

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

English is one of the most important subjects in the Indonesian education curriculum, especially at the junior high school level, as it lays the foundation for mastering vocabulary. A strong vocabulary is essential for developing key language skills, including listening, speaking, presenting, reading, viewing, and writing. According to Muhammad et al., (2023), vocabulary represents one of the most important skills necessary for teaching and learning a foreign language. Daulay, (2021) state vocabulary refers to a collection of words that carry meaning, are comprehensible to an individual, and can be used for interaction with others. According to Yaser et al., (2022), vocabulary is a set of words owned by a person or is part of a particular language. According to Miskiyah & Amalia in Yafet (2022), vocabulary is an aspect that needs to be emphasized in learning English at the elementary school level because vocabulary is the basis of a language. Vocabulary becomes the main tool for students in their attempt to use English effectively.

Presenting is an essential component of language learning, as it allows students to actively apply vocabulary in structured and meaningful communication. A strong vocabulary base supports effective presentation skills, enabling learners to express thoughts, ideas, and emotions clearly in front of an audience. Vocabulary plays an important role in supporting speaking skills, enabling learners to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively in English.

According to Troike as cited in Raja et al., (2021), attaining proficiency in speaking skills requires an adequate vocabulary to convey meaning and actively participate in discussions. Similarly, Reza et al (2023) state that vocabulary acts as a tool for communication, allowing individuals to exchange information, express opinions, and articulate emotions. In addition, Rahmani as cited in Reza et al., (2023) emphasizes that vocabulary is a key factor in delivering impactful presentations, as it helps learners communicate ideas confidently and meaningfully to their audience.

In presentations, learners need to master topic-specific vocabulary and use discourse markers that help them organize their speech. Furthermore, effective presentations require not only vocabulary knowledge but also skills such as intonation, body language, and clear articulation to engage the audience. Mudofir et al (2024), emphasize that students should presenting their ability to use learned words effectively in real-life or simulated communication contexts. This aligns with the idea that presenting is a productive language skill that requires the practical application of vocabulary in organized and meaningful communication. In conclusion, presenting plays a significant role in language learning, as it involves not only a solid foundation of vocabulary but also the ability to apply it effectively in real-life or simulated classroom contexts. Vocabulary serves as a vital tool that enables learners to convey ideas, express opinions, and communicate messages clearly during presentations.

Based on observations and interviews conducted by researcher at UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, it was found that students' vocabulary mastery level is still low. Many students expressed difficulties in understanding and remembering new words, which impacted their ability to communicate effectively in English. This observation began when the researcher joined the Batch 8 *Kampus Mengajar* program at the school, which ran from September 10th, 2024, to December 15th, 2024. During this period, the researcher closely observed how the students learned English in class and noted the various challenges they faced, especially in acquiring and retaining new vocabulary.

One of the main causes of this problem is the use of learning methods that were still less varied. Predominantly text-based or lecture-based learning methods often failed to attract students' attention, causing them to feel bored and less motivated. This aligns with research by Karpova et al., (2019), which showed that a monotonous learning approach can reduce student interest and hinder an effective learning process. These experiences and observations provided the researcher with valuable insight into the urgency of implementing innovative and engaging teaching methods to improve students' vocabulary mastery and overall English skills.

Compared to other teaching methods, a visual arts-based approach offers distinct advantages in learning English vocabulary. Traditional methods, such as memorization or text-based exercises, often lack interest and feel monotonous to students. In contrast, visual arts provide a dynamic and interactive learning experience, which makes the material more interesting and memorable, including that by Hwang et al (2020), highlight that visual arts can stimulate creativity and critical thinking while improving memory retention. This approach not only helps students understand new vocabulary more effectively, but also fosters a positive and enjoyable learning environment, making it an effective complement to conventional methods.

Furthermore, research by Kuo et al (2021), found that the integration of visual media in language learning can help students build associations between new words and images, thus strengthening their memory of the vocabulary. By using this approach, students are not only more motivated to learn but also able to remember and use English vocabulary more effectively. The use of visual media in teaching English vocabulary has proven to be effective in improving students' learning outcomes.

