CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, research focuses on research background, research problems, research objectives, research significance, scope, and research limitations and definitions of key terms.

A. Background of the Problem

Vocabulary is one of the factors that support students to master language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In listening, students may not understand the conversation well. In speaking they cannot communicate well without vocabulary; in reading students may not understand the text; and in writing, students may not write our ideas. The problem is a lack of vocabulary. We can conclude that vocabulary is very important in a language because vocabulary is one component of language in English. Supported by Wallace (1988: 9), "vocabulary is a vital aspect of language". Furthermore, Rivers (1970: 462) said that "it is not possible to learn languages without vocabulary".

Vocabulary is a basic element of language that makes language meaningful. This means that the more vocabulary people learn, the easier they are to express their ideas. Therefore, vocabulary is a must in learning a language. Although, we know that vocabulary is an important component of language that must be mastered by students but there are still many students who still lack vocabulary.

Vocabulary, as one of the language components, it is an important component for students to be learned since it builds up communication. People cannot send their messages or express ideas to others, they can grasp what other people say if they don't know the vocabulary. There are still many students who could not answer the teachers' question. They keep asking questions to translate the question into their mother tongue (Indonesian). And when reading some textbooks the students do not know the content of the text or not the reading comprehension because they don't know the meaning of the text. The student really depended on the dictionary to make it in English words and the last, their listening and speaking abilities. When the teacher asked them some questions in English, some of the students could understand the meaning of the teacher, but they could not answer it by using English.

According to Allan and Vallate (1997) state that teaching vocabulary can be meaningful if the teacher conducts the teaching process by combining the available techniques of teaching. There are several techniques for teaching 'Vocabulary'. When the teacher wants to present new vocabulary or lexical items to students, means the teacher wants students to remember new vocabulary. Then, the teacher tells students to study, practice, and revise, so that to prevent students from forgetting it.

Concerning with the visual techniques, Gairns and Redman(1980) as cited by Marla, et al (1999:12) says that "there are there form visual techniques; "relia, pictures, and mime or gestures." Relia means using a variety of real-object brought by the students in the classroom It can be also applied to remember written material. Students can act out what they read, or associate physical sensation with specific words found in reading passages.

This technique pertains to the use of the illustrative situation, synonyms, opposites, scale, definition, and categories. More specifically, Marla, et al (1990:3) divide verbal techniques into four parts, among those are:

a) Definition and illustration sentences; This technique the English teachers are expected to introduce a word in English through the use of another word in the same language. b) Synonyms and antonyms; Synonyms and antonyms are especially important in building new vocabulary because learners are able to know the vocabulary. Synonyms are words that have the same meaning as the unknown in a given sentence. There may be signals that identify the presence of synonym for the readers. They could be or, commas, dashes, and colons. Meanwhile, antonyms are words that have the opposite meaning of the unknown word in a given sentence. Signals which identify the presence of the antonyms for readers are instead, although, but, yet, and however. c) Scale; This technique is the presentation of related words in scales that include the combination of

both verbal and visual techniques, for example, in the term 32° Celsius, the degree sign is visual. d) Explanation; This technique explains the meaning and the use of a foreign word in the foreign language itself.

Taking into account the points of the technique presented earlier, it seems that there are several similarities of the program for teaching vocabulary development skills to be recognized by Brown (1994:367). He offers some techniques for teaching vocabulary skills, among others are: Determine the goal of teaching, such as:

- To improve the reading vocabulary skills of ESL students.
- To teach ESL students word-building skills.
- To teach ESL students to guess word meanings from context clues.

• Get a student to make word building; that is derived from suffixes, prefixes, and roots.

• Definition clues, which comprises the parentheses and footnotes, and synonyms and antonyms.

• Inference clues; These clues have three types, such as for example, summary, and experience.

Based on the quotation above, it can be said that the English teachers, before applying those techniques, should know the level of students' competency and the goal of teaching in advance, particularly on teaching vocabulary. Also, they should be able to lead the students

to learn a new word or some words clearly. In relation to the employment of verbal techniques, of course, the English teachers have to regard the length of time and the English textbooks used.

