

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a brief explanation of some theories that support the study. The theories are related to perceptions, vocabulary, the importance of learning vocabulary, and flashcards for junior high school.

2.1 Perceptions

Students' perceptions are important in learning English to support the learning process. Perceptions have been defined as a person's experience about objects, events, or the relationships obtained by concluding information and interpreting messages (Jalaluddin, 2005). It has also been deemed as the result of thinking from what we experience from our five senses which are smell, hear, touch, taste, and see (Paul, 1973). The information that we acquired from our five senses is then transformed into perceptions towards something (Paul, 1973). Aligning with the statement from Sumanto (2014) who points out that perceptions are the process of understanding or giving meaning to information to a stimulus. Stimulus is obtained from the process of sensing objects, events, or relationships between symptoms which are then processed by our brain.

From the statements above, it can be concluded that perceptions are the process of obtaining information through the five senses that then will be integrated into something meaningful such as an idea. As for the concept of perceptions, Walgito (2010); Sobur (2009) believes that two factors can influence the perceptions of people which are internal and external factors. Internal factors involve individual thoughts (how people interpret a message, object, or environment depends on the value system that they adhere to), and psychological factors such as motivation and feelings. While external factors involve stimuli, culture, belief, and the environment.

Moreover, the internal and external factors of perceptions can lead the students' opinion of something into positive or negative perceptions because

they have different thoughts, motivations, feelings, stimuli, culture, beliefs, and environment towards something. As stated by Irwanto (2002) that perception can be divided into two, namely, positive perception and negative perception. Positive perception refers to all knowledge and responses that are aligned with the object being perceived and that encourage acceptance and support of the object being perceived. Meanwhile, negative perception describes all knowledge and responses that are not aligned with the object being perceived and lead someone to reject or oppose the object. Therefore, this research investigated students' perceptions on the use of electronic flashcards for vocabulary learning by observing whether something is good or not according to the perceptions that the students have of learning media used in vocabulary learning activities.

2.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the important components to acquire a language. There are some definitions related to vocabulary. Vocabulary can be defined as the words that people must know to be able to communicate effectively (Bintz, 2011). Moreover, vocabulary can also be specified as a language element that correlates the four language skills involving listening, speaking, reading, and writing in learning a foreign language (Huyen & Nga, 2003). In addition, vocabulary can be viewed in three ways, which are; 1) the total number of words in a language; 2) all the words a person is familiar with or those are used in a particular book, subject, etc; 3) a list of words along with their descriptions (Albert, 1956).

In the meantime, vocabulary has been divided into two types, which are receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary (Alqahtani, 2015). Receptive vocabulary has been defined as words that an individual understands and recognizes when the words are used in a context, but the individual does not produce the words whether in writing or speaking (Webb, 2008). For example, a person does not use the word "invisible" in their writing or speaking, but when they find the word in the text, they do not find any

difficulties in understanding the text. It is in line with the statement of Valdehita & De Diego (2021) saying that receptive knowledge allows people to recognize the form, meaning, and possible contexts of a word.

In contrast to receptive vocabulary, productive vocabulary refers to the ability to retrieve the meaning of the words and be able to use the word (Webb, 2008) whether oral or written. Productive vocabulary allows people to use the words regularly. It is because productive knowledge implies the use of a word with its correct spelling and pronunciation, and correct lexical, pragmatic, and syntactic contexts (Valdehita & De Diego, 2021).

In conclusion, receptive vocabulary is the vocabulary we receive, and understand the meaning when the words are used in a context, but we do not use them both in spoken and written communication. In contrast, productive vocabulary is the ability to understand and produce vocabulary whether spoken or written. Both types of vocabulary are important when it comes to understanding and mastering a language. In mastering a language, it is not only enough to know and understand the word we learned, but people also have to be able to produce and use it. Therefore, students should have a wide range of vocabulary to communicate effectively.

2.3 The Importance of Learning Vocabulary

Vocabulary learning is considered as an essential thing in language learning. Vocabulary learning is viewed as central to language acquisition, whether the language is first, second, or foreign (Decarrico, 2001). The importance of vocabulary has also been stated by Richards & Renandya (2002); Farida (2019) says that vocabulary plays an important part in one's foreign language learning and language proficiency as it obviously can affect how well people speak, listen, read, and write. A similar statement has also been pointed out by Wardani (2015) who asserts that vocabulary is important since it has a significant contribution to language mastery in almost all aspects.

