

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the fundamental components of the study. Those are background of the study, research question, research objective, hypotheses, significance of the study, scope and limitation, as well as the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Language plays a crucial role in communication and functions as a means of interaction among people around the world. Vocabulary is considered an essential component of language learning; however, many students still experience difficulties in learning a language,¹ because of their lack about vocabulary knowledge of the language, in this context is English. Vocabulary refers to all the words and phrases that make up a language or the collection of words known and used. If students have little knowledge of English vocabulary, it will also be difficult to learn and master English, because the first thing that must be understood, improved and mastered in learning a language is vocabulary.

Vocabulary size defined as the total number of words a learner knows and understands, at least in terms of their basic meanings.² There are three main frequency levels of vocabulary size, which are high-frequency (1000-2000

¹ Ahmad Rosyidul Majid, *VOCABULARY TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES IN MTS SUNAN DRAJAT BANJARANYAR, LAMONGAN*, Volume 19, No. 16 (2024), <https://jim.unisma.ac.id/index.php/jp3/article/view/25118/19000>.

² Cinthia Astan and Siti Mina Tamah, *THE CORRELATION BETWEEN VOCABULARY SIZE AND THE READING COMPREHENSION OF THE ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STUDENTS*, no. 38 (2015): 123–31, <https://doi.org/10.33508/mgs.v0i38.788>.

word families), mid-frequency (3000-9000 word families), and low-frequency (9000+ word families).³ Learners need approximately 8,000 word families in order to understand various spoken and written texts that are not simplified.⁴ Even so, for non-European undergraduate students, 5,000 to 6,000 words families are very important and will help them in their English class activities.

However, not all students can meet the minimum vocabulary size expectation, such as some Indonesian students. Indonesian students did not meet the curriculum expectation even though he tested the first 1st 2.000 and 1st 3.000 most-frequently used words for junior and high school students.⁵ Especially for English department students, even though they are majoring in that subject, they may not necessarily have a large vocabulary. This aligns with the statement, that English department students possessed a limited vocabulary size, indicating a low level of vocabulary proficiency.⁶

Most of the sixth semester English department students have a low vocabulary size and still at high frequency-level.⁷ The results of the several above studies serve as a warning to students, especially those in the English

³ Nation, P. & Beglar, D. (2007). *A Vocabulary Size Test*. The Language Teacher, 31(7), 9-13, <https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.12552197>.

⁴ *ibid*.

⁵ Faisal Mustafa, "English Vocabulary Size of Indonesian High School Graduates: Curriculum Expectation and Reality," *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)* 3 (May 2019): 357–71, <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v3i2.278>.

⁶ Chulalongkorn University, Sudarman Sudarman, and Sumalee Chinokul, "THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY SIZE AND LEVEL OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AT KUTAI KARTANEGARA UNIVERSITY," *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning and Research Journal)* 4, no. 1 (June 2018): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.24252/Eternal.V41.2018.A1>.

⁷ Normalia Sirande, Matius Tandikombong, and Agustina Pangngala, "MEASURING THE SIXTH SEMESTER STUDENTS' ENGLISH VOCABULARY AT ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM OF FKIP UKI TORAJA," *Teaching English as a Foreign Language Overseas Journal* 11, no. 1 (July 2023): 33–41, <https://doi.org/10.47178/teflo.v11i1.2068>.

department, that their vocabulary knowledge is still inadequate. They must find a way to increase their vocabulary size. A student who tends to use more vocabulary learning strategy will be successful in acquiring vocabulary.⁸

On the other hand, students nowadays tend to spend less time on traditional learning methods such as reading books, and instead prefer to play video games in their free time. However, video games may serve as an alternative medium for learning a language, particularly in acquiring new vocabulary.⁹ A variety of offline video games may benefit language learners.¹⁰ Also, by playing online games indirectly, players will gain new vocabulary.¹¹ Thus, the higher the students' intensity of playing video game, they can enrich their vocabulary.¹²

Using video games as an alternative way to learn English is a great concept, by taking from the frequency how often the students playing. Questionnaires answered by students, showed that playing video games indeed

⁸ Aria Nugraha, Cucu Sutarsyah, and Huzairin Huzairin, "A Comparative Study of Vocabulary Size Among Different Learning Strategies Use," *UNILA Journal of English Teaching* 5, no. 2 (2016).

⁹ Ary Kurniawan and Yeni Rahmawati, "The Role of Video Games in Enhancing English Vocabulary Language Learning," *Riwayat: Educational Journal of History and Humanities* 8, no. 1 (January 2025): 506–18, <https://doi.org/10.24815/jr.v8i1.44142>.

