CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Vocabulary mastery is one of the fundamental components of language learning because it enables learners to understand, express, and communicate ideas effectively. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students may encounter difficulties in developing the four essential English language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is considered an important component of students' overall English proficiency.

McKeown and Curtis (2022) state that vocabulary knowledge extends beyond knowing the meaning of individual words. It also includes understanding how words are appropriately used in different contexts and communicative situations. Likewise, Alshumrani (2024) emphasizes that vocabulary plays a central role in second language acquisition and that teachers' and students' beliefs about vocabulary learning can significantly influence learning outcomes.

In English language teaching, vocabulary serves as a foundation for effective communication. Students with sufficient vocabulary knowledge are better able to comprehend texts, participate in conversations, express ideas, and produce written work confidently. Conversely, limited vocabulary mastery can become a major obstacle that prevents students from achieving satisfactory performance in English. Therefore, appropriate strategies and instructional media are needed to help students develop their vocabulary mastery effectively.

Based on preliminary observations and informal discussions with the English teacher at SMA Negeri 17 Muaro Jambi, many eleventh-grade students still experience difficulties in mastering English vocabulary. Most students have problems understanding the meanings of unfamiliar words, remembering vocabulary items, and applying them appropriately in sentences and classroom communication. As a result, their vocabulary achievement remains below the expected learning standards and may negatively affect their performance in other English language skills.

One factor that may contribute to this condition is the use of conventional teaching methods, which mainly rely on teacher explanations, textbooks, and memorization activities. Such instructional approaches may create relatively passive learning environments and provide limited opportunities for students to encounter vocabulary in meaningful contexts. Consequently, students may become less motivated and experience difficulties in retaining newly learned words for long-term use.

To address these problems, teachers need to employ innovative instructional media that can increase students' motivation and facilitate vocabulary acquisition. One alternative is the use of short films as audio-visual instructional media. Several scholars have described short films not merely as shorter versions of feature films but as a distinct film format with its own narrative and production characteristics. Sergi and Batty (2019) explain that short films require careful consideration of story, characters, scope, and dramatic questions because the limited format influences how a story is developed and presented. Walde (2021) further argues that

a short film should be understood as a specific format rather than simply a film with a short duration, emphasizing the relationship between brevity, format, and the context of its production and exhibition. More recently, Sayıcı (2023) describes short film as a distinctive form of cinema that communicates a story within a limited duration and includes different forms such as fiction, animation, experimental, and documentary films. Based on these views, a short film can be understood as a relatively brief audiovisual work that presents a focused story, idea, or message through moving images, sound, dialogue, and other cinematic elements. Although its duration is shorter than a feature-length film, a short film can still contain important narrative elements such as characters, setting, events, conflict, and resolution. In English language teaching, short films can provide students with contextualized language input and visual situations that support their understanding of new vocabulary.

Short films can be particularly useful in vocabulary learning because they combine visual and auditory information. Through a short film, students can observe objects and actions, listen to pronunciation and dialogue, and understand the meanings of words through contextual situations. The combination of images, sounds, gestures, expressions, and dialogue can help students associate new vocabulary with meaningful situations. Therefore, students may find it easier to understand, remember, and use new vocabulary.

Furthermore, short films can provide a more engaging learning experience than activities that rely primarily on memorization. Students can observe how vocabulary is used in communication and relate the words they learn to situations

presented in the film. This may encourage students to become more actively involved in classroom activities and increase their interest in learning English. Thus, the use of short films as audio-visual media has the potential to support both vocabulary acquisition and students' classroom engagement.

Several previous studies have shown that the use of audio-visual media can improve students' vocabulary achievement and learning motivation. For example, Inayatul found that the use of audio-visual media was effective in improving students' vocabulary learning. Other previous studies have also reported positive effects of audio-visual media on students' vocabulary achievement, motivation, and classroom engagement. These findings suggest that audio-visual media can provide meaningful and engaging learning experiences for students. However, research specifically investigating the effectiveness of short films in teaching vocabulary at the senior high school level, particularly at SMA Negeri 17 Muaro Jambi, remains limited. Therefore, further investigation is needed to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of short films as an instructional strategy for improving students' vocabulary mastery.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled **"The Effectiveness of Using Short Films on Students' Vocabulary Mastery at the Eleventh Grade of SMA Negeri 17 Muaro Jambi."**

1.2 Identification of problem

1. Never use audio-visual in vocabulary learning such as short films

2. Students' vocabulary scores are still low or below average from grade books and teacher assessments.

3. The teaching and learning process is still dominated by conventional methods that provide limited opportunities for students to interact actively with vocabulary.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

To make the research more focused and manageable, this study is limited to investigating the effectiveness of using short films on students' vocabulary mastery. The participants of this research are the eleventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 17 Muaro Jambi in the academic year 2025/2026. The study focuses only on measuring students' vocabulary mastery through pre-test and post-test scores. The vocabulary items assessed in this study are mainly adjectives, verbs, and nouns, with the test focusing on students' ability to understand word meanings, identify vocabulary in context, recognize synonyms and antonyms, and select appropriate vocabulary in sentences

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation of the problem, the research question is formulated as "Is the use short films effective in improving the vocabulary mastery of the eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 17 Muaro Jambi?"

1.5 Purpose of the Research

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the purpose of this research is To investigate whether the use short films is effective in improving the vocabulary mastery of the eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 17 Muaro Jambi.

This expected of study is to provide theoritical,partical and profesional benefit

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.Theoritically

The research finding can be used to enrich the theories and method regarding the use short film toward student to improve vocabulary mastery.

2.Partically

Partically ,the research finding provides to The English teachers in teaching vocabulary by using short film ,the theacher can teach student in an effective.for the students will get more experience and the students will get some motivation that learning vocabulary is not complicated as they think before. The students will be able to have good achievement in vocabulary mastery.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and clarify the focus of this study, the following key terms are defined as follows:

1. Short Film

Short film refers to a relatively brief audiovisual production that presents a focused story, idea, or message through moving images, dialogue, sound, and other

visual elements. In this study, short film is used as an instructional medium in teaching English vocabulary. The short film provides students with visual and auditory contexts through characters, actions, dialogue, gestures, and situations, which can help students understand and remember new vocabulary. In particular, the animated short film *Snack Attack* is used as the learning material in the experimental class.

2. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery refers to students' ability to understand, recognize, remember, and appropriately use English words in meaningful contexts. It includes students' ability to identify word meanings, understand vocabulary based on context, recognize synonyms and antonyms, and select appropriate vocabulary in sentences. In this study, students' vocabulary mastery is measured through vocabulary tests administered as a pre-test and post-test. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions designed to measure students' understanding of the vocabulary taught during the learning process.