

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Learning English as an international language, also known as English as a Foreign Language (EFL), became increasingly important in this day and age. One of the most important skills for EFL students was vocabulary mastery, which serves as the foundation for daily activities such as reading, writing and speaking. However, the vocabulary learning process was increasingly difficult for students, especially when the material was presented in a conventional format. Therefore, innovations in learning media were essential to increase motivation and effectiveness.

In this age of technology, there had been many innovations created by humans. One of the results of technology was social media. Social media was an online-based technology which requires the internet to be able to access it. Social media was an online media that allows users to easily engage, share, and create content, including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums, and virtual worlds. Social media provided positive influences and benefits to the development of science and technology, for example through ease of communication, searching and accessing information, building relationships, making friends, and others. There were many social media platforms that can be used as learning media, such as Instagram, YouTube and the most popular among the public in the last two years was TikTok (Liedfray et al, 2022).

TikTok was one of the popular applications and was in great demand by people in the world. TikTok was an application that allows users to create short videos that were usually 15 seconds to 3 minutes long accompanied by music, filters, and several other creative features. This application was first created by a company from Tiongkok, China called Byte Dance first launched this application under the name Douyin. It only took 1 year, Douyin had 100 million users and 1 billion video views every day. Due to its high popularity, the Douyin application was expanding outside China, where this application was named TikTok (Adawiyah, 2020).

TikTok application provided different types of videos created by content creators, such as entertainment videos, information, trending videos, and educational videos. In the list of educational videos, there were many types of videos that can be found, including videos for learning English vocabulary. These learning videos were created by content creators with many interesting approaches, such as the use of images, sound and text to introduce new words to the public. With a short and easy format, TikTok vocabulary videos were an effective and interesting way for users, especially for EFL students, to enrich their vocabulary independently and flexibly.

When one decided to learn English, the first thing to do was to start learning vocabulary. Learning a language would not work if one did not know the words. This hindered effective communication with others. Students who were learning English need to be encouraged to learn to communicate in English. It was

important to present words in an interesting way so that language skills can increase and be easier to learn. In order to overcome this problem, EFL students should try different techniques to improve their vocabulary (Venalinda & Armanda, 2023).

With TikTok as a platform that was currently popular, it could be an alternative learning media that was interesting and fun. TikTok can allow users to access short videos that were often made visually and audibly interesting and one of the videos contains educational videos such as learning vocabulary. With the use of visually and audibly appealing content, TikTok had the potential to help EFL students improve vocabulary acquisition through exposure to interesting and memorable content.

Previous research had shown that the use of social media in education can significantly increase student engagement and motivation. These platforms provided interactive, dynamic and accessible content to students that can enhance their learning experience. However, despite the growing popularity of social media, there were still few studies that specifically explore its effectiveness in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), particularly in relation to vocabulary learning. One social media platform that had gained a lot of attention was TikTok, which was known for its short and interesting video format. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the role of TikTok as a supportive medium in EFL students' vocabulary learning.

There was also research on the TikTok application as a medium for learning vocabulary that has been carried out by many experts in this field, for example,

studies that discuss this topic were Alshreef & Khadawardi (2023), in this study discussing TikTok can be an effective tool in increasing the number of students' English vocabulary, especially in the context of foreign language learning. And (Rama et al. 2023), in this study also discusses the students' perspective on the TikTok application can play an important role in improving mastery of English vocabulary, especially in the context of social media which was rich in frequently used words and phrases.

TikTok was one of the application that has become popular among young people including EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners (Aisyiah & Erizar, 2023). This research was crucial to determine whether TikTok can be a useful tool to expand students' vocabulary as the use of social media in English language learning was increasingly significant. A key element in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) was expanding vocabulary. Therefore, students benefit by knowing how UMRAH students used TikTok to expand their vocabulary to maximize the learning process.

The purpose of the researcher choosing the title “EFL Students' Perception on Tiktok Application for Vocabulary Learning” was to see how TikTok application can be used as a medium for learning English vocabulary, especially for students studying English as a foreign language (EFL). Given the importance of vocabulary acquisition in the English language learning process, this study aims to understand students' perceptions on the effectiveness of TikTok as a tool that can improve their vocabulary skills.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the above background, the researcher formulated the research problem in the form of a question, this research questions can be formulated as follows: “How do students perceive the TikTok application in learning vocabulary?”

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of this research was to investigate EFL students’s perception on TikTok application for learning vocabulary.

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research focus on EFL students who used TikTok as a medium for learning English vocabulary. The research subjects were limited to EFL students studying in Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji (UMRAH). Data collection was conducted through questionnaires, and interviews to gain an understanding of students' experiences in using TikTok as a vocabulary learning media.

1.5 Significances of the Research

1. Theoretical

Theoretically, by enhancing current theory for vocabulary building, this research could be a significant addition to the use of TikTok as a vocabulary learning medium.

2. Practically

a. For Students

This research was expected to provide benefits and could provide references regarding TikTok applications that can be used as tools to facilitate vocabulary learning. The use of TikTok application provided quick and specific feedback to students, helping them to improve their vocabulary.

b. For Educators

This research was expected to provide information to educators about the benefits of using the TikTok application as a medium that can help in teaching vocabulary to students. Educators can also use the TikTok application when teaching vocabulary to students in class.

c. For Other Researchers

This research can increase knowledge and provide information to other researchers as a reference regarding the role of students in using the TikTok application in vocabulary learning.

1.6 The Definition of the Key Term

1. EFL students

Students were those who learn English in a country where English was not the native language.

2. TikTok

TikTok was an audiovisual social media application with short videos that can be created by yourself or other users.

3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary was a collection of words that were mastered and understood by someone in a particular language, in this case English.