In addition to the previous two techniques, the use of dictionary is another technique in finding out the meaning of unfamiliar words and expression. In this respect, the Students can make use a variety of dictionaries, such as bilingual, monolingual, pictorial, and thesaurus. It can be concluded that the teacher must choose the right technique for students who do not understand the vocabulary well.

This is the reason that the writer applies the application to create new styles of teaching rather than old fashioned direct instruction. Many students are lazy to learn vocabulary words because they are bored with the method given by the teacher. Students only get the vocabulary then the teacher tells the students to memorize it. Or just make sentences from the vocabulary that only they can. The writer assumes that the student can encourage, and they can enjoy with Duolingo application.

Duolingo application is a Free Language Learning Application can be downloaded on the Phone or PC, so the user can practice anytime. Especially for English young learners can practice anytime and anywhere. Duolingo application has an excellent learning strategy because it has a very motivating learning system. It uses a strategy of game mechanics to create the incentive to keep students learning. It is built very similarly to a computer game where the participants have to

pass certain levels. A student passes the three level of the language. The following lessons are unlocked after a learner has mastered the previous material. Users can complete a variety of exercise types including multiple choices, writing and also speaking through a microphone. Duolingo uses mainly drills and repetitive exercises in the lessons.

According to Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 92) stated that internet access is becoming increasingly available to learners, younger learners are growing in the technology era, and English as an international language is being used in a technological context. Therefore, it is significant to employ technology as the media to support the teaching and learning materials without the limitation of time. One of the applications of technologies that popular in learning English is Duolingo application. As described in Wikipedia web site " Duolingo uses a heavily data-driven approach to education. At each step along the way, the system measures which questions the users struggle with and what sorts of mistakes they make. It then aggregates those data and learns from the patterns it recognizes". To ease the process of learning the English language, and supported by a very advanced technology currently, the young learners who want to learn English with practical and fun applications might use Duolingo application to practice English. Practices are important to enable students to master English skills, and exercise is very important since it is made as a tool for measuring and evaluating student's ability in

achieving the material which is given. When doing exercises someone should examine whether the exercises are relevant or not. The researcher focuses on the exercises of vocabulary presented in Duolingo free language learning application.

Duolingo deliberately brought the concept of play and learn in order to feel more comfortable and easy to use by all walks of life. We certainly have felt tired doing daily routines and for a moment we can relax while learning a foreign language.

The research aims to offer convenience to learn English with the use of multimedia learning applications using Duolingo, which can be used to practice independently and can be used in place of study/course/ school/ home or everywhere.

In this study, the researcher attempt to prove whether the Duolingo application is effective in improving vocabulary ability at the class of the seventh grade of junior high school.

The use of technology is an essential part to support the process of teaching and learning in order to make it more interesting. So far, video, cassette, and power point presentation are used in teaching-learning processes. In addition, it will be one of the teachings and learning instructional that is used either in the class or outside the class. According to National Research Council (1995, p. 51), technology offers new ways of teaching and learning and provides new ways for all students in education to be openly accountable to parents, communities, and students. Therefore the use of technology

can facilitate the achievement of students because it provides an attractive medium for learning English in order to be more fun and effective. This was also conveyed by Dudeney and Hockly (2007, p. 92) stated that internet access is becoming increasingly available to learners, younger learners are growing in the technology era, and English as an international language is being used in a technological context. Therefore, it is very important to use technology as a medium to support learning and teaching materials without time constraints.

One of the popular technology applications in learning English is Duolingo. As explained in the Wikipedia website "Duolingo uses 5 approaches that are strongly driven by data for education. At each step along the way, the system measures which questions the users struggle with and what sorts of mistakes they make. It then aggregates those data and learns from the patterns it recognizes". To ease the process of learning the English language, and supported by a very advanced technology currently, the young learners who want to learn English with practical and fun applications might use Duolingo to practice English.

The reason researcher chose Duolingo for teaching vocabulary, because the method used in learning on Duolingo application is different from general classroom teaching. Where students only memorize and write vocabulary, it makes students more bored in learning vocabulary. Though the vocabulary is the beginning of mastery of English. In vocabulary learning using the Duolingo

application, researcher use media such as LCD, sound, and laptop so that learning run effectively in the class.

