

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief description of the research. This chapter presents the research's background, research questions, research purposes, limitations of the study, research significances, rationale, and previous research.

A. Background

This research aims to improve students' vocabulary learning through Word Cloud. In this research, vocabulary is necessary for learning English. This is an essential factor in reading, listening, writing, and speaking (Manik & Christiani, 2016). Learning English could be challenging for learners (Meara, 2005) cited in (Mansouri, 2015). English, like other languages, has its own lexical system. The system is unique and inclusive. For example, the writing is different when it is spoken, and several words are the same in writing but have different meanings as in the word 'live' /lɪv/ which means to have life and live /laɪv/ which means live broadcast.

Therefore, English teachers must employ strategies to respond to English characteristics in their teaching of English vocabulary. They can use different strategies to teach learners a new vocabulary. The variety of strategies helps the learners interested and engaged in the class. Along with the ICT enhancement, the strategies have developed considerably. The integration of ICT into teaching strategies could be advantageous for the teachers. For example, Word Cloud allows students to experiment with words and motivates students to be creative (Bromley, 2013). Students are involved in identifying and learning vocabulary by exploring the use of language using Word Cloud. It offers a visual display that is good for the students in pre-reading and post-reading lessons. It can promote students' standard word recognition, usage, definition, and spelling (Bromley, 2013).

In general, Word Cloud is a data visualization type highlighting the main points (Baralt et al., 2011). It has been used by (Filatova, 2016) in her research of

ESL classroom activities. She used it as a visual aid to present new vocabulary. Students found vocabulary in texts, and Word Cloud was created from those vocabularies. It helped students in summarizing and understanding the texts they read. Through Word Cloud, students learned vocabulary from highlighting various words in the cloud that appeared on a separate list of words used as keywords, and they could connect each word with a different meaning.

In this research site, SMAN Jatinunggal, Sumedang - Indonesia, Word Cloud could respond to the English classes' challenges. Based on my preliminary interview with the English teacher, three disturbing factors in the class are discussed. She said that her students had difficulty increasing vocabulary because of their English learning background. Regarding their English learning background, they are beginner learners of English. Besides, they are less familiar with English words and rarely exposed to English. Moreover, they are not self-directed learners, which means that they do not control their learning and development (Ferralazzo, 2013).

These factors make the students challenging to comprehend English text. Moreover, in the interview, the teacher confessed that the only thing she could do is translating word by word. This means that the students only learn vocabulary with the translation method without understanding how words are used. The technique makes the students forget a new word that the teacher delivers because each new vocabulary is not used contextually (Arono & Nadrah, 2019).

For those reasons, Word Cloud was used to teach vocabulary in the research site. This research aims to find how significant Word Cloud improved students' vocabulary. It was designed as an experimental study. It involved 30 students in SMAN Jatinunggal, Sumedang – Indonesia, who aged between 16th until 17th years old. English was taught as one of the compulsory subjects in the school, allocated two-hour meetings each week. The experiment took three two-hour meetings.

B. Research Questions

The concerns in the study are formulated into three research questions, as follows:

1. What is the students' vocabulary before using Word Cloud?
2. What is the students' vocabulary after using Word Cloud?
3. How significant is the different between students' vocabulary before using Word Cloud and after using Word Cloud?

C. Research Purposes

From the research questions above, this study is intended to acquire the three following objectives:

1. To find out the result of students' vocabulary before using Word Cloud.
2. To find out the result of students' vocabulary after using Word Cloud.
3. To find out the significant difference between students' vocabulary before and after using Word Cloud.

D. Limitation of the Research

This study focuses on investigating how effective Word Cloud in vocabulary learning. It means that the analysis and discussion are specific to the finding of the effectiveness. This study do not concern with productive vocabulary because the students learned vocabulary in a receptive way, which means learning new words from listening and reading. This study is conducted to 30 students in SMAN Jatinunggal from 31st March to 12th April 2021. The findings represent the population's condition at the time; it cannot be generalized to the other context.