To make progress in language learning, a person needs to comprehend what they are hearing or reading. If the language they are learning is

inapprehensible, vocabulary acquisition will most likely not happen in the learning (Folse, 2004). The previous statement is strongly supported by Meara (1995) who asserts that the largest issue when people learn a language is that the words seem to have no meaning at all to the learner who finds it difficult to comprehend any language words.

From the statements above, it can be inferred that vocabulary learning is very essential since vocabulary is the basic thing that should be mastered in advance. In learning a language, other skills should be mastered aside from vocabulary. One of which is often associated with the mastery of vocabulary is grammar. People often worry about grammar when they try to deliver something, so they prefer not to say anything. However, Maximo (2000) argues that without grammar, little to convey, but without vocabulary, nothing to convey. Therefore, it can be concluded that vocabulary mastery is more crucial than grammar itself. People should not have to worry about grammar errors when delivering something, because what matters is that the vocabulary used can effectively represent what is being said. Therefore, teachers should use the appropriate media to support the effectiveness of vocabulary learning for students.

2.4 Electronic Flashcards for Junior High School

Electronic flashcards are one of the learning media that help English teaching and learning activities. Electronic flashcards have been defined as technology-based learning media to assist foreign vocabulary learning that contains pictures with animation that is intended to convey information or knowledge to aid students' understanding (Noge, 2018). Electronic flashcards have also been known as a combination of a flashcard and the use of a computer (flashcard computer-based) (Safira et al., 2021). Since technological developments make it easier in designing media for learning, the use of electronic flashcards can be used by teachers as learning media that can aid language learning activities.

Nowadays, there are many platforms that provide electronic flashcards. Electronic flashcards can be found on applications, e-mail, websites, and so on (Lubis et al., 2022). Besides that, electronic flashcards can also be created easily. People can create electronic flashcards on multiple platforms, such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, or Prezi (Nashir & Laili, 2018). Therefore, teachers can create electronic flashcards that suit the learning material easily due to their accessibility.

In language learning, electronic flashcards are commonly used to ease when presenting new words since it provides pictures, numbers, and letters that aim to provide information (Hamer & Rohimajaya, 2018). Electronic flashcards are considered effective to help students in remembering words, knowing the name of an object easily, and enhancing their enjoyment and interest in learning (Pintubatu et al., 2017; Safira et al., 2021). In this context, electronic flashcards are used to explain vocabulary contained in learning materials as students have difficulty remembering and knowing English words.

Moreover, in English language learning, the use of electronic flashcards are used in pre-activity because it will be helpful to the learning process of understanding the material (Amroji, 2021). Introducing English words by using electronic flashcards in the pre-activity is intended to raise students' interest and to introduce students to the words that will appear in the material to be taught. Therefore, the material presented can be well understood by students.

2.5 How to Utilize Electronic Flashcards

In English language learning, electronic flashcards are commonly used to assist the teaching and learning process. Electronic flashcards are also usually used to help students enhance their vocabulary (Arsana & Maharani, 2021). Nowadays, people can easily find electronic flashcards on multiple platforms, such as applications or websites. In this context, the teacher uses PowerPoint considering that these applications are easy to access and easy to use.

Before the learning process, the teacher would have prepared electronic flashcards that will be used in vocabulary learning. The teacher creates it using PowerPoint because PowerPoint provides a functional feature that adapts to user needs. The cards contain a picture on the front of the card (figure 1) as well as a word along with its definition, and phonetic transcription on the back of the card (figure 2). As stated by Arsana & Maharani (2021), flashcards have two sides, the front side of flashcards has images or symbols, while the back side has definitions and descriptions of the images. In addition, the teacher uses a laptop and projector in presenting electronic flashcards.