Practices are important to enable students to master English skills, and exercise is very important since it is made as a tool for measuring and evaluating student's ability in achieving the material which is given. When doing exercises someone should examine whether the exercises are relevant or not. The researcher focuses on the exercises of vocabulary presented in Duolingo Free Language Learning Application.

B. Research Problem

Based on the background of this study, the writer has determined the problem of the study that becomes the concern of the discussion. The problem was elaborated into a research question that read:

1. Is there any significant difference between students' vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by Duolingo application?

C. Objectives of the Research

From the statement of the problem stated above the goal of this research was:

1. To find out whether there is any significant difference between students' vocabulary mastery before and after being taught by Duolingo application.

D.   Significance of the Research

The significances of this research were expected to provide some advantages for English teaching and learning process. The significances of this research are:

1.   For the students as the subjects of the research, it was expected that the students will take the advantages of the research. They can learn how to improve their skills of vocabulary trough application.

2.   For the teachers in the school, it was expected that the teachers can improve their student's vocabulary interestingly and effectively so that the students will enjoy the study.

E.   Scope and Limitation of the Research

The use of learning media greatly influences the results of learning objectives. Because teachers do not need to feel difficulty understanding and especially training vocabulary that often becomes the problem is for teachers, lacking special time in practicing their vocabulary skills. Many learning media around us can be used to support learning activities, with advances in information and technology today, for example with the Duolingo smartphone application. This application intentionally carries the concept of "playing while learning" to make it more fun and easy to use for all ages. This application can be made alone to support learning activities according to daily topics, and can make it easier for us, especially

education practitioners, to practice English skills in vocabulary tests. The researcher chose the first grade of junior high school because in the first grade of junior high school they need to learn more about vocabulary, and the reason researcher choose first grade than other grade because mastery of vocabulary is emphasized on the first grade. And the vocabulary material in the Duolingo application matches the ability of first-grade students. In the first grade, they tend to feel bored in learning vocabulary, then the researcher will provide a fun vocabulary learning through Duolingo application. Researcher chose Duolingo technique because wanted to find out whether using the Duolingo application could increase students' vocabulary mastery. In learning vocabulary using Duolingo application students will not feel bored, because in Duolingo application provides several features like pictures, audio section, various kinds of chapters, coin learning achievement, and also there are key answers and explanations the material, and make students more creative, etc. The researcher on the use of Duolingo, because the researcher wants to know how the result of using Duolingo in teaching English especially vocabulary material.

In the chapter of Duolingo, there are various types of vocabulary such as noun, verb, adjective, etc. And each chapter finds different types of vocabulary, such as basic 1, basic 2, conjunctions, verbs, adjectives, family, ownership words, verb gerund, etc, and we must complete the previous chapter if we want to continue to the next chapter. In Duolingo there is an aspect of vocabulary namely spelling,

pronunciation, and meaning. And in teaching vocabulary through Duolingo, Researcher more focused on pronunciation and meaning aspects, so that the students easier in mastering vocabulary. Duolingo also provides listening skills in each word, where students can better understand the mastery of pronunciation. and here students can master the vocabulary better. A student passes the three level of the language. The following lessons are unlocked after a learner has mastered the previous material. Users can complete a variety of exercise types including multiple choices, writing and also speaking through a microphone.

Before learning about the vocabulary more broadly, you must look for basic words that must be learned, so that it is easier to expand the mastery of English vocabulary. The eight parts of speech are nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections.

A noun is generally defined as a person, place, or thing; however, ideas are also nouns. For example, love is not a tangible thing that can be seen or held, but clearly, it exists, so it is also a noun.

 A verb is a word that describes the action or a state of being. The second part of this definition is important, as many believe that verbs are always action words that can be visualized. This is true of action verbs: run, walk, play, jump, sing, scream, etc.

A pronoun; is a word that is used to replace a noun For example, instead of saying "Sam likes pizza" we can use "He" as a substitute for Sam. Writers need to be careful with pronoun use, as pronouns should only be used after a noun has been used first, and it must be clear which noun the pronoun is replacing.

An adjective; modifies (limits or describes) a noun or a pronoun. Essentially, it provides more information about a person, place, or thing.

Adverb; similar to adjectives, an adverb modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. In the sentence *Susan walked slowly towards the door,* the word *slowly* serves as an adverb since it describes how she walked.