Parede et al (2022), conducted a study on "Improving Students' Vocabulary by Visual Media" using a quantitative research method. The researchers employed pre- and post-tests to measure the effectiveness of visual media in enhancing vocabulary mastery. The results revealed that the pre-test scores averaged 4.16, while the post-test scores reached 7. This significant improvement indicates that students' vocabulary mastery increased after using picture-guessing games in online learning. The study demonstrated that visual media effectively supports children's learning of new language skills by making learning more interactive and engaging.

Ismaya et al (2024), investigated the use of word walls as a medium to facilitate vocabulary learning among EFL students. This qualitative research explored individual experiences and perspectives to gain insights into the implementation and effectiveness of word walls in the classroom. It was conducted in a junior high school in Bekasi, the study involved six eighth-grade students selected through purposive sampling to represent varying vocabulary

abilities (low, medium, high). Students initially participated in a vocabulary test to classify their skill levels, followed by detailed observations and assessments of their challenges in learning vocabulary. Additionally, data were collected on how teachers utilized word walls to support students' vocabulary learning. Results indicated that the implementation of word walls positively impacted students' vocabulary mastery. Students found the method engaging, which improved their participation and interest in learning. The use of word walls helped students discover new vocabulary, enhanced their understanding of English, and made vocabulary learning more enjoyable. After the intervention, students demonstrated increased activity in class, improved comprehension of materials, and greater enthusiasm for learning.

According to Saripah, (2022), the study on improving students' vocabulary through the use of picture cards involved observation, questionnaires, and vocabulary tests to collect data. Observations focused on students' behaviors and interactions during the learning process. A closed-questionnaire was used to gauge students' responses to the learning method, while a vocabulary test with 100 questions assessed their mastery of irregular verbs. Data analysis combined qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data explored students' responses to the learning process using a Likert scale, while quantitative data compared pretest and posttest results. The findings showed a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after the implementation of picture cards. Pretest scores were lower than posttest scores, indicating that the use of visual media effectively enhanced vocabulary learning. Students also reported a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience with picture cards. This study was conducted using a Classroom Action Research (CAR).

In the research of Hutasoit et al., (2022), the effectiveness of animation videos in improving vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students of SMP GpdI BERE A Tondano was examined. The research employed a quantitative study with a pre-experimental design. It used a one-group pre-test and post-test design, involving 20 students. Initially, students completed a pre-test of 20 questions on adjectives to assess their baseline vocabulary knowledge. During the treatment phase, the teacher used an animated video as a medium to teach

adjectives, providing explanations and examples from the video, and engaging students in repetition and memorization exercises. Afterward, a post-test was administered to evaluate students' vocabulary improvement. The results showed a significant increase in students' vocabulary mastery, with the mean score rising from 31.5 in the pre-test to 80 in the post-test. This indicates that animation videos effectively support and develop students' vocabulary skills, making the learning process more engaging and productive.

Based on the previous researches above, the researcher concludes that the previous studies by Saripah, Parede et al., Ismaya et al., and Hutasoit et al. demonstrated that using a single type of visual art media—such as picture cards, picture-guessing games, word walls, or animation videos—effectively improved students' vocabulary mastery. These media made learning more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable, which contributed to better vocabulary acquisition.

However, Wang and Lee (2021) in *Frontiers in Psychology* found that using more than one type of visual media, such as a combination of images and videos, led to significantly better vocabulary outcomes than using a single medium. Learners who received visual glosses that included both definitions and visual elements performed better and reported higher engagement. Therefore, while single visual media are effective, the use of multiple visual art media is more powerful in enhancing vocabulary learning, as it provides richer input and stronger memory support.

According to Ferdy (2021), there are types of visual arts namely drawing, painting, photography, collage, sculpture. Meanwhile, the researcher developed a broader approach by using more types of visual arts, namely image visual, and video visual. This approach provides a more varied and interactive learning experience using visual arts that aim to improve students' comprehension of English vocabulary.

