CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

The fundamental goal of education extends beyond the mere transfer of knowledge; it encompasses the psychological and emotional development of the learner. In Indonesia, this holistic approach is mandated by law. Law Number 20 Chapter 40 Paragraph 2 explicitly states that educators and educational staff are obligated to create an educational atmosphere that is meaningful, fun, creative, dynamic, and dialogical. This is further reinforced by Government Regulation (PP) No. 19 Article 19 Paragraph 1, which dictates: "The learning process in educational units is organized to be interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging, motivating students to actively participate, and providing sufficient space for initiative, creativity, and independence in accordance with their talents, interests, physical development, and student psychology" (Layyinah, 2017). These legal frameworks highlight that a positive, engaging classroom environment is not merely a preference, but a pedagogical requirement.

Despite these clear governmental directives, achieving optimal learning outcomes remains a complex challenge, particularly in the context of foreign language acquisition. Learning a new language is a notoriously difficult and time-consuming process, especially for young or beginner learners who lack exposure to the language outside the classroom. Consequently, students often struggle to speak

or understand English proficiently, even after studying the language for an extended period (Ratmaningsih, 2017).

This persistent lack of proficiency is influenced by a complex interplay of variables. Broadly, there are several factors that influence learners in acquiring a new language, categorized into internal and external elements. Internal factors reside within the learners themselves, encompassing their intellect (intelligence), intrinsic motivation, self-confidence, natural talent, and personal interests. Conversely, external factors stem from the learner's environment. These include the social and cultural context, peer influence, curriculum design, institutional support, and crucially, the educational strategies and learning processes orchestrated by the teachers (Ratmaningsih, 2017).

Among these external factors, the teaching strategies employed in the classroom play an essential and highly controllable role in the language learning process. There is a distinct contrast in the learning strategies utilized by successful versus unsuccessful learners, and the teacher's approach directly dictates which path a student takes. For a language program to be effective, both teachers and students must experience mutual improvement in their respective teaching and learning processes (Sartika, 2019).

The strategies of successful and unsuccessful learners provides critical insights for educators. It informs teachers on how to optimize English instruction to genuinely help students learn. Unfortunately, when teachers utilize misaligned or outdated pedagogical strategies, it not only fails to improve students' English

proficiency but actively harms their educational journey, causing them to feel bored, overwhelmed, and lazy toward learning the English language (An-nisa & Suwartono, 2020).

This sense of boredom and demotivation is most often the result of traditional, teacher-centered methodologies. A learning strategy that focuses solely on passive reception—such as listening to long teacher lectures, copying extensive notes from the board, and rote memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary creates a monotonous classroom atmosphere. This heavily cognitive approach ignores the emotional and psychological needs of the students, causing them to quickly lose interest and severely reducing their intrinsic motivation. When motivation drops, the "affective filter" (a psychological barrier to learning) rises, preventing language acquisition from occurring. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers abandon these rigid methods and transition toward dynamic, engaging teaching activities that are enjoyable for learners (Lahadisi, 2014).

To bridge the gap between low student proficiency and the government's mandate for engaging education, teachers must actively implement "Fun Learning." Fun learning is not a frivolous addition to the classroom; it is highly necessary for every effective learning process. It helps students contextualize the material, facilitates a meaningful learning experience, and provides a sense of psychological satisfaction, which is a primary determining factor in long-term academic success (Mustafa1, Sriyanti, et al., 2023).

This concept aligns with the principles established by Bobbi DePorter, who stated that fun learning strategies are utilized to create a highly effective learning environment. By lowering student anxiety and increasing active participation, fun learning acts as a catalyst. It aids in seamlessly implementing the curriculum, conveying complex materials in an accessible way, and ultimately repairing and accelerating students' learning achievements (Darmasyah, 2011). When students associate English learning with positive emotions rather than stress and boredom, their willingness to practice, make mistakes, and engage with the language increases dramatically.

