

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses about : (1) background, (2) problem of the research, (3) objective of the research, (4) significances of the research.

#### **1.1 Background**

The four skills in English were closely related to vocabulary mastery. According to Laflamme in Sari (2017), vocabulary knowledge was a key factor that influenced reading comprehension. Understanding vocabulary was an integral part of the language learning process, and vocabulary played an essential role in language. Without sufficient vocabulary, individuals could not communicate effectively or convey their ideas clearly. Thus, vocabulary played a crucial role in constructing sentences. According to Asyiah (2017), a rich vocabulary totally helped students master English and its four major skills, which covered listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Vocabulary mastery played an important role in students' success in the process of learning English. Lele (2018, p.8), stated that the key to enhancing vocabulary was to retain words in long-term memory. The more words students mastered, the greater their understanding of those words was. Students needed to master English vocabulary first before applying it in speaking or writing (Setiawan, 2020). In addition Yudha (2021) explained that with sufficient vocabulary, a person could express ideas, understand language tasks, and speak in a foreign language.

Irsani (2023), stated that vocabulary was essential for mastering a foreign language because, without a wide range of vocabulary, it would be difficult to use grammar and language functions effectively for smooth communication. She also stated that a child's vocabulary grew quickly as they learned new words and their meanings. Vocabulary mastery was very important for students because it helped them understand the language being learned (Arsana, 2021). Vocabulary was essential for students because it enabled them to use it effectively for communication.

Many students faced difficulties in understanding vocabulary, especially elementary school students. Ndraha (2023), stated that elementary school students often had limited vocabulary due to difficulties in remembering the meaning and pronouncing English words. According to Ningrum (2020), vocabulary limitations occurred in fifth-grade students because to weaknesses in memorizing vocabulary. They tended to get bored with learning methods that were not engaging. Teachers used techniques such as writing several vocabulary words on the board, then asking students to copy and memorize them. This method made students bored and tended to discourage them from wanting to study further. Dalimunthe (2022), stated that teachers had to be able to choose learning methods that aligned with the curriculum and students' potential.

Based on the observations conducted by the researcher at State Elementary School 2 Tekorejo from August 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, it was found that fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 2 Tekorejo had very limited proficiency in English. They perceived English as a difficult language to understand. Many

students still struggled with pronouncing words in English, which reduced their confidence in using the vocabulary they had learned. The lack of practice and repetition made the vocabulary they had learned easily forgotten, and there was also a lack of interaction between students and teachers. Moreover, the less supportive learning environment, such as uninteresting teaching methods, was also one of the problems faced by fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 2 Tekorejo. According to Piagets' theory taken by (Lisa, 2019) children aged 7-11 were always interested in recognizing and learning new words. They tended to repeat them multiple times to remember them well. Based on this explanation, theoretically, elementary school-aged children tended to recognize and repeat new words to make them easier to remember. However, a lack of practice, interaction, and engaging learning methods could hinder their language development. As an elementary school teacher, it was important to have various methods to help students easily understand vocabulary. There were many ways to make learning English less boring, one of which was by using games.

According to Bavi (2018), the use of games and fun activities as learning tools had long been applied in language teaching. Mortini (2017), stated that using games was one of the methods to enhance students' abilities in the learning process. A teacher had to use various methods to make learning in the classroom enjoyable and engaging, especially for elementary school students. Games were one method that could help students get involve in playing. Games were applied as a way or technique to encourage students to participate in the learning process (Akdogan, 2017). By using game-based methods, students became motivated and more

enthusiastic about learning, especially in vocabulary comprehension at the elementary school level. This technique helped students develop their vocabulary and one way to implement this was by using flashcards as a learning tools.

Flashcards were one of the easiest and most effective teaching tools for teaching English to English Young Learners (EYL) because they were in the form of colorful pictures that were appealing to children (Kusumawardhani, 2019 ). In using flashcards, a teacher needed to have engaging techniques to make the class fun and interactive. The application of learning methods at State Elementary School 2 of Tekorejo was less engaging, so the researcher used flashcards to make the learning method more enjoyable. In this study, the researcher used the teaching technique according to Suyanto in Hasibuan (2020), which was the use of flashcards. The process started with arranging the cards and showing them one by one to the students. The teacher read the word in English, asked the students to repeat it, and then tested their understanding by showing the cards randomly. If the students answered incorrectly, the teacher provided corrections and repeated the cards that had not been mastered to reinforce their understanding. This repetition technique ensured that students had many opportunities to practice and strengthen their vocabulary, ultimately helping to improve their confidence and mastery of words in English.

