

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

A framework for 21st century learning identified key competencies and skills essential for success in twenty-first century work and life (P21, 2007). These included 'The 4Cs', short for communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. We need to have an effective communication skills since it is essential for success in many walks of life (McCroskey, 1984). Whether you want to strengthen your interpersonal relationships, manage stress or handle the fast-changing workplace conditions, effective communication plays a critical role. (Mehra, 2019)

It is a common knowledge that English is an international language. Thus, in order to face the global competition, it is important for the students in every country, including Indonesia, to improve their English communication skill. And just like any other languages, the four basic communication skills in English are speaking, listening, writing and reading. However, when someone mentions communication skills most people will first think of speaking. It is the most preferred and used skill to express oneself in daily and business life (Ozden, 2018). It is commonly used as a measurement for someone's self quality. It is also one of the most common admission requirements nowadays. For example when applying for a job, a scholarship, or an educational

institution, the candidate will face an interviewing stage. Thus, in order to be able to pass the interviewing stage, someone must have a good speaking skill. The use of speaking skill in education and working life doesn't just end there. After the applicants got accepted for the position they were applying, they still need a good speaking skill when doing their job or study. It is needed and used in a group discussion, a presentation, a debate or even in a seminar.

There are many skills and abilities someone need to master in order to have a good English speaking skill, one of them is having large vocabulary. The larger the vocabulary, the bigger possibility to acquire fluency in speaking. (Afna & Sutriani, 2018) Furthermore, EFL students who lack of vocabulary are less likely to involve in oral communication with their peers. (August et al, 2005) In order to get the message across, someone need to pick the most suitable words and say them correctly. Thus, it is crucial for someone not to make a vocabulary errors since it can cause momentary confusion and bring about misunderstanding. (Djokic, 1999)

When speaking, an individual only have limited time to arrange the words into sentences that we want to say. Thus, mastering as much English vocabulary as possible is needed in order to be able to spontaneously produce sentences in such a short amount of time and to express our thought effectively. Previous study by Laufer and Nation (2012) shows that it is adequate for the learners to know 2000 most frequent words to be able to engage in a simple conversation. Nevertheless, it requires more or less 3,000

words to be able to speak fluently and 8,000 to 9,000 words in order to be able to speak as well as a native speaker or nearly so.

Since vocabulary has such important role in communication, it means that EFL students have to constantly expand their vocabulary. In order to do so, they need an effective media to support their learning process. Nowadays, there are many media that can be used to learn vocabulary. One of them is a language learning application such as Duolingo. Duolingo is a free application which is available in both mobile and website versions. It is also well-known amongst EFL students including grade 11 Hospitality Study students of SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar class Based on the preliminary data that was collected by handing out questionnaires to the students, it is revealed that 48 out of 67 students have ever used Duolingo to learn English. This means that they are familiar with this application.

The Duolingo application serves as a learning medium with individualized instructions for the EFL learners. The courses in Duolingo are served through gamification. According to Seaborn and Fels (2015), gamification is “The intentional use of game elements for a gameful experience of non-game tasks and contexts.” Game elements are patterns, objects, principles, models, and methods which inspirations are taken from game. (Seaborn & Fels, 2015) Thus, in education, gamification means using a game-like activity during the learning process. The use of gamification in

duolingo can make the learning process more fun which leads the students in becoming more motivated to learn. (Rich & Chapman, 2018)

Previous studies also had proven duolingo as an effective media for learning English Vocabulary. (Puspita & Setiadi, 2022; Yuwono, 2022; Aulia, Wahjuningsih, & Andayani, 2020) It was also revealed that using Duolingo can significantly improve the students' vocabulary mastery. (Ambara, 2020). From the previous studies it can be concluded that Duolingo can be used as an alternative media to enhance the students' vocabulary.

However, in teaching and learning process, teachers also need to know the students perceptions towards anything related to the learning process including the media that will be used. Prior studies had found that students' perceptions affect how students perceive learning materials and the selection of the study and learning approach (Hassall and Joyce, 2001; Entwistle et al., 2002). Students' perceptions can also influence the students' achievement (Burden & Williams, 1997, p.98) and affect their motivation to study (Greene et al., 2004). Positive perceptions towards the learning process can boost students' learning motivation. In result, the students will enjoy the study more and be able to achieve the learning objectives effectively. This statement is supported by Mayangsari, Kamaluddin and Agustina's (2022) statement that says, "In the learning process, the students' perceptions can affect the process and the results." Moreover, The curriculum design and the creation of a learning environment that promote students' positive perceptions is a key to

achieve high quality in learning (Lucas, 2001) and to improve students' academic performance. Negative perceptions could cause negative feelings towards learning, a decrease in motivation, cognitive processing, and the students' performance (Isen, 2004).

Thus, it can be concluded that researches on students' perceptions on Duolingo is needed to be done as the way students perceive this application will most certainly change over time. Their perceptions is assessed in order to develop an appropriate adjustments for the success of the learning process. (Wijayanti, 2019)

The result of this study is expected to give the education stakeholders, especially the government, an idea about the criterias of an appropriate vocabulary learning media for high school students which then can be used as a consideration in providing facilitations to support the students' learning process. This study also provides the description of the features provided in Duolingo and the use of the application, which can help the teacher to apply the application in the classroom. Moreover, the data of the students' perceptions in this study can also help the teacher to know the students' opinion about it. Therefore, based on the explanation above the researcher decided to conduct a study with the title "Students' Perception on the Use of Duolingo as Vocabulary Learning Media in Hospitality Program Grade 11 of SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar"

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem was formulated as:

1. What is the perception of the Hospitality Program grade 11 students in SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar on the use of Duolingo?
2. What is the implied meaning of the perception of the Hospitality Program grade 11 students in SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar on the use of Duolingo?

C. The Objective of the Study

1. To explore the students' perception on the use of Duolingo in Hospitality Program grade 11 of SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar.
2. To find out the implied meaning of the students' perception on the use of Duolingo in Hospitality Program grade 11 of SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar.

D. The Scope of the Study

The current study is limited to the investigation of the perception of Hospitality Program grade 11 students in SMKN 3 Pematangsiantar on the use of Duolingo as a vocabulary learning media.

E. The Significance of the Study

The data collected in this study can be used by the education stakeholders, specifically government, as a consideration in providing facilitations to support students' learning process. This study also provides the

description of the features provided in Duolingo and the use of the application, so it can help the teacher to apply it in the classroom. Moreover, the data of the students' perceptions in this study can also help the teacher to know the students' opinion about the application. Not only those, the result of this study can also be used by the future researchers as a reference when conducting a research in similar area.