In this study, during the learning process, before starting the material, the teacher gives some stimulating questions to the students related to the material, to gain their attention and interest. Aligning with the statement from Nashir & Laili (2018) that students can be given leading questions to pique their interest in learning and attract their attention. Then, the teacher gives a text for quick reading. After reading the text, the teacher presents vocabulary in the text in the form of electronic flashcards and guides students regarding how to pronounce the words correctly. The teacher gives an example, and then students repeat it after the teacher. Following what Alqahtani (2015) said, drilling techniques can be used to make students accustomed to the word form, particularly to how it sounds. Therefore, the teacher does it repeatedly so that students are able to remember the words.



Figure 1 Example of Electronic Flashcards Before Flipping

Picture flashcards come first. Then, the name of things on the card is also displayed in order to make it easier for students to read and pronounce the words on the cards.



Figure 2 Example of Electronic Flashcards After Flipping

After explaining the vocabulary by using electronic flashcards, the teacher checks students' memories regarding the displayed vocabulary by giving several questions related to it. Then, the teacher asks students to read the texts again to ensure that students have fully understood the reading text. In addition, after students understand the text, the teacher gives several questions regarding the text to check students' understanding of the material. Moreover, after the delivery of the material is complete, the teacher provides exercises related to the learning material that has been taught.

In conclusion, electronic flashcards can be used to assist in English vocabulary learning. Teachers can create electronic flashcards in various ways. In this context, the teacher uses PowerPoint to make electronic flashcards. The use of electronic flashcards is intended to help students understand English materials since they have trouble understanding English words. The teacher

uses electronic flashcards in the pre-activity as an introduction to the material to be taught. Therefore, students do not have trouble understanding English materials as they are familiar with the English words.

2.6 Study of the Relevant Research

In regard to the use of flashcards for vocabulary learning, there are several researchers who have underlined this issue in their studies (see Safira et al., 2021; Alghamdi & Elyas, 2020; Nashir & Laili, 2018; Dodigovic, 2013; Byrd & Lansing, 2016; Nurmala, 2022). They conducted their studies with different focuses.

Some of them focused on analyzing the effect of the use of electronic flashcards on students' vocabulary mastery at different levels, particularly elementary school, junior high school, and university (Safira et al., 2021; Alghamdi & Elyas, 2020; Nashir & Laili, 2018). By exploring the effect of the media on students' vocabulary mastery, Safira (2021) found that the use of electronic flashcards in elementary school students has a significant effect on their vocabulary mastery. Students who learned English vocabulary by using electronic flashcards got a higher score than those who did not. It also happened to university students in Arabia where the use of electronic flashcards improved students' vocabulary learning (Alghamdi & Elyas, 2020). Meanwhile, Nashir & Laili (2018) found that learning English vocabulary by using electronic flashcards has been proven useful in enhancing junior high school students' vocabulary. In addition, the visuals provided in the flashcards made students more active and excited in the learning activities.

In the meantime, several researchers focused on comparing the effectiveness between electronic flashcards and other media (Dodigovic, 2013; Byrd & Lansing, 2016). Dodigovic (2013) focused on comparing the use of teacher design and student design of electronic flashcards on university students' vocabulary. Based on the result, students learned best when using either their design or the teacher's design. Nevertheless, the use of students' cards in learning vocabulary seemed to be less effective than the one that the

teacher had. Meanwhile, Byrd & Lansing (2016) were interested in comparing the use of electronic flashcards and paper flashcards in the English classroom. The results show that students who studied using electronic flashcards excelled over those who studied with paper-based flashcards.

On the other hand, Nurmala and Suryaman (2022) focused on investigating junior high school students' perceptions of the use of flashcards for vocabulary mastery. Based on the study, the researcher found the advantages and disadvantages of flashcards for students' vocabulary learning. The advantages involve: 1) flashcards can be carried everywhere, 2) flashcards offer greater flexibility, 3) flashcards provide an attractive visual, and 4) flashcards can be used as games. While the disadvantages involve: 1) expensive, 2) limited vocabulary, and 3) there is no supervision or direction for pronouncing the listed vocabulary.

Despite myriad studies investigating the use of electronic flashcards for vocabulary learning, there is still a gap in investigating the issue by focusing on junior high school students' perceptions. Therefore, this study is intended to be able to fill in the gap in the existing studies. In this study, the researcher investigated junior high school students' perceptions on the use of electronic flashcards for vocabulary learning.