

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, research focuses on background of Research, formulation of research questions, purpose of the research, significance of the research, Scope and limitation of research and definition of key terms.

A. The Background of the Study

Vocabulary is a fundamental component that students need to master when learning the English language. It is important because the vocabulary is basic building block of the language. Students need vocabulary because before they can speak or write, they must understand the smallest units of meaning in language, which are words. Without enough vocabulary, students may have trouble expressing their ideas, understanding others, answering questions, reading, and taking part in class activities.¹ Theories have consistently shown that vocabulary is a significant predictor of overall language proficiency a strong vocabulary base is linked to improved understanding and retention of new concepts, thus serving as a vital element in the learning process. Additionally, I.S.P. Nation asserts that the mastery of four language skills speaking, listening, reading, and writing is influenced by vocabulary use during language learning. When speaking and writing, students must be able to use words. In addition, a large vocabulary is needed for reading and listening in order to comprehend texts and follow directions during talks.²

¹ Norbert Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*, 2nd ed, with Diane Schmitt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

² I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009093873>.

From this essential role of vocabulary in supporting students' language skills, the curriculum's goals for English learning further highlight its importance. In addition, the goal of learning English, as outlined in curriculum is for students to communicate well. To achieve this, students need to develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Because of the reason, students need to learn a lot of words. Vocabulary is seen as an important part of language that helps students improve their ability to communicate and their overall language skills. Learning vocabulary can achieve Vocabulary mastery is integral to successful English language learning, as it not only aids in verbal communication but also enhances reading comprehension, listening skills, and writing proficiency. The ability to effectively utilize a rich vocabulary facilitates the expression of complex thoughts and emotions, making communication more engaging and effective. Furthermore, the breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge significantly correlate with learners' reading comprehension and academic success, further asserting its importance in language education .³

To help students acquire vocabulary effectively, vocabulary should be taught in an enjoyable and meaningful way. Enjoyable learning activities can increase students' motivation, participation, and interest in learning English. When students are actively involved in the learning process, they tend to understand and remember new vocabulary more easily. Therefore, teachers need to provide learning

³ Norbert Schmitt and Diane Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*, Second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108569057>.

strategies and media that encourage students to learn vocabulary actively rather than merely memorizing word lists.

One reason for this is that teaching methods are often less engaging and interactive activities, which makes it harder for students to remember and use new words. This situation shows that there's a big need for new teaching strategies that focus on the learner and help them stay interested and successful in learning vocabulary. One of the strategies in this regard is the Foldable Vocabulary Book project. It's designed to help junior high students learn vocabulary in a more active and personalized way. By letting students create and organize vocabulary themselves, the project encourages them to be more involved in their learning. According to Bonwel that being active in learning helps students remember words better⁴.

Pictures are an essential component of the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project because they provide visual representations that help students understand and remember the meanings of new words more effectively. According to the Dual Coding Theory, combining verbal information with visual images enhances students' comprehension and long-term memory. In vocabulary learning, especially for concrete nouns, pictures enable students to associate words with real objects, making the learning process more meaningful and engaging. Therefore, integrating pictures into the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project is expected to improve students' vocabulary mastery and increase their motivation to learn English.

⁴ Charles C. Bonwell and James A. Eison, *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Research Report 1 (Washington, DC: School of Education and Human Development, George Washington Univ, 1991).

Some previous researches have indicated that creative print based media, including handmade learning materials, can significantly enhance students' vocabulary achievement. For instance, Sari investigated the effectiveness of the Scrabble Game technique, finding that while it increased students' enthusiasm for learning, it did not significantly improve vocabulary retention among eighth graders in West Java.⁵ Similarly with Febrianti & Shofiyuddin, developed a Matching Card Book designed to engage seventh-grade students, which was associated with improved vocabulary mastery.⁶

These studies underscore the potential benefits of interactive materials in fostering vocabulary acquisition among learners. Moreover, Telaumbanua explored the use of descriptive texts in vocabulary learning, concluding that multimedia elements such as images substantially aid comprehension and retention.⁷ While their findings affirmed the role of engaging content in learning, they also noted the challenges posed by traditional instructional methods, which often lack the necessary dynamism to retain students' interest. In a different vein, Nurhidayah and Rakhmawati demonstrated that technological interventions, such as the Rosetta

⁵ Diana Fauzia Sari et al., "Scrabble Game Technique: A Game Changer for English Vocabulary Learning," *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities* 10, no. 1 (November 2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v10i1.12388>.

⁶ Nissa Febrianti and Muh Shofiyuddin, "The Development of Matching Card Book in Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery," *Journal of Language Intelligence and Culture* 7, no. 1 (June 2025): 69–86, <https://doi.org/10.35719/jlic.v7i1.640>.

⁷ Syukur Prima Telaumbanua et al., "STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE USE OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT IN INCREASING VOCABULARY AT SEVENTH GRADE OF SMP NEGERI 2 HILIDUHO," *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme* 8, no. 2 (June 2025): 787–800, <https://doi.org/10.31851/esteem.v8i2.19051>.