True educators inspire curiosity, break down barriers,and celebrate small wins. From HR. Bukhari & Muslim:

يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا، وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا تُنَفِّرُوا

Guided by the prophetic wisdom to facilitate and not complicate, and to encourage and not alienate are the true education transcends the mere delivery of facts. It defines the ideal educator as a bridge-builder who uses simplicity and empathy to dismantle barriers to learning, ensuring that rigor never devolves into unnecessary hardship. By prioritizing "glad tidings" positive reinforcement and hope over harshness, the teacher fosters an environment of attraction rather than aversion. Ultimately, creativity in the classroom is elevated from a simple technique to a sacred virtue, demanding that the educator constantly innovate to make knowledge accessible, inspiring, and transformative for every learner.

Fun and good learning activities is in accordance with the word of Allah in Surah An Nahl verse 125, below:

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُۗ

The teacher as a source of knowledge for students in teaching, needs to use different methods so that the students can quickly learn how to complete the learning, as well as the teaching.

The teacher needs to use a variety of methods to provide completeness. Motivating students, for example by using different methods, teaching aids, and teaching strategies education. One of them is the use of a skill based game in language learning such as Velcro Dart Game. Velcro Dart Game is a skill based game that involves the learners throwing a Velcro dart to the Velcroboard. It has varied size, shape, the number, color, etc, the teacher can easily made this throwing game challenging by adding rules that was more suitable.

Because this method is new and exciting and makes the learning environment joyful, but the state of joy is meant to create a cheerful environment. The joy here means that the student's desire to learn and understand the course material, and this method is also very popular with young people. That’s why it is very suitable for the student.

Based on the discrepancy between the ideal educational atmosphere mandated by regulations and the frequent reality of boring, ineffective English instruction, there is a pressing need to explore and apply engaging pedagogical strategies. Implementing fun learning is crucial to maximizing student potential, mitigating external obstacles, and fostering internal motivation. Therefore, this research aims to investigate "The effectiveness of the Velcro Dart game in teaching vocabulary to seventh grade at SMPN 1 Barabai in Hulu Sungai Tengah District."

B. Definition of Key Terms

1. Effectiveness

   Effectiveness is the main element to achieve the goals and objectives that have been determined in every organization, activity or program. It is called effective if the goals or objectives are achieved as specified.

2. Vocabulary

   Vocabulary is a list or collection of words usually arranged alphabetically and each word has a meaning to convey information. Vocabulary is also the knowledge of words and word meanings, which make up language.

3. Velcro Dart Game

   Velcro dart game is a game where the player throw Velcro dart which is small ball that covered by Velcro material that could be attached on Velcro dartboard that was specifically for Velcro dart. Velcro dart game is safe to play with as they do not have sharp needles. Velcro Dart game can be used

to introduce children to the fun of playing dart and learning how to throw safely.

C. Research Question:

1. Are there some signicant improvement from the students on their vocabulary after studying using Velcro Dart game?
2. Are there any difficulties during students learning activities involving the use of Velcro Dart game?

D. Research objectives

1 The purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the Velcro Dart Game on improving Students vocabulary.

2 To identify the difficulties that arise when the teacher use Dart Vencro in their learning activity.

E. Research Hypothesis

1 Null Hypothesis (H0) which states there is no significant increase in effectiveness in learning English vocabulary of seventh grade students.

2 Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) which states there is an increase in effectiveness in learning seventh grade English vocabulary.

F. Significance of Study

1. For Researchers

Can develop the mindset and expertise of researchers to become an educator in educational media development. The researcher can implement the Velcro Dart game when he/she becomes the teacher later.

2. For Students

   As input on the use of the Velcro Dart game as a game media to improve the understanding of English vocabulary for students improve understanding of English vocabulary for students.

3. For teachers

   As an intervention material for teachers to utilize the media of Velcro Dart Game in learning students' English vocabulary.

4. For school

   As information about educational media that can be used to improve students' English vocabulary and as a consideration for educational institutions to provide policies for teachers to use Velcro dart game media on students' English vocabulary.