

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a machine that exhibits intelligence by reflecting human cognition and development, which is then integrated with information already available around the world for the purpose of facilitating humans to live easier. AI-based products and platforms are increasingly being used in a wide range of industries, including health care, transportation, and education. AI is now being created to help the field of education, particularly language instruction, as Ali (2020) emphasizes, its purpose is to improve pedagogy and make the learning process easier. The rapid development of AI to support education, particularly in language teaching, underscores the need to master English as a global and international language.

English, as a worldwide and international language, is one that is needed to be mastered. The ability to communicate in English will open up numerous opportunities that will allow people to engage directly with individuals all over the world. However, learning and teaching English as a foreign language or non-native one might be challenging. The main challenge occurs when the mother tongue and the foreign language being acquired have significant disparities in vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, and grammar, as identified by Ahmed (2013) in his study of the problems faced by teachers and students when learning English as a foreign language. This challenge leads them to face other challenges; the difficulty to

remember the vocabulary of English, language structures that are different from the students' first language and the way English language being pronounced makes students lose their interest to study English. Not to mention the students' ignorance and indifference the usefulness and function to learning English, and the lack of resources that will make it easier for students to gain knowledge about learning English are also the challenges in teaching and learning English. These challenges require the development of innovative techniques and strategies to improve the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or non-native language.

Teachers need to employ techniques and strategies when teaching English to their students, and those strategies and techniques to teach English are no longer limited through textbook only. According to Renau (2016) and Arora et al. (2017), English language training has progressed beyond traditional approaches, with an emphasis on communication skills and practical application. As English language teaching moves beyond traditional techniques, this demonstrates how, by working with developments in AI technology, teachers can rapidly and effectively gain assistance in enhancing students' English skills. Language learning in this innovative method keeps students motivated, interested and not easily bored during learning teaching process.

Numerous artificial intelligence technologies in the field of education, especially in the field of English education, are now very varied and increasingly innovative in providing services needed by both teachers and students in language learning. Different features are offered and highlighted by each language learning AI-powered platform to attract teachers and students as users. Hence, the teachers

as language learning instructors for students must be knowledgeable in selecting existing AI-powered platforms that are adjusted to the needs of the students to learn and improve their English language skills. The effectiveness of these tools, however, is dependent on the quality of their design and the understanding of the teachers who use them. Colchester (2017) highlights the significance of AI platforms in adjusting to the unique needs of students in English Language Teaching (ELT). Therefore, teachers should not simply leave it up to their students to learn using AI on their own without being guided, instead teachers need to choose platforms customized to their students' specific requirements. Additionally, teachers must be prepared to integrate AI-powered platforms into their classroom instruction (Pokriváková, 2019).

Some AI-powered platforms provide features that enable to support English learning in various skills such as speaking, reading, writing and others. In improving English proficiencies, EFL students need to explore and understand vocabulary and how vocabulary is pronounced in English, which shows big differences in pronunciation and vocabulary between their mother tongue or first language and English as the foreign language they are targeting to learn. Moreover, vocabulary and listening skills tend to be important components of language acquisition to be able to improve English proficiency.

Observing vocabulary and listening skills in the study is critical since they play such an important role in language acquisition and communication ability. Vocabulary is important because it allows pupils to grasp and communicate a variety of ideas, which improves both oral and written communication. Listening

skills are equally crucial because they enable kids to understand spoken language, follow directions, and participate in meaningful conversations. Together, these abilities create a thorough comprehension of the language, allowing for improved academic performance and real-world interactions. The study focuses on vocabulary and listening, two crucial components that have a substantial impact on language learning outcomes and instructional method efficacy.

Given the importance of these skills, finding effective tools to enhance learning is essential. Integrating technology in education has shown promising results, particularly in language learning. This study examines how Memrise, an AI-powered learning platform, can be used to support and improve students' listening and vocabulary skills. The primary focus of this study is on the use of an AI tool known as Memrise to increase students' listening abilities and vocabulary in the context of teaching and learning English in the classroom. Memrise is a free online learning platform that teaches vocabulary and listening skills in a variety of languages. It utilizes the use of artificial intelligence technology to deliver interactive learning content, allowing users to expand their vocabulary and enhance their listening abilities. Memrise works to enhance students' English learning in a rapid, engaging approach that allows them to fully internalize what they have learnt.

Memrise is a great tool for teaching vocabulary and listening skills to students because it's user-friendly and enjoyable. Memrise helps various learner types remember better by using tried-and-true techniques like spaced repetition and offering a ton of games, videos, and audio. Its extensive content, written by professionals and native speakers, aids students in hearing and comprehending

spoken language. Points, levels, and daily objectives are just a few of the game-like elements on the platform that encourage students to practice frequently and make learning new words and honing listening comprehension skills enjoyable and efficient. Using Memrise in the classroom will enable teachers to conduct more active, effective, and engaging learning experiences. Memrise also offers an adaptive learning experience, tailoring the curriculum to the demands of each user and boosting the effectiveness of language acquisition. Memrise may be utilized on a computer as well as a cellphone, making it accessible from anywhere and at any time.

Memrise was chosen as the primary tool to investigate its impact on increasing students' listening abilities and vocabulary learning. This study urges researchers to investigate the extent to which Memrise can help students improve their English language skills. In this study, the researcher would like to find out whether integrating Memrise in English learning may improve students' vocabulary and English listening skills, and investigate if there is a significant improvement experienced by students before and after the intervention. Considering the background and the researcher's curiosity based on the previous explanation, this research may provide answers to the objectives of the research.