A preposition; shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and some other word in the sentence. This relationship is spatial, temporal, or directional. For instance, in the sentence *Mark walked towards the house,* the word *towards* is a preposition since it shows direction. When linked with nouns or pronouns, prepositions create word groups referred to as prepositional phrases. (In the previous example, *towards the house* is a prepositional phrase).

A conjunction; joins two words, ideas, phrases or clauses together in a sentence and shows how they are connected. Examples: and, or, but, because, so, yet, unless, since, if.

An interjection is a word or phrase that expresses a strong feeling or emotion. An interjection is one of the eight major parts of speech, along with verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions. Interjections simply convey the way the author (or speaker) is feeling. Interjections are rarely used in academic or formal writing; they're more common in fiction or artistic writing. They're usually, but not always, offset by an exclamation point (which is also used to show emotion). It is a short exclamation. Examples: Ouch! Wow! Great! Help! Oh! Hey! Hi!.

The concept of a word can be defined in various ways, but three significant aspects teachers need to be aware of and focus on are form, meaning, and use. According to Nation (2001), the form of a word involves its pronunciation (spoken form), spelling (written form), and any word parts that make up this particular item (such as a prefix, root, meaning, and suffix). Vocabulary aspect namely spelling, pronunciation, and meaning.

Spelling is the ability to spell words in the correct way. It is also an attempt to spell a word in the correct way.

Pronunciation is the way in which a word or a language is spoken. This may refer to generally agreed-upon sequences of sounds used in speaking a given word or language in a specific dialect ("correct pronunciation"), or simply the way a particular individual speaks a word or language.

Meaning is the information or concepts that a sender intends to convey, or does convey, in communication with a receiver.

F.   Definition of Key terms

In order to make the readers get easier in understanding this study, here the researcher will give the definition of some key terms that important to be understood as the following:

a.   Duolingo

Duolingo is a free language-learning application. To ease the process of learning English language, and supported by a very advanced technology currently, the young learners who want to learn the English with practical and fun applications might use Duolingo to practice English. This app is not only available in the web version but it is also available in Android, iOS and Windows Phone versions. In November 2016, the app provides 66 different language courses available in 23 languages; there are 22 more courses that are still being developed. English courses for Indonesian users are available and used by 1.39 million users. On the contrary, the Indonesian course for English speakers is still in the development stage. Interactive exercises provide immediate feedback to help the student improve English skills on the spot. Continue tobe motivated with rewards.

Students can earn virtual coins, open new levels, and see the value of fluency in increasing as students' ability to master new words, phrases, and grammar. Duolingo provides both written and sound learning, there is also speaking practice for more experienced users.

Duolingo has a tree of capabilities whereby the user can complete a chapter later toward another branch of the tree. Users are hitting "experience points" (XP) after they complete a chapter, enough points can raise the user level. The completed chapter will be golden, eventually, if the users rarely practice, the gold color will disappear and the user must complete the chapter. If the user has completed all the chapters in one course they can repeat the exercise

b. Vocabulary

A vocabulary is a set of familiar words within a person's language. A vocabulary, usually developed with age, serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Acquiring an extensive vocabulary is one of the largest challenges in learning a second language.

"Learning vocabulary is one of the most important elements without which neither comprehension nor production of language is possible. In other words, vocabulary cannot be separated from other language skills." Laufer (1997, p. 140) in Indriati (2014). In this research, vocabulary is learning material that has to be learned by the students of junior high school in the first grade.

c. Technology

"Technology in teaching and learning as an enabler and suggests that technology can work to help organize and provide structure for material to students; help students, teachers, and parents interact, anytime and anywhere" Bajcsy (2002, p. 81)

In this research, technology means an application that can be used as English learning medium. It can be installed in PC, laptop, and smartphone. It is free language-learning application that called Duolingo Application. With technology, it can make it easier for teachers to deliver material to students. For example, such as vocabulary teaching using the Duolingo application. In teaching vocabulary using the Duolingo application the teacher uses LCD, sound, and laptop media to deliver material, so that learning activities run effectively. Therefore, technology is very important in teaching and learning activities in the classroom, such as teaching vocabulary using the Duolingo application.