Stone application, had a positive impact on vocabulary mastery, suggesting that interactive and engaging tools are crucial for students success.⁸

However, all these research primarily focus on teacher created materials and emphasize visual appeal, often overlooking the aspect of students autonomy in the learning process. For example, while most studies utilize pre-fabricated materials, they tend to neglect how empowering students to create their learning tools could benefit their retention and engagement.⁹ Notably, the literature lacks explorations of foldable vocabulary books, which encourage learners to engage actively by folding, constructing, and personalizing their vocabulary resources. This represents a clear research gap; despite the documented benefits of students-centered learning, there are few studies directly examining the effectiveness of students-generated foldable vocabulary books in improving vocabulary mastery.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the researcher intends to conduct research related to the use of the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project, which is assumed to be an effective strategy in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery, entitled "The Effectiveness of Foldable Vocabulary Book Project on Students' Vocabulary Mastery at Seventh Grade of SMPN 2 Kademangan". This research thus aims to address this gap by investigating the effectiveness of foldable vocabulary books as a low tech, personalized, and students centered.

⁸ Nurhidayah Nurhidayah and Ika Rakhmawati, "The Effectiveness Of Rosetta Stone On Vocabulary Mastery Through Seventh Grade At Smp Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung In Academic Year 2023/2024," *Dharma Acariya Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa Dan Budaya* 2, no. 2 (August 2024): 270–76, <https://doi.org/10.47861/jdan.v2i2.1256>.

⁹ Erva Riswalastika, Dias Andris Susanto, and T. Sri Suwarti, "Using Pop-Up Book in E-Learning to Improve Students Vocabulary Mastery Student," *Edusia: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Asia* 3, no. 1 (January 2023): 15–27, <https://doi.org/10.53754/edusia.v3i1.184>.

Vocabulary strategy for junior high school learners. When students do activities like making foldable books, they are more motivated, which can lead to better success in learning new vocabulary. This research attempts to fill that the research gap by investigating the effectiveness of the Foldable Vocabulary Book project on students' vocabulary skills. Unlike previous approaches that have predominantly focused on teacher directed media, this research will evaluate how the act of creating and customizing a vocabulary book can influence students' active engagement and mastery of vocabulary. Such an exploration not only adds to the existing literature but also paves the way for innovative, inclusive educational practices that prioritize students agency and creativity in the learning environment.

B. Research Question

Based on the background of the research and the identified research gap, this research is conducted to answer the following question:

1. Is there any significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after being taught using the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project?

C. Research Objective

In line with the research question above, the objective of this research is formulated as follows:

1. To determine whether there is a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after using the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project.

D. The Significance of Study

The results of this research are expected to provide useful contributions for teachers, students, and future researchers.

1. The Teachers

This research offers insight into an engaging and practical learning medium the foldable vocabulary book project. Unlike conventional materials, this students-created foldable book encourages hands-on learning, personalization, and creativity, which may help increase students' interest and participation in vocabulary lessons. If proven effective, this medium can become an alternative instructional tool that supports more interactive and students-centered teaching practices.

2. The Students

This research emphasizes the significance of mastering vocabulary as a foundation for developing broader language skills. Through the use of a foldable vocabulary book, students are expected to experience a more enjoyable and meaningful learning process, since the activity allows them to design, organize, and explore vocabulary in a visual and structured format. This medium may help students understand, remember, and apply new vocabulary more easily.

3. The Future researchers

This research is expected to serve as a reference for conducting further investigations on creative, low-tech, and students-generated learning media. The findings may inspire other scholars to explore different types of vocabulary projects or to refine the use of foldable books for various educational levels. This research may contribute to the development of more innovative vocabulary teaching strategies in the future. Specifically, future researchers are

encouraged to explore the integration of multimedia elements or to conduct comparative studies between foldable books and other hands on learning tools to further validate their impact on diverse learner profiles.

E. Research of Hypothesis

Based on the formulation of the problem and the purpose of the research, the hypotheses of this research are stated as follows:

- 1. Null Hypothesis (H_0):** There is no significant effect of foldable vocabulary book project on students' vocabulary mastery in seventh grade of SMPN 2 Kademangan.
- 2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** There is significant effect of foldable vocabulary book Project on students' vocabulary mastery in seventh grade of SMPN 2 Kademangan.

F. Scope and Delimitation of the research

This research focuses on examining the effectiveness of the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The scope of this study is limited to English vocabulary learning for seventh-grade students of SMPN 2 Kademangan Blitar.

Specifically, the vocabulary taught and assessed in this research is limited to concrete nouns related to the topic "Home Sweet Home," such as objects and rooms commonly found in a house (e.g., bedroom, bathroom, table, chair, door, window, and kitchen). Vocabulary mastery in this study refers to students' ability to recognize, understand, and use these concrete nouns correctly in simple contexts.

The effectiveness of the Foldable Vocabulary Book Project is measured through students' vocabulary test scores before and after the treatment. This research does not investigate other categories of vocabulary such as verbs, adjectives, abstract nouns, idioms, or other language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The research was conducted over a period of two weeks, and factors such as students' motivation, learning styles, and prior knowledge were not examined in detail.

G. Definition of Key Term

1. Students' vocabulary Mastery

Mastery of vocabulary by students refers to how well individual students can identify, understand, and use words in their contexts. It entails understanding the meaning of a word, being capable of using it in sentences, and being able to understand how it can be used in different grammatical contexts. It is essential in learning languages naturally and helps the students learn well in their junior high school education.

2. Foldable Vocabulary Book Project

Foldable Vocabulary Book Project encourages a more attentive way of studying and remembering new words. Students make a handmade or computer-made booklet, which they can fold themselves. Each section of the book includes a word, its meaning, antonyms and opposites, example sentences, drawings, and perhaps even fun activities. While making their books, students use hands and eyes to learn.