## **1.2. Reason for Choosing the Topic**

Currently, the world of education has entered the digital era, where the learning system is no longer in the stage of using traditional methods or through textbooks alone. The improvement of artificial intelligence in the field of language education can enable language teachers to integrate AI platforms into English

language learning. A deep understanding of students' needs in learning English provides a strong foundation for this research to explore the contribution of AI platforms in improving EFL students' vocabulary and listening skills.

This study chooses Memrise, a language learning tool that employs artificial intelligence (AI) to present materials adaptively. The research attempts to cater to students' particular needs, offering a personalized and effective learning experience, with a focus on vocabulary and listening abilities. Vocabulary and listening skills were chosen to be essential foundations for successful language communication, and the research is exploratory in nature, seeking the contribution of Memrise, as an AI platform, to the development of these skills in EFL students. Whereas students' enthusiasm and understanding of English language learning materials remain low, particularly in vocabulary and listening abilities and there are still many students who do not know the Memrise platform to increase their vocabulary and listening skills. The platform's use of videos, audio, and games makes learning enjoyable and effective, which can yield measurable improvements in the language skills. Additionally, Memrise's popularity and accessibility ensure that the study can be easily replicated and applied in diverse educational settings.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

From the mentioned background above, some research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. Does the use of Memrise enhance EFL students' vocabulary significantly?

2. Does the use of Memrise enhance EFL students' listening skills significantly?

#### **1.4. Aims of Research**

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate whether using the Memrise platform as a language learning tool can significantly improve EFL students' vocabulary.
2. To assess whether the use of Memrise platform can significantly enhances EFL students' listening skills.

#### **1.5. Clarification of Key Terms**

##### **1.5.1. AI Memrise**

Memrise is a learning platform that uses AI-based technology (combined with a GPT3-powered "AI Language partner") that functions as a language learning media. Memrise can be opened through the website or be downloaded as an application on smartphone or tab. Memrise provides various features that help language learners to learn new languages as beginner and improve their language proficiency in a more exciting and engaging way.

##### **1.5.2. English Language Teaching (ELT)**

English Language Teaching (ELT) refers to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language to non-native speakers. The main goal of ELT is to help learners develop English language skills involving four main aspects: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are multiple

approaches in ELT, some of them are including integration of technology, AI, and other strategies which are then adapted to students' needs.

### **1.5.3. EFL Students**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners or students refer to individuals whose first language is not English, and they are in the process of acquiring proficiency in English as a secondary or additional language. These students usually live in areas or nations where English is not the most common language of exchange. The aim of EFL students' language study is to use English for social, professional, and academic contexts. For EFL students, formal educational environments, language schools, or independent study are common learning environments in which they can develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities to become proficient in English communication. Depending on their linguistic origins, cultural settings, and exposure to English language resources, EFL learners may encounter different difficulties.

### **1.5.4. Vocabulary and Listening skill**

Vocabulary refers to the collection of words and their meanings that an individual knows and uses in a particular language. It encompasses a person's understanding of word definitions, spellings, and how words are used in different contexts. Developing a robust vocabulary is crucial for effective communication and language comprehension.

Listening skill, on the other hand, is the ability to understand spoken language accurately. It involves not only hearing the words but also grasping

the context, nuances, and subtleties of the speaker's message. Effective listening skills contribute significantly to language acquisition, facilitating better communication and comprehension in various settings such as conversations, lectures, or multimedia presentations. Both vocabulary and listening skills are fundamental components in language learning, working together to enhance overall language proficiency.

#### **1.6. Organization of the Study**

This thesis presents the study's organization in order to deliver the study in a methodical manner. As a result, the paper is organized into five chapters.

1. The first part is Chapter I, Introduction. It mainly discusses the background of the study, the research questions, the objectives of the study, the limitation of the study, the contribution of the study, and the organization of the study.
2. The second section is Chapter II, Literature Review. This second chapter provides some theories that can be implemented as the basic foundation of the study. Artificial Intelligence, ELT, EFL Skill and previous studies are presented in this chapter.
3. The third part is Chapter III, Methodology. This chapter describes the research methodology. It covers the following topics including the research design, the setting and subjects, data collection methods, and data analysis methods.

4. The fourth part is Chapter IV, Result and Discussion. The research analysis is presented in this chapter. The study's findings, as well as the final result, will be discussed.
5. The last part is Chapter V, Conclusion and recommendations. The study's conclusions and recommendations are presented in this final chapter. The conclusion provides a detailed overview of the research findings. Meanwhile, the recommendation offers some advice to readers, English teachers, and other researchers on teaching English for general or specific objectives.

## **1.7. The Contribution of the Research**

### **1.7.1. Theoretically**

The research on Memrise in English language teaching deepens the understanding of how AI platforms can significantly enhance vocabulary and listening skills in EFL learners, illustrating the impact of multimedia resources and gamification on language acquisition. It focuses on the cognitive benefits of varied sensory input, such as combining audio and visual features, which facilitates better memorization and comprehension. Furthermore, the study broadens the perspective on the integration of technology in education by demonstrating how artificial intelligence may be a valuable tool in modern language learning environments to improve student engagement.

### 1.7.2. Practically

The study also gives helpful ideas for teachers on how to effectively include Memrise into their teaching approaches, as well as a realistic framework for applying AI tools to improve student outcomes. It is also equipping teachers' practical ideas to improve their traditional teaching methods. The findings suggest ways to make language learning more interactive and accessible, ultimately contributing to a more engaging and effective educational experience for students.