According to Aziza (2020), children were more interested in flashcards that had pictures because using visuals helped them understand the material more easily. Image made learning more engaging, helped connect words with real objects, and improved students' focus and motivation during their studies. According to

Harisanty *et al.*, (2020), flashcards not only helped students expand their vocabulary but also enhanced their understanding of foreign languages. The images in flashcards varied, ranging from animals, family, colors, plants, shapes, and more. Musa (2025), stated that flashcards were effective because they were flexible, portable, and could be used for various subjects. The use of flashcards was also highly effective because they did not require significant expenses to create. The content on the flashcards could be tailored to the students' proficiency level, whether it was basic, intermediate, or advanced (Aba, 2019). Muhammad, *et al* (2020) stated that picture-based flashcards were effective for vocabulary learning as they kept students engaged and allowed them to learn while playing. Flashcards could be used in group settings or explained by the teacher. They could be an interactive and enjoyable method. Students could actively engage in the learning process by guessing the word or image on the card. By using flashcards, students could expand their English vocabulary while making learning enjoyable.

Based on the explanation above, it could be concluded that vocabulary was the most important part of learning a language. Without sufficient vocabulary, people could not communicate effectively or express their ideas well. There were various ways to improve students' vocabulary, one of which was by using flashcards as a learning tool. Several previous studies had shown that the use of flashcards could significantly improve vocabulary mastery. However, most of these studies were conducted in urban school with better learning facilities, such as the study conducted by Rachmadi (2023) entitled “The Effectiveness of Flashcards Media Strategy in Improving Young Learners’ Vocabulary”. His research was carried out

on seventh-grade students at State Junior High School 30 Makassar. He stated that flashcards were quite effective in helping students learn English vocabulary. On the other hand, studies on the use of flashcards in elementary school located in rural areas, such as State Elementary School 2 of Tekorejo, were still very limited. Therefore, the researcher was interested in conducting a study entitled **"The Use of Flashcards in English Vocabulary Learning for Fifth-Grade Students of State Elementary School 2 of Tekorejo"** with the aim of helping students learn vocabulary.

## **1.2 Problem of the Research**

The problem of the research was the section that explained the issue the study aimed to address. This section included limitation of the scope of the problem and formulation of the research on fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 2 of Tekorejo who struggled with memorizing, understanding, and pronouncing English vocabulary.

### **1.2.1 Limitation of the Scope of the Problem**

The researcher limited several issues, including:

- a. Focusing on the use of adjectives in the second semester with the topic "Adjective Comparison Degree".

### **1.2.2 Formulation of the Research**

The researcher chose the following research problem based on the previously provided explanation "Is there any significant difference in English vocabulary learning between the fifth-grade students of State

Elementary School 2 of Tekorejo who are taught using flashcards and those who are not?”

### **1.3 Objective of the Research**

The objective of this research is to find out whether there is a significant difference in English vocabulary learning between the fifth-grade students of State Elementary School 2 of Tekorejo who are taught using flashcards and those who are not.

### **1.4 Significances of the Research**

#### **1.4.1 Significances Pedagogic**

The pedagogic significance of this research was to show how flashcards could be used as an effective method in teaching English vocabulary to fifth-grade students. Flashcards were expected to help students learn new words more easily through visual and repetitive learning. This study also aimed to give teachers new ideas on how to make vocabulary lessons more fun and interesting for young learners. By using flashcards, the learning process became more interactive, and students were more motivated to remember new words. This research also supported the idea that choosing the right teaching media was important in improving students' vocabulary skills.

#### **1.4.2 Significances Theoretically**

This study contributed to the development of knowledge in English language learning, especially in vocabulary learning for elementary school students. The use of flashcards in this research supported learning became

more effective when combining pictures and words. In other words, the findings of this study served as additional evidence that visual media like flashcards were useful in helping students understand and remember English vocabulary.

### **1.4.3 Significances Practically**

This research has several benefits, as presented below :

#### **a. For Students**

The use of flashcards was expected to enhance students' interest in learning as well as improve their English vocabulary comprehension. By using flashcards, the learning method in the classroom became more engaging, which helped boost students' confidence in mastering English and motivated them to be more enthusiastic about learning the language.

#### **b. For Teacher**

The use of flashcards to increase English vocabulary provided teachers with an insight into whether this method could be effectively used in every English lesson.

#### **c. For Researcher**

In this study, the researcher was able to assess each student's English proficiency, as well as motivated them to continue learning English.



d. For the School

It provided insight to the school that the use of flashcards could be an engaging method to expand students' vocabulary, as well as a fun teaching method using visual media to support the national English curriculum.