This study aims to integrate visual arts into English language learning to enhance the vocabulary learning of seventh-grade students at UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa. Through this approach, students are expected to develop greater motivation for learning while improving their ability to remember and master English vocabulary. While visual media have been widely used in

language instruction, most applications tend to focus on a single type of media either video or image used separately. Furthermore, many of these implementations are conducted in higher education contexts or in more developed school environments.

There is still a lack of research that combines both video and image-based visual arts in a structured and cyclical classroom action research setting at the junior high school level. This study addresses that gap by applying both types of media in two cycles of vocabulary instruction for seventh-grade students.

Through the implementation of **English Language Learning: Visual Arts to Improve the Seventh Graders' Vocabulary of UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa**, this research aims to provide a practical and innovative method that can increase student engagement and vocabulary retention, which will ultimately contribute to better language skills and a more enjoyable learning experience. In addition, the learning objective achievement criteria is 70% for students' mastery of English vocabulary after the application of the visual arts method in learning.

This standard is used as a reference to assess the success of the application of the method in improving students' vocabulary skills at UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

The majority of seventh grader's students at UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa encounter difficulties in comprehending vocabulary and recalling new words in English. This can be attributed to the fact that the learning methodologies employed lack sufficient visual elements. Presently, the methodologies utilized are predominantly text-based or lecture-based, which tend to be less engaging and result in students losing interest rapidly. Consequently, their motivation to learn is diminished, which in turn affects their learning of English vocabulary.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

The researcher focuses on exploring how visual arts, specifically mixed media in the form of images and videos, can enhance vocabulary learning among seventh graders. This study aims to make the learning process more

engaging, interactive, and memorable. Visual arts allow students to associate new words with clear visual representations, strengthening their understanding and retention. This research is conducted at UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, where students are encouraged to actively participate in lessons that integrate creativity in language learning. The goal is not only to improve their vocabulary but also to develop their interest and confidence in learning English. By examining this approach, the researcher hopes to provide practical insights for educators seeking innovative methods to enhance language learning in similar contexts.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

The problem formulated in this study is: **How does visual art improve the seventh-grader's vocabulary of UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa?** In this context, the research aims to explore the effectiveness of visual art in helping students remember and use new vocabulary in English language learning. By incorporating this approach, it is expected that the learning process becomes more engaging and interactive, while also increasing students' motivation and confidence in learning English.

1.5 Objectives of the Research

The aim of this research is to explore how visual arts can be used as a tool to improve the Seventh Grader's vocabulary at UPTD SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa. By combining creativity with language learning, this study seeks to create a more interactive and effective learning experience for students.

1.6 Significance of the Research

The significance of the research are :

1. Theoretically

This research provides a valuable reference for the development of English language teaching and learning processes, particularly in integrating visual arts to improve student's vocabulary. It contributes to the understanding of how multimodal learning strategies can enhance language learning and provides a foundation for future studies in this area.

2. Practically

1. For Teachers: This study highlights the effectiveness of using mixed media (images and videos) in vocabulary learning, which has not been widely explored in previous research. Teachers can adopt this approach to create a more engaging and multimodal learning experiences.
2. For students: By incorporating both static and dynamic visual elements, students are exposed to a richer learning experience that supports vocabulary retention and contextual understanding.
3. For schools: The findings of this research can support the development of a curriculum that integrates descriptive texts and multimedia tools. This approach will contribute to improving vocabulary learning among students and can serve as a model for integrating creative teaching practices within the school curriculum. The integration of mixed media in vocabulary learning can serve as an innovative teaching model that enhances student engagement and aligns with modern educational approaches.
4. For University Students in Nias: This research aims to improve the learning process of university students by introducing innovative methods such as visual arts. This approach allows students to learn vocabulary in a more interesting and meaningful way, thus helping to improve their understanding and memory.
5. The University of Nias: The findings of this study can support curriculum development that integrates creative teaching methods, such as visual arts and multimedia tools. This can improve the quality of English language learning and serve as a model in modernizing teaching methods in universities.
6. The next researchers: This study can assist future researchers in gaining a clearer understanding of the factors affecting students' vocabulary learning and the obstacles encountered during the learning process.