

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides general explanations of what the researcher will discuss in this research. The introductory part contains several subheadings, such as background of the study, research problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

The rapid growth of technology has had wide impacts, one of which is the revolution in the world of education. The educational landscape is currently undergoing a transformation driven by the rapid development of digital technology. During these changes, English plays a crucial role as an international language, not only as a global communication tool, but also as the primary medium for learning new technologies. This strengthens the connection between technology and education, as understanding modern technology often requires mastery of English as a gateway to global information and innovation.¹

In the industrial era 4.0 it is very necessary to have competency in operating technology and learning media or E-learning.² Digital technology development has significantly affected how student access and learn English. Since 1920, the use of technology in learning has been the most discussed-

¹ Helmiana, "The Use of Social Media in English Language Learning in the Digital Era," *Jupendik : Jurnal Pendidikan*, (2023).

² D. A. W. Nurhayati, "Learning Basic Grammar Using Task-Based Learning: A Perspective on Analyzing Online Media Text," *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, (2019): 21.

topic.³ Thus, the rapid development of digital technology today opens up new opportunities for the availability of access to English learning resources, especially through social media. About 98% of children and adolescents in Indonesia already use social media in their daily lives, including YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, and others. These social media platforms can be utilized by students to enhance their English language skills, have the potential to become innovative and flexible English learning media that can be accessed anytime and anywhere.⁴

One of the social media applications widely used by various groups is Mobile Instant Messaging (MIM), such as WhatsApp. Research showed that WhatsApp has advantages in enhancing social interaction.⁵ Additionally, a survey found that 98% of students have social media accounts such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram.⁶ In another study, 97.24% of respondents stated they had used WhatsApp, and 61.81% revealed that WhatsApp was the most frequently used application for communication.⁷

The latest innovation in the WhatsApp ecosystem is the public Channel feature that offers a new way of distributing educational content for free. This

³ Nasywa Nur Kamila Sari, Zahra Pinkan Maulida, and Aulia Salmawati, "The Importance of English in the Era of Globalization," *Karimah Tauhid*, (2024): 3687.

⁴ Nandito Tampubolon et al., "Socialization of Social Media Utilization as a Tool to Improve English Language Skills of Seventh Grade Students at SMP Negeri 2 Siantar," *Community Service, Association of Early Childhood Education Journal Managers in Indonesia*, (2023): 127.

⁵ Patient Rambe and Crispin Chipunza, "Using mobile devices to leverage student access to collaboratively-generated resources: A case of WhatsApp instant messaging at a South African University," (2013): 336.

⁶ Rahayu Malilla and Irwandi Irwandi, "The Effectiveness of Using WhatsApp in English Language Teaching during the Covid-19 Pandemic for Junior High School Students," *Journal of Education and Teaching (JET)*, Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendari, (2022): 187.

⁷ Fitriyani Halawa, "The Use of Social Media in Learning English: Students Perception," *English Language Education*, (2024): 83.

feature enables one-way communication from educators to many students efficiently. The main advantages of the WhatsApp Channel feature are its ability to optimize online classroom management, improve communication efficiency, and support various learning styles through multimedia content. Therefore, it has the potential to change the way educators and students interact and share information in a digital learning environment. With this feature, educators can easily share announcements, assignments, and course materials, ensuring all students receive consistent information.

One example of innovative utilization of WhatsApp Channel is the existence of *Jeya's English Hacks*. This channel was founded on November 24th, 2023 and has been active since June 15th, 2024. This channel offers a unique approach to learning English with regularly uploaded content covering vocabulary, grammar, slang, pronunciation, and other English hacks. The uniqueness of this channel lies in the use of WhatsApp's polling feature to create interactive exercises, allowing users to test their understanding directly. The target audience of *Jeya's English Hacks* Channel is WhatsApp users who have a desire to deepen their English knowledge. With its accessible approach and relevant content, the channel is an attractive learning resource for a wide range of people, from students to professionals looking to improve their English skills.

One of the English contents that is often uploaded on *Jeya's English Hacks* Channel is content related to vocabulary. Vocabulary is important for all of the fundamental English skills. Since the vocabulary of a language includes all its terms, *Jeya's English Hacks* Channel provides diverse vocabulary content

to improve students' language skills. The channel regularly presents vocabulary learning through various interesting formats. Through its “Word of the Day” concept, users can learn new words complete with definitions and example sentences. For example, the word “obnoxious” is presented with the meaning “very unpleasant, offensive, or rude” along with example sentences such as “When she's in a bad mood she's obnoxious to everyone”. The channel also features “Idiom of the Day,” which introduces expressions such as “busy as a bee” along with its meaning and contextual usage. Through “Slang of the day,” users learn everyday slang expressions such as “no cap” which means not to lie. In addition, this channel also helps clarify words that are often confused, such as the difference between “either” and “neither”. The “Other Ways to Say” section enriches vocabulary by providing alternative expressions, for example, different ways to say “how are you?” such as “wassup”, “how's life?”, or “what's new?”. The channel also provided the TOEFL and IELTS vocabularies, and provided the differences between British and American vocabulary. The channel also keeps its users updated with trending English vocabulary.

