CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Learning a language being an important thing that people have to do. The language used by humans to communicate with others. The identity of humans is good communication. Language is the most important component in life. With good language we can have a good conversation. However, it cannot be denied that vocabulary mastery also plays an important role in the daily conversations that we use. The importance of mastering vocabulary in everyday life can have an impact on human life. For example, in job interviews, daily conversations, writing, and also in negotiations. Sometimes can be seen as a wise man, or clever, even someone who does not take his stand from the everyday words he uses. However, as we know, vocabulary is now growing rapidly. Give birth to several new genres that we know such as slang, proverbs, idioms, jargon, and so on so that humans must also develop following the development of words that are also growing.

In English, mastering vocabulary is very necessary. Especially for everyday conversation. The importance of vocabulary knowledge in enabling individuals to hold authentic and native, like conversations is self-evident.[1] The very center of these important shifts in English language arts is language, and the rich vocabulary that will be necessary to meet the new expectations.[2] In some respect, it is gateway to standards; without the rich vocabulary, we will never understand what other people want to express or deliver to others. Especially in idioms. Because from now on, idiomatic expressions become parts of every language. Every country and every language have idioms. Especially in English. Native speakers tend to use idiomatic expressions spontaneously without thinking of the figurative meaning.[3] It is natural that non-native speakers find idioms difficult to understand because they do not know what the image of the idiomatic expression is based on. Because idioms do

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[1] Zainab Abolfazli Khonbi and Karim Sadeghi, 'Improving English Language Learners' Idiomatic Competence: Does Mode of Teaching Play a Role?', *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 5.3 (2017), 61–79.

[2] Susan B Neuman, *"All About Words: Increasing Vocabulary in The Common Core Classroom, Pre-K2"*. (New York:Teachers College press) p.15

[3] Abid Thyab Rana, 'The Necessity of Idiomatic Expressions to English Language Learners', *International Journal of English and Literature*, 7.7 (2016), 106–11 <https://doi.org/10.5897/ijel2016.0895>.

not have a clear grammar or word order, so they cannot be translated word by word. So, we must know the overall meaning of the idiom. For example, if the native speaker says 'the project went down in flames when the team lead resigned'.[4] It means that the project fails. Because the team lead resigned.

In addition, there are still many students in the school environment who have not mastered vocabulary well. In fact, to understand idiomatic expressions, students need to master a lot of vocabulary in order to understand idiomatic expressions well. In this case, students still encounter many difficulties so that if students do not master a lot of vocabulary, students cannot understand idiomatic expressions well. The writer takes an example from one of the private schools in Indonesia that the writer has visited. In learning English, they still encounter some difficulties in vocabulary although in grammar and speaking it can be said that they are fluent and reliable. However, only by using the same vocabulary. Only a few of them know a lot of vocabulary. However, it cannot be used as a benchmark in learning. So that other friends who do not have the same rich vocabulary will be left behind. So, we cannot understand idiomatic expressions well if we do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.

Idiomatic terms, such as similes, metaphors, phrasal verbs, and figurative speech, abound in any language, and projected that during a 600-year lifetime, a person is expected to utilize roughly 20 million idioms.[5] Knowing and using idioms fluently may be considered a sign of proficiency, as it could be a useful tool for students to improve their communication skills in everyday situations. As a result, idioms have become an ubiquitous part of language in this century. However, the word idiom remains as alien to the pupil as the second language.[6]

The study of how well Asian language learners absorb and employ idioms in communication has recently piqued the interest of English language research. Understanding and utilizing them fluently might be considered a sign of language competency, as it could be a useful technique to provide students with better

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[5] Maha H. Alhaysony, 'Strategies and Difficulties of Understanding English Idioms: A Case Study of Saudi University EFL Students', *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7.3 (2017), 70 <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v7n3p70>.

[6] Violetta Beloussova, 'Idiom Learning Materials For Estonian Secondary School Students Ma Thesis', 2015.

opportunities to improve their communicative skills in everyday situations.[7] Investigating how idiomatic expressions are dealt with and processed in a second language or foreign language is an issue worth examining further since it may give language teachers a better idea of some of the strategies language learners use in order to interpret figurative language. However, it seems that they have not been given much attention by teachers and students. By the reason, it is necessary to have media that can be used to facilitate the students in learning idiomatic expressions. So that, teachers can explain the learning material easily, and the students can understand the teachers' explanation as well.