¹⁰ Jonathan Newcombe and Billy Brick, "Blending Video Games Into Language Learning:," *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching* 7, no. 4 (October 2017): 75–89, <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJCALLT.2017100106>.

¹¹ Shokhikhatul Khasanah, "Online Games as A Medium To Increase English Vocabulary For Elementary School Students," *Pubmedia Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris* 2, no. 2 (January 2025): 9, <https://doi.org/10.47134/jpbi.v2i2.1294>.

¹² Muhamad Noor Fauzan, Luqman Baehaqi, and Zaitun Qamariah, "THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE INTENSITY OF PLAYING ROBLOX ON VOCABULARY SIZE OF EFL SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS," *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme* 9, no. 1 (September 2025): 17–28, <https://doi.org/10.31851/5ra09x61>.

can improve vocabulary.¹³ Language video games are viewed as an engaging media that can support students in acquiring new vocabulary. Video games help expand the vocabulary of the player.¹⁴

According to two studies, different game genres, such as MOBA and Shooter,¹⁵ and also genres such as RPG and Light Novel,¹⁶ can expand the vocabulary uniquely depending on the game genre. Learning English using video games is proven to be more fun and easier.¹⁷ Without good vocabulary, English language skills will not be built properly.¹⁸ Video games are powerful tool for improving vocabulary over traditional methods of learning.¹⁹ Students who play video games succeed better than those who do not play video games in vocabulary evaluations, as interactive gaming environments facilitate meaningful and contextual language application that enhances vocabulary retention.²⁰

¹³ Muhammad Dhany Winaldo and Lulud Oktaviani, "INFLUENCE OF VIDEO GAMES ON THE ACQUISITION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE," *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning* 3, no. 2 (December 2022): 21–26, <https://doi.org/10.33365/jeltl.v3i2.1953>.

¹⁴ Domas Rudis and Svetozar Poštić, "INFLUENCE OF VIDEO GAMES ON THE ACQUISITION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE," *Verbum* 8 (January 2018): 112–28, <https://doi.org/10.15388/Verb.2017.8.11354>.

¹⁵ T. Silvana Sinar et al., "Learning English Literacy through Video Games: A Multimodal Perspective," *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching* 13, no. 1 (February 2024): 102, <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v13n1p102>.

¹⁶ Winaldo and Oktaviani, "INFLUENCE OF VIDEO GAMES ON THE ACQUISITION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE."

¹⁷ Muhamad Sandi et al., "Video Game-Based Digital Learning in the Development of Vocabulary Knowledge," *Jurnal Keilmuan Dan Keislaman*, March 31, 2023, 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.23917/jkk.v2i1.56>.

¹⁸ Shokhikhatul Khasanah, "Online Games as A Medium To Increase English Vocabulary For Elementary School Students," *Pubmedia Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris* 2, no. 2 (January 2025): 9, <https://doi.org/10.47134/jpbi.v2i2.1294>.

¹⁹ Muhammad Haroon Rasheed et al., "Enhancing Vocabulary Acquisition in Pakistani ESL Learners Through Video Games: An Experimental Study," *Forum for Linguistic Studies* 7, no. 7 (July 2025), <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i7.9161>.

²⁰ Muhammad Ahmed Islam, Hafiz Muhammad Awais, and Muhammad Usman Naveed, "VIDEO GAMES AND VOCABULARY LEARNING IN EFL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF

Thus, the primary aim of this study is to find out whether there is a correlation between students' habits of playing video game and their English vocabulary achievement. This study is conducted with the English Department sixth semester students on academic year of 2025/2026 at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, a population that has received relatively little attention in previous correlational studies on video game playing habits and vocabulary achievement. Several studies such as by Azizah et al.²¹ and by Fauzan et al.²² predominantly focus on online video gaming habits for vocabulary, but they rarely explore how a combination of both online and offline gaming routines relates to students' vocabulary achievement.

Due to the widespread popularity of video games and their potential as an English language learning tool, this research is necessary to examine whether the students' habits of playing video games correlates with their English vocabulary achievement. Because most of the nowadays students must have played video games at least once during their education. Despite that and the widespread use of video games, many still underestimate their educational value, particularly in language learning. Do not forget that vocabulary is one of the important things in learning English and most of the video games use

GAMERS AND NON-GAMERS,” preprint, Unpublished, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.34901.13285>.

