

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language is one of the most important aspects of communication and functions as a means of communication between nations throughout the world. Of the many languages in the world, English is one of the most widely used by the global community. Therefore, English is known as an international language that is used in many countries and plays a role in various fields such as education, politics, technology, economics, business, and others. As an international language, English is very important and related to various aspects of human life (Rao, 2019).

In Indonesia, English is not considered a second language but rather a foreign language. English has also become a mandatory subject from elementary school to university level. Therefore, students are expected to improve their ability to speak English.

In learning English, skills are divided into two types, namely receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills include reading and listening. According to Tarigan (2008), reading is a process carried out and used by readers to get messages, as well as a method of communication both with themselves and with others, which conveys the meaning implied or expressed

in written symbols. In addition, according to Tarigan (2008) listening is an activity that involves hearing language sounds, identifying, observing, and responding to the meaning contained in stimuli.

The productive skills include writing and speaking skills. White (1986) stated that writing is the process of expressing ideas, knowledge, information or experience, as well as understanding writing to obtain and share knowledge or information and Astrawan (2013) stated that speaking is a skill that must be mastered and practiced with other people. All of these English skills are very important. However, to master it, students need to practice all these skills because this is crucial in mastering English. What this means is, all skills are the result of a long learning process and the application of the knowledge students gain during that process.

There are also soft skills such as vocabulary and grammar. One of the most important aspects of learning English is vocabulary. Webb (2005) stated that vocabulary learning tasks are more receptive than productive. Receptive activities, such as looking up words in a dictionary, matching words to their meanings or definitions, guessing from context, and learning from word pairs, are performed more frequently because they are easier to design, assess, and complete compared to productive tasks. However, Webb also acknowledged that "it has never been proven that receptive learning is more effective than productive learning; in fact, research suggests that the opposite may be true." Students' vocabulary attainment is the most important factor in learning

English. When learning a language, one of the components that needs to be learned is vocabulary.

So far, students' vocabulary mastery are still low. This is caused by the focus of teachers in Indonesia which has only been on teaching grammar. They often forget that the main goal of language skills is to communicate well in that language, in this case English. Because of this, most Indonesian students are more proficient in grammar than in vocabulary. Thornbury (2002) said, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." This statement emphasizes how important vocabulary is for communicating because people will have difficulty communicating if they don't have vocabulary. Considering the importance of vocabulary in foreign language learning, mastery of this component needs to be developed. Ideally, high school students should have a lot of vocabulary, because by having a lot of vocabulary, they can improve their English skills.

Using dictionary is one of the best ways to improve our English skills. Dictionary is considered as the important tool in learning foreign language that cannot be separated in language learning. Dictionaries provide learners with useful linguistic and cultural information, particularly when the educators are unavailable and the students are responsible for their own studying (Koca et al, 2014).

Electronic dictionaries are preferred by many students in the academic field in this digital era. Jiang (2012) stated that the main use of electronic

dictionaries is that they are suitable for use and very helpful. He also said that electronic dictionaries are growing; they can give example sentences to explain word usage, pronounce words clearly, and keep hard-to-remember words special. According to Zheng & Wang (2016), electronic dictionaries have become famous, popular, and preferred among learners of English as a Foreign Language at various levels.

In this case, the usage of U-Dictionary application in this situation could aid students in their studies and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching and learning process. One tool that both teachers and students can use in the teaching and learning process.

U-dictionary is an offline/online English dictionary application that can be downloaded by every student in every class. This application can be downloaded via play store, u-dictionary is an application that is available on all mobile phones made by Talent Education inc. Besides being easy to use, this application may enhance students` English skills. u-dictionary not only gives the spelling of words, but also their meanings. Anyone can use u-dictionary to not only translate words or phrases but also to practice their foreign language skills. U-dictionary is a useful learning tool that can help students increase their English skills. By using the u-dictionary application in the learning process, it is hoped that it can help students to enhance their English skills effectively and efficiently. Allah stated in Qur'an surah Ar-Rum, verse 22:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

Surah Ar-Rum means that learning a foreign language can be a valuable tool for fostering communication and understanding between different cultures and nations. In other words, this surah makes a statement to learn a foreign language, in this case English. And one effective way to improve our English skills is to use an electronic dictionary. Electronic dictionary is an important tool in improving language skills and deepening cross-cultural understanding.

For students at the second grade of Islamic Senior High School 3 Banjar, English learning material is one of the subjects they usually learn at the school. Based on results of observations at the school, the researcher conducted interviews with English teacher in class XI of MAN 3 Banjar. The teacher mentioned that some students still face many difficulties in mastering English. She said that some students do not know the meanings of vocabulary, so they cannot answer the questions and exercises given correctly. Then, in writing activities some of the students unable to write vocabulary according correct spelling and in reading activities, some students cannot pronounce vocabulary correctly because, in English, the spelling and pronunciation of words are different. The uninteresting classroom learning process also causes some students to feel uninterested in learning English. Therefore, based on the background above, the researcher is interested in studying about the use of u-dictionary application in supporting learning English for students of Islamic senior high school.

B. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid confusion regarding the editorial intent behind the title, it must be described as an operational definition from some of the title's words:

1. Learning

According to Ambrose et al (2010), learning is a process that produces changes as a result of experience, which increases the potential for future performance and learning. Changes in students can occur in terms of knowledge, behavior, or attitudes. Through learning, students can understand concepts, ideas, and/or views of the world differently.

2. Perception

Perception is the process by which we interpret and make sense of sensory information that we receive from our environment. This includes information from our senses such as sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Our perception is influenced by a variety of factors including our past experiences, expectations, attention, and context. perception plays an important role in how we understand and interpret the references we encounter, and it is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors.

3. U-Dictionary

U-Dictionary is an offline and online dictionary that is easy to use in learning and can be accessed by laptop, computer and smartphone, u-dictionary

also has complete features such as phonetic symbols and pronunciation, OCR translate, grammar check, and machine translation of more than 30 languages in the world

C. Research Questions

Based on the background study, this research is to find out the answer of the research question:

1. How to apply u-dictionary in supporting English learning for Islamic senior high school students?
2. How are students` responses in using u-dictionary for English learning?

D. Objectives of Study

Based on the research question above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To describe how to apply u dictionary in supporting English learning for Islamic senior high school students.
2. To find out the students` responses in using u-dictionary for English learning.

E. Significance of Study

The research's findings should provide teachers and students with some solutions:

1. English Teacher

This research is expected to help future English teachers to consider whether or not to use electronic dictionary as teaching aid later on.

2. Students

This research is expected to help them in learning English.

3. Future Researchers

This research is expected to be useful for the future researchers who conduct the similar research to get any information and as one of the references.