Especially in this day and age, there are lots of media that can be used to learn idiomatic expressions. Some of the media commonly used include books, songs, music, and films or movies. Some of the new media that are often used by most people today are podcasts, YouTube, several viral applications such as TikTok, Instagram, and other learning applications. One of the commonly used learning modalities is the visual modality. It is closely related to the audiovisual trend that affects a lot of students to enjoy visual audio and visual stimuli better than textual ones.[8] Something that similar to the explanation before is comic strips. Although it has not been widely used, the idiomatic expression teaching method using comic strips can be an option. Because apart from having interesting animations, comic strips are also short and easy to understand. As one of the media, comic strips can be used in language classrooms as a medium of instruction in order to increase learner's understanding of language usage.[9] Because in making comic strips, the artist must pay attention to the picture that he draws also to the structure of language which can also increase vocabulary. However, the students who are familiar with the medias above, they must understand a little or even large number of idiomatic expressions.

Aside from the relevance of idiom phrases and the media that might be used to teach the idioms, teaching idioms in the classroom can be thought for teachers. According to Chen and Lai,

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[8] Eka Anastasia Wijaya and others, 'Comic Strips for Language Teaching: The Benefits and Challenges According To Recent Research', *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, 7.1 (2021), 230 <https://doi.org/10.24252/eternal.v71.2021.a16>.

[9] Ms Richa Sharma, 'Comics: A Tool of Teaching Language Through Literature', 8.4 (2020), 3200 <www.ijcrt.org>.

there are claims that teaching idioms is difficult. Because beside the students already difficult to learn English, the students must learn idiomatic expressions as well that have the same difficulty. And it is already known that English is the second language that we learn in elementary school and continued in high school. There is a chance that students will be very enthusiastic about it, or vice versa. The kids will be uninterested in learning the idiom. Or, in the worst-case scenario, the learner may not even attempt to grasp idioms because they may not have opportunity to notice or utilize idioms in everyday situations. Because the students may feel a little bit confused about the proper time to use the idiomatic expressions. Many such challenges can be solved with the help of a formal, independent idioms course, which is lacking in many English education programs, including our own English education.[10] But, by comic strips, the teacher can decrease the difficulty or learning idiomatic expressions. Because, the use of pictures as in comic strips could give an exciting atmosphere that can be seen in how it helps the students to express their emotion in the learning process. Therefore, the use of comics will make the students learn English in more enjoyable and interesting ways. Comic strips also help students generate their ideas and become a medium to develop and practice their target language.[11]

Based on the background above, the writer is interested in conducting a research entitled **"The Use of Idiomatic Expressions in Comic Strips to Facilitate Students' Vocabulary Mastery at an Indonesian Senior High School in Kudus".**

B. RESEARCH FOCUS AND SCOPE

The research title is about **The Use of Idiomatic Expressions in Comic Strips to Facilitate Students' Vocabulary Mastery at an Indonesian Senior High School in Kudus**. Then the writer will try to do some research about learning vocabulary with idiomatic expressions by comic strips in senior high school students to increase their vocabulary. Thus, the study's focus is finding out the correlation between developing the students' idiomatic

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[10] Zainab Abolfazli Khonbi and Karim Sadeghi, 'Improving English Language Learners' Idiomatic Competence: Does Mode of Teaching Play a Role?', *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 5.3 (2017), 61–79 <http://ijltr.urmia.ac.ir>..

[11] Eka Anastasia Wijaya and others, 'Comic Strips for Language Teaching: The Benefits and Challenges According To Recent Research', *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, 7.1 (2021), 230 <https://doi.org/10.24252/eternal.v71.2021.a16>.

expressions especially in the students' vocabulary through the comic strips.

C. RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the research focus above, the research question that will be the object of the research is as follows:
1. How does idiomatic expressions in comic strips can facilitate the vocabulary mastery for twelfth grade students of senior high school?
2. What are the students' perception toward the idiomatic expressions in the comic strips?

D. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the research question above, the research objectives to be achieved by this research are:
1. To explain the use idiomatic expressions in comic strips that facilitate the vocabulary mastery for twelfth grade students of senior high school.
2. To explain the perception of students of an Indonesian senior high school about idiomatic expressions in comic strips and its improvement of the learning process.

E. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCES

Based on the research objectives above, the benefits of this research are:
1. Theoretical benefits
    a. This research is expected to deepen knowledge about the improvement of learning process especially in vocabulary mastery through idiomatic expressions in comic strips.
    b. It is hoped that it can develop the vocabulary mastery and become one of method to learn idiomatic expressions.
2. Practical benefits
    With this research, the writer hopes that this research will be useful for:
    a. Writer, the result are expected to enrich insight, knowledge, and practice in everyday life what has been studied in this research, especially in developing vocabulary mastery through idiomatic expressions in comic strips.
    b. Institution or Faculty, the results of this study are expected to provide information and knowledge to Tarbiyah faculty students, especially the English Education Department

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students, regarding the study of developing vocabulary mastery though idiomatic expressions in comic strips.

c. Community or Public general, the results of the study are expected to explain to the public that the art of music can be used as a tool in learning vocabulary and idiomatic expressions, can add insight to readers, and can provide motivation for the students or readers who are learning vocabulary.

F. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Definitions of key terms are definitions of keywords or phrases that are used explicitly in research to clarify concepts and avoid misinterpretation. The purpose of the definition of key terms is to explain the context of the sentence or research variables contained in the research title so that there is no misunderstanding in the meaning of the research

1. Vocabulary

Hard to believe that people today do not know about vocabulary. By Fathul, a vocabulary is a set of familiar words within a person's language.[12] Usually people will develop their vocabulary when they are growth. So, the older the people are, the more vocabulary they know. Because people use vocabulary for communications, and acquiring knowledge.

2. Idiomatic expressions

Idiomatic Expressions also known as idioms are expressions that usually found in native speakers' communications. Not only in the formal communications but also in informal communications. Idiomatic expressions are defined as an expression whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of the words that make it up.[13] Idioms are a combination of words that always come together in a certain order and to which minimal linguistic alterations are possible. The meanings of the overall expression are most often quite different from the meanings of the words composing them, a lexemic/semantic feature which makes learning them very

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[12] Fathul Munir, 'The Effectiveness of Teaching Vocabulary by Using Cartoon Film toward Vocabulary Mastery of EFL Students', *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 1.1 (2016), 13 <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v1i1.20>.

[13] Abid Thyab Rana, 'The Necessity of Idiomatic Expressions to English Language Learners', *International Journal of English and Literature*, 7.7 (2016), 106–11 <https://doi.org/10.5897/ijel2016.0895>.

complex and challenging for second language learners.[14] In other word, idioms do not mean as exactly as the words say. Because idioms have the hidden meaning. People cannot translate idioms like they translate a usual sentence.

3. Comic strips

Comic is a medium to express ideas in images combined with text or visual information.[15] According to Poai, aside from the pictures, the elements of strips include panel, lettering, balloon, caption, and borders. Comic strips are similar to the usual comics, or comic books, but comic stirps have shorter chapter or part.[16] Because comic strips only convey a single story in every series that contains of picture and text box.

G. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

To describe more clearly in the discussion of this research, the writer will describe the organization of the thesis. The thesis organization in this study is as follows:

Chapter I Introduction, is the initial chapter which contains the research background, namely the social phenomena that underlie this research. Research questions which is the root of the problem whose answers will be found after conducting research, research objectives, research significances, definition of key terms, and thesis organization.

Chapter II Review of Related Literature, is a description of the theoretical perspective, which contains theoretical description of the keywords that discusses literature theory related to research titles, theoretical framework, relevant of previous research as references and comparisons to current research.

Chapter III Research Methodology, is a research method that explains how the procedures carried out by writer in conducting research, which consist of research methods, research settings, type and methodology, study environment, population and sample, design

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[14] Zainab Abolfazli Khonbi and Karim Sadeghi, 'Improving English Language Learners' Idiomatic Competence: Does Mode of Teaching Play a Role?', *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 5.3 (2017), 61–79 <http://ijltr.urmia.ac.ir>.

[15] Eka Anastasia Wijaya and others, 'Comic Strips for Language Teaching: The Benefits and Challenges According To Recent Research', *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, 7.1 (2021), 230 <https://doi.org/10.24252/eternal.v71.2021.a16>.

[16] Poai, S. T, 'Teaching English vocabulary using comic strips', *Sintuwu Maroso Journal of English Teaching (JET)*, 4(1), 51–58 (2018). Retrieved from https://ojs.unsimar.ac.id/index.php/sintuwumarosoJET/article/download/153/138

and operational definition of variables, validity and reliability test, data collection procedure, and technical analysis data.

Chapter IV Research results and discussion, which includes: research results and discussion.

Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations, is the last chapter in thesis writing which contains conclusions and suggestions.

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