E. Research Significances

This research is expected to a credible reference that reports Word Cloud used in English vocabulary teaching. It offers specific data showing how effective the application Word Cloud is in vocabulary teaching. Additionally, this study could be useful for further research in language learning.

F. Rationale

Vocabulary is a basic element in language learning. Vocabulary can be divided into two types; receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. These two terms are used to distinguish between 'receptive' and 'productive' skills (Palmer, 1921; Wets, 1938; Crow 1986, cited in Novianti, 2017). Receptive vocabulary is the skill of students who can recognize and understand a word's meaning when reading and listening. In comparison, productive vocabulary is students' skills in understanding words and can be used both in oral and written form (Maskor & Baharudin, 2016). Both of these abilities can certainly help students in learning English. However, this study only focuses on students' receptive vocabulary.

Word Cloud is a strategy that the students learn new words from multimodal media, such as visualized arts made from texts. This strategy makes students see texts in a more exciting way (Mahmoodi, 2013). In that way, students can choose vocabulary from the texts they read and understand to be used as main points. After that, students can make their vocabulary lists by giving different colours or sizes to each word to make them more comfortable remembering and understanding the meaning.

According to Bromley (2013) students can create Word Clouds that identify important words on topics they are studying in science and social studies. To do this, students need to cut and paste a famous speech or a section of their subject area text into the Word Cloud box. Word Clouds allow students to see how an author uses language: which words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) the author uses most and least often. Students can then write their own poem, notes, report, or essay using the key vocabulary identified in the Word Cloud from the resulting Word Cloud.

The teacher provides an example of a Word Cloud to identify how the vocabulary in Word Cloud is related. Then students have to identify the vocabulary that will be entered into the Word Cloud. So that students can see how

vocabulary is used in related contexts and create their own online dictionary through visual illustrations. It can help students to identify the main idea, theme, and purpose of the sentence. In this study, researchers used a test to measure students' receptive vocabulary. This type of test is expected to measure receptive understanding of vocabulary and as motivation in improving students' English vocabulary learning.

G. Hypothesis

Hypotheses are predictions the researcher makes about the expected relationships among variables (Creswell, 2012). The formulation of the hypothesis of this research is presented below:

1. H_a rejected and H_0 accepted if $t_{\text{ccount}} < t_{\text{table}}$. It means that there is no significant effect of Word Cloud to the students' vocabulary.
2. H_a accepted H_0 rejected if $t_{\text{ccount}} > t_{\text{table}}$. It means that there is a significant effect of Word Cloud to the students' vocabulary.

H. Previous Research

For the past five years, several studies have investigated the use of Word Cloud in TESOL. Word Cloud has proven to have positive effects in engaging the learners in the classroom. It was mostly applied in the classroom of second language (L2) writing. Word Cloud effectively improved students' new lexical items in their writing to boost students' self-confidence in writing (Baralt et al., 2011). Additionally, this teaching strategy helped students identify concepts and topics to write a text (Brooks et al., 2014). Word Cloud could help students created a particular tone of voice in writing (Filatova, 2016), and generated ideas for new writing topics or themes (Tafazoli, 2013).

Regarding the teaching reading in TESOL, Word Cloud can be used as part of reading activities. One of the reading activities is pre-reading, which aims to help the learners prepare the task and motivate them to read (Lindsay and Knight, 2006, cited in (Tafazoli, 2013). Besides, Word Cloud can also be used in both pre-reading and post-reading (Bromley, 2013). According to (Filatova, 2016), the larger the word on the Word Cloud, the more important it is. In other words, the

largest word is the main idea in the Word Cloud. Other words are describing minor supporting details in the text.

In terms of teaching ESL vocabulary, word use becomes a promising factor in learners' learning. Word Cloud improved students' long term vocabulary (Mahmoodi, 2013), enhanced vocabulary learning retention (Hajebi et al., 2018), and created activities for students to explore words independently in an engaging way (Roman et al., 2016).

However, there is limited research to study the precise improvement of students' vocabulary. It is what this present research focusses on. It specifically investigates how significant the effectiveness of Word Cloud is to teach English receptive vocabulary.