Language teaching is an essential component of communicative competence, as language serves as a crucial medium for both spoken and written communication.⁸ To support this communicative function, vocabulary instruction plays a key role in language learning because it helps students develop the four main language skills: speaking, listening, writing, and

⁸ Dwi Astuti Wahyu Nurhayati, “Students' Perspective on Innovative Teaching Model Using Edmodo in Teaching English Phonology: A Virtual Class Development,” *Dinamika Ilmu*, (2019): 14.

reading.⁹ Thus, developing a sufficient vocabulary is essential to enhancing the four fundamental skills. Therefore, to improve the four fundamental skills, learning an adequate vocabulary is a must. A strong vocabulary is necessary for effective communication. If language learners struggle to select a word to represent concepts, they will not be able to comprehend what people are saying or writing.¹⁰

One of a language's most important components is its vocabulary. We cannot convey a message without vocabulary, especially when speaking English, which is a foreign language in Indonesia. A key element of language proficiency, vocabulary serves as a foundation for students' ability to read, write, speak, and listen.¹¹ Despite the fact that vocabulary is crucial to learning English, students frequently struggle with mastering vocabulary.

The research context at MAN 1 Blitar adds an interesting dimension to this study. This school faces challenges in implementing the smartphone policy, with a lack of student awareness and teacher discipline in controlling smartphone use during class hours. Based on internship observation during classroom activities, many students were seen accessing social media or games during English lessons. In addition, one of the main challenges in learning English at MAN 1 Blitar is the limited vocabulary acquisition experienced by students. Based on the results of recent English assessments, only 42% of

⁹ Suardi & Juwita and Eka Sakti, "Teacher Difficulties in Teaching Vocabulary," *Cokroaminoto Palopo University*, (2019): 93.

¹⁰ Fadhilatul Lailiyah and Sayid Ma'rifatulloh, "The Effectiveness of Using Anagram Game to Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery," *J-Shelves of Indragiri (JSI)*, JSI, (2024): 225.

¹¹ Siti Nurjanah, "The Effect of Anagram Technique on Students' Vocabulary," *Journal of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta*, (2018).

students in class X-C were able to reach the minimum passing grade in vocabulary-related tasks. Despite having access to smartphones and various digital learning resources, the majority of students still have difficulty in developing and learning English words. This low vocabulary mastery not only impacts verbal communication, but also significantly affects students' ability to understand English lessons. The condition of uncontrolled smartphone usage at MAN 1 Blitar raises questions about how technology can be effectively integrated in learning. In addition, the lack of English vocabulary mastery of MAN 1 Blitar students creates its own phenomenon that can be connected to the policy of using smartphones within the school. Educational WhatsApp channels such as *Jeya's English Hacks* have the potential to direct students' smartphone usage in a more productive direction.

On the previous related study comes from Nabila and Aruan entitled “The Correlation Between Social Media Activeness and Vocabulary Mastery of the English Department Students of Universitas Riau”. The main purpose of this study was to determine the correlation of social media activeness on English vocabulary mastery among English Department Students of Riau University. The results of the study showed that there is a positive significant correlation between students' activeness on social media and their vocabulary mastery.¹² The second previous study comes from Sivabalan and Ali entitled “The Effectiveness of WhatsApp in Vocabulary Learning”. This study investigated

¹² Ovia Nabilla et al., “The Correlation Between Social Media Activeness and Vocabulary Mastery of the English,” *International Journal of Education Best Practices (IJE BP)*, 2022.

the effectiveness the use of WhatsApp application in learning English vocabulary. The findings showed that WhatsApp significantly improved students' vocabulary learning, making it an effective and flexible tool for language instruction.¹³ The third previous study from Janfeshan entitled “The Effects of Using WhatsApp: Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning and Autonomy”, aimed to explore the effects of using WhatsApp on English vocabulary learning and autonomy. The findings showed that blended learning combined with WhatsApp was significantly enhanced both vocabulary learning and learner autonomy compared to traditional methods.¹⁴

Based on the previous studies, the researcher found similarities in this study, which are the topics of social media precisely about WhatsApp and vocabulary mastery. However, what distinguishes this study from previous studies is that previous studies discussed the independent variable too broadly, which discussed social media and WhatsApp in general. Meanwhile, this research will focus the independent variable on “The Frequency of Using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel”. In addition, another difference lies in the type of research method used, where the second and third previous studies used experimental research designs. Meanwhile, this research used a correlational study.

