environments, and facility constraints; thus, it is necessary to investigate how Blooket performs in this specific context. Since the students at SMP Negeri 5 tend to experience challenges in mastering vocabulary due to the lack of varied instructional media, the implementation of Blooket could provide new insights into improving vocabulary learning in the school. Therefore, this research is considered important and relevant.

Based on the problems identified, the significance of vocabulary mastery, the limitations of traditional teaching methods, and the promising potential of Blooket as a digital learning platform, the researcher intends to conduct a study entitled: ***“The Effect of Using Blooket Games on Students’ Vocabulary Mastery at SMP Negeri 5 Kota Bengkulu.”***

B. Identification of The Problem

From the background of the problem that has been explained, several problems can be identified as follows:

1. Many students have difficulty mastering english vocabulary, which affects their ability to understand and communicate in english.
2. The use of conventional teaching methods reduces student interest and participation in vocabulary learning.
3. The lack of engaging and interactive media, such as game-based applications, contributes to students' low motivation in learning vocabulary.

C. Limitation of The Research

This study is limited to investigating The Effect of Using Blooket Games on Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 5 Kota Bengkulu in the academic year 2025/2026.

D. Research Question

Based on the background above then the study question can be formulated as : Is there any significant Effect of Using Blooket Games on Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 5 Kota Bengkulu in the academic year 2025/2026?

E. Research Objective

Based on the Background above then the objective of the study is aimed to see The Effect of Using Blooket Games on Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 5 Kota Bengkulu in the academic year 2025/2026.

F. Significance of the Research

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical significance related to the use of gamification platforms, particularly Blooket, in improving students' vocabulary mastery in English learning.

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, the findings of this research are expected to enrich the existing literature on vocabulary learning and the integration of technology in English language teaching. It can provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of using Blooket as a gamification-based learning tool to enhance vocabulary mastery among junior high school students. Moreover, the results of this study may serve as a reference for future researchers who are interested in exploring the relationship between game-based learning, motivation, and language acquisition. In addition, this study can contribute to the development of theories concerning the application of digital games in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning contexts, especially in Indonesia.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, this study is expected to provide significance for several parties:

a. For English Teachers

The findings of this research can help teachers understand how to effectively integrate Blooket into their teaching process as a learning medium to make vocabulary learning more engaging, interactive, and effective. It can also provide teachers with an alternative strategy to overcome students' low motivation and limited vocabulary retention in traditional classrooms.

b. For Students

Through this research, students can experience more enjoyable and motivating learning activities that help them improve their vocabulary mastery. The interactive nature of Blooket can increase students' participation, confidence, and interest in learning English.

c. For Schools

The results of this study can be used as a consideration for schools in implementing technology-based learning media to enhance the quality of English teaching and learning.

d. For Future Researchers

This research can serve as a reference for further studies related to the use of gamification or other digital learning platforms in English language teaching. Future researchers can develop similar studies with different focuses, levels, or contexts to broaden the understanding of technology integration in language education.

G. Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided to ensure that readers share a common understanding of the terms used in this study. This section helps avoid misinterpretation between the researcher and readers regarding important concepts. The key terms are defined as follows:

1. Blooket Games

Blooket Games refer to an online game-based learning platform that allows teachers to create interactive quizzes that students can participate in through various game modes. The platform incorporates elements such as competition, points, and rewards, which enhance student engagement and motivation during learning activities. Blooket has been shown to improve vocabulary learning because it provides repetitive, enjoyable, and meaningful exposure to vocabulary items through gameplay (Sulistyanto, I., & Asyhar, 2024).

2. Game-Based Learning

Game-Based Learning refers to the use of digital game elements as part of instructional strategies to enhance student motivation, engagement, and understanding. This learning approach integrates features such as challenges, goals, feedback, and interactive mechanics to support deeper comprehension and active participation in learning. Research indicates that game-based learning can significantly improve educational outcomes across various subjects, including language learning (de Carvalho & Coelho, 2022).

3. Vocabulary mastery

Vocabulary mastery refers to students' ability to understand, remember, and use words appropriately in both spoken and written communication. It involves two main components: receptive vocabulary, which deals with recognizing and understanding the meaning of words, and productive vocabulary, which relates to the ability to use words accurately in sentences. A strong vocabulary mastery is essential because it directly supports students' performance in other language skills, especially reading comprehension and speaking fluency (Apriliani, D. M. D., et. al., 2021).