²¹ A. Nur Wafiq Azizah, Nurdin Noni, and Sultan Baa, *THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PLAYING INTENSITY OF ONLINE GAME AND ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY IN SMPN 7 SINJAI*, 2, no. 1 (2023).

²² Muhamad Noor Fauzan, Luqman Baehaqi, and Zaitun Qamariah, “THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE INTENSITY OF PLAYING ROBLOX ON VOCABULARY SIZE OF EFL SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS,” *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme* 9, no. 1 (September 2025): 17–28, <https://doi.org/10.31851/5ra09x61>.

English as the dominant language. So, it is important to take note that purpose of playing video games not only to escape boredom and seeking fun, but it can help students to enrich students' vocabulary in more enjoyable, fun and easy way.

B. Statement of Research Question

According to the background of the study stated above, the formulated research question is:

“Is there any significant correlation between students' habits of playing video games and their English vocabulary achievement of the sixth semester English Education Department students at UIN SATU?”

C. Objective of the Research

Regarding to formulation of research question above, the objective of this study as follows:

“To know the correlation between students' habits of playing video games and their English vocabulary achievement of the sixth semester English Education Department students at UIN SATU.”

D. Formulation of Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the research can be formulated as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho):

“There is no correlation between students' habits of playing video games and their English vocabulary achievement.”

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha):

“There is a correlation between students` habits playing video games and their English vocabulary achievement.”

For the purpose of finding out which hypothesis is accepted, the researcher follows the rules below:

Sig > 0,05, Ho will be accepted

Sig < 0,05, Ha will be rejected

The level of significance that is used is null hypothesis (Ho) will be rejected if the probability of error is below 5% ($p < 0,05$).

E. Significance of the Research

This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions in understanding the correlation between students` video games playing habits and their English vocabulary achievement. The study also expected to provide people with useful information and relevant recommendation, which are:

1. For the English lecturers and teachers, this research will give them additional information about the positive sides about the usage of playing video games for the students. To make a better view that students who play video games have the potential to expand their vocabulary size with the help of teachers / lecturers.
2. For the students, this research will help and provide the opportunities for them to learn and increase their English vocabulary size by spending time playing video games. To make students realize that playing games is not

only to pass the time but also as a place to learn vocabulary and increase its size.

3. For the researcher, this research expects to enrich the understanding of the correlation playing video games and vocabulary size.
4. For the future researchers, the research can add new insights and knowledge to reader and can be a reference for the similar research. Furthermore, future researchers may develop this study on a broader scope.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Research

In order to prevent misunderstanding upon what the researcher explained, the researcher defines the limitation of this study on the two variables which are students` habits of playing video games and their English vocabulary achievement. Students` habits of playing video games as the predictor variable and their English vocabulary achievement as the criterion variable. It is focused only on the sixth semester academic year of 2025/2026 students of English Education Department class of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Also, only online and offline video games while using any genres, but not the content of the video games.

In this research, vocabulary achievement is operationally measured through students` vocabulary size. As for the vocabulary test, this study adopt a Vocabulary Size Test (VST) developed by Nation and Beglar²³. Due to the proficiency level of the research subjects and practical considerations, only the

²³ Paul Nation and D. Beglar, *A Vocabulary Size Test*, 2007, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.12552197>.

1,000 to 6,000 words family levels of the VST are administered. Therefore, the findings reflect students' vocabulary size up to the 6,000-word family level, not their complete vocabulary range.

G. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation related to the concepts in this topic, the researcher needs to provide definitions and explanations of the key terms in this study. Those are:

1. Video Game

Video games are interactive media consisting of challenges, entertainment, and multiple levels that operate through different mechanics and rules within a story driven objective.²⁴

2. Vocabulary Achievement

Vocabulary achievement refers to student's performance in vocabulary tests, indicating how well they have learned and can recognize or use English vocabulary following a learning period or instructional intervention.²⁵

²⁴ David Boces Obis, *The Weird and the Eerie in Video Games*, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.19557.31203>.

²⁵ Anisa Mutia, Rosnani Sahardin, and Geunta Mardika Putra, "The Impact of Vocabulary Instruction on Vocabulary Achievement," *English Education Journal* 13, no. 4 (January 2023): 464–77, <https://doi.org/10.24815/eej.v13i4.30005>.

3. Habit

Habit refers to a learned pattern of behavior that is repeated regularly and often occurs subconsciously.²⁶

²⁶ David T. Neal et al., “How Do Habits Guide Behavior? Perceived and Actual Triggers of Habits in Daily Life,” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 48, no. 2 (March 2012): 492–98, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2011.10.011>.