¹³ Kasturi Sivabalan and Zuraina Ali, “Effectiveness of WhatsApp in Vocabulary Learning,” *Innovative Teaching and Learning Journal*, December, 2022.

¹⁴ Kamran Janfeshan, Asmaa Nader Sharhan, and Mohamad Mahdi Janfeshan, “Effects of Using WhatsApp: Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning and Autonomy,” *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 2023.

Based on the phenomena found and the previous related study above, the researcher is encouraged to conduct research which aims to determine the correlation between the frequency of using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English vocabulary mastery. Thus, the title of the research is "The Correlation Between the Frequency of Using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English Vocabulary Mastery of the Tenth Grade Students at MAN 1 Blitar".

B. Research Problem

Based on the background explanation above, so the research problem of this research is “is there any correlation between the frequency of using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English Vocabulary Mastery of the Tenth Grade Students at MAN 1 Blitar?”

C. Research Objective

In this research, there needs to be an objective that can be used as a reference to the main problem being researched, so that researchers will work more focused on the study. Based on the problem formulation, the purpose of this research is to determine the correlation between the frequency of using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English Vocabulary Mastery of the tenth-grade students at MAN 1 Blitar.

D. Research Hypothesis

A hypothesis is an answer, refutation, conjecture, or assumption that is presumed to be true and is temporary. Hypotheses are temporary answers to the formulation of research problems, where the problem has been stated in the form of a statement sentence.¹⁵ There are two hypotheses in this study, which are:

1. Null Hypothesis (H_0)

There is no correlation between the frequency of using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English vocabulary mastery of the tenth grade students at MAN 1 Blitar.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)

There is a positive correlation between the frequency of using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English vocabulary mastery of the tenth grade students at MAN 1 Blitar.

E. Research Significance

The results of this research are expected to contribute theoretically and practically:

1. Theoretically:

This research provides insight about how the use of media such as WhatsApp Channel is related to students' English vocabulary mastery.

¹⁵ Sugiyono, *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, R&D*, ALFABETA, CV, Bandung, 2020.

2. Practically:

a. For the future researcher

The findings of this study could serve as a reference for future researchers conducting studies related to the use of social media in learning English and their vocabulary mastery.

b. For teachers

Teachers can use WhatsApp Channel as a learning tool if it is proven have a correlation with students' vocabulary mastery.

F. Research Scope and Limitation

The study entitled “The Correlation Between the Frequency of Using *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel and English Vocabulary Mastery of the Tenth Grade Students at MAN 1 Blitar” has certain scope and limitations. The scope of this research covers various types of vocabulary content presented in the channel, including word of the day, idioms of the day, slang expressions commonly used in daily conversation, and commonly confused words in English. The vocabulary content examined in this study encompasses both formal and informal language use, ranging from standard vocabulary to contemporary expressions used in daily communication.

The limitations of the study specifically examine the word of the day, idioms of the day, slang of the day, and commonly confused words (such as either/neither, there/they're/their). Other vocabulary content available on the channel, such as TOEFL vocabulary, IELTS vocabulary, and differences

between British and American vocabulary, is not included in this study. This limitation is set to maintain focus on everyday vocabulary usage and to ensure more precise measurement of vocabulary mastery in common communication contexts.

G. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation about the research title, it is better if the term is defined as follows:

1. *Jeya's English Hacks*

Jeya's English Hacks refers to a specific WhatsApp Channel designed to support English language learning, particularly vocabulary development. In this study, the term represents the students' engagement with the channel, which includes the frequency of accessing it, reading posts, and interacting with content such as "Word of the Day," "Slang of the Day," "Idiom of the Day," and clarifications of commonly confused words. "The use of *Jeya's English Hacks*" in this context highlights how students utilize the channel as a resource for improving their vocabulary, focusing on activities such as learning new words, exploring contextual meanings, and applying these words in real-life situations.

2. WhatsApp Channel

A WhatsApp Channel is a digital platform within the WhatsApp application used for sharing content and interacting with an audience. In this study, the WhatsApp Channel refers specifically to *Jeya's English Hacks*, which

provides educational content aimed at improving students' English vocabulary mastery. It includes various resources and interactive features that enhance students' learning experiences through mobile access.

3. English Vocabulary Mastery

Students' ability to understand and use vocabulary presented in *Jeya's English Hacks* WhatsApp Channel, specifically focusing on word of the day, idioms, slang expressions, and commonly confused words. This mastery will be measured through a vocabulary test designed based on the content provided by the channel.