AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY AT FIFTH GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SDIT CAHAYA HATI

THESIS

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Written By :

Malia Putri:

2319.139

Advisor :

SYAHRUL, S.S., M.Pd.

197003252003121008

ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM

FACULTY OF TARBIYAH AND TEACHING TRAINING

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SJECH M. DJAMIL DJAMBEK

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Chapter I

Introduction

A. Background of the Problem

Vocabulary is an important thing to learn as a crucial component in language use, because vocabulary is the key to mastering English, the four language skills heavily rely on a strong vocabulary. According to Wilkins as cited in Thornbury (2002) without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed (p.13). The more words learners know, the better English learners will be. In other words, students should make a habit of learning new English words to have better English.

Because learning words is important, it is needed to teach the student as soon as possible. Learning English usually starts in elementary school and continues through senior high school. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 12 of 2024 states that English language subjects in elementary schools will be optional until the 2026/2027 academic year. This means that schools can choose whether or not to teach English to elementary students. This is a stark contrast to the junior and senior high school levels, where English is a core and mandatory subject. Therefore, given the crucial role of vocabulary in language learning, it is essential to prioritize its teaching from Elementary level.

At the elementary level, most students begin learning English with a main focus on vocabulary mastery. Mastery of English vocabulary is very decisive for young learners to have knowledge of English and skills that will make it easier for students to communicate in English well in the future. English is a foreign language that is included in school subjects that must be studied. The ability of young learners to learn foreign languages, especially English, is a new thing and is considered difficult by students. However, the ability of young learners in mastering English vocabulary will increase optimally by implementing methods or media that can make it easier for teachers to teach and make it easier for students to understand lessons.

Learning English vocabulary is very important for Indonesian students to master English as a foreign language. Without enough vocabulary, a person cannot communicate effectively. However, learning new vocabulary is not easy. Teachers need to choose methods that encourage students to expand their vocabulary. As we know, teaching young learners is different from teaching adults. Teachers need to use special methods to help them learn. It's important to be creative and use fun ways to keep students interested in the subject. According to Kirgoz (2018) young learners love to play, so teachers should try to make English lessons exciting and enjoyable. However, in reality, when teachers teach, they often use a variety of media. On the other hand, teachers should use different methods to make learning easier, like providing context, connecting to what students already know, and using various inputs like visuals, sounds, and touch. Props, real objects, pictures, and

feeling boxes can help students understand better. Creating a classroom environment with lots of print, such as labels, posters with words, and children's books, also helps. Using language while doing actions can make the context clearer for students. By using these strategies, teachers can ensure students get meaningful and understandable input during learning. From the preliminary research sometimes, in reality the teacher sometimes still uses the conventional way of teaching by writing vocabulary on the board and having students memorize it. Some students may feel challenged, disinterested, and less motivated to study English as a result of this.

However, students' difficulties in learning English vocabulary are not only due to how teachers teach vocabulary but also to the characteristics of the words themselves. According to Thornbury (2004: 27) there are some factors that make some words more difficult as follows: a. Pronunciation, spelling, length and complexity, grammar, meaning, range, connotation and idiomaticity. In learning English vocabulary, English vocabulary is different from Indonesian in terms of form, including pronunciation and spelling, meaning, and word usage. Additionally, the way words are pronounced is often different from how they are written. Therefore, people, especially students learning English, often find it difficult to learn vocabulary. There are two factors that cause learning difficulties, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors come from within the students themselves, namely physiological factors and psychological factors. What is meant by physiological factors are weakness or body defects, while psychological

factors include low intelligence levels. External factors come from outside the students, namely non-social factors and social factors such as family, community, school, and teacher.

From preliminary research conducted in August 2025, the researcher found a lot of information about English language learning at SDIT Cahaya Hati Grade Fifth. This information was gathered through observations and interviews with English teachers and students. The research revealed a gap between the school's expectations and the reality of

vocabulary learning in the classroom. The school's curriculum is intended for fifth-grade students to develop the ability to accurately write, read, and utilize English vocabulary. However, in practice, many students found it difficult to learn English vocabulary. One of the main challenges was the difference between how words were written and how they were pronounced. Students often got confused because the written word didn't always sound exactly the same. Additionally, students complained about having trouble remembering vocabulary in the long term. Even though the students had memorized words and their meanings in previous lessons, they often forgot in the next class. Another problem was that some students lack of initiative when facing difficulties. When they had trouble understanding new words, some students chose to stay quiet and didn't ask their teacher or classmates for help. This passive attitude hindered their learning process.

This fact was uncovered through interviews with teachers and observations of students' practice results, which showed less-than-ideal performance. Even though English teachers use child-friendly methods, like using pictures and cards, some students still don't fully learn and use the new words. This way of learning should help students learn English vocabulary easily. But it seems that it was not working well. This happened maybe because sometimes, teachers still used the conventional method of writing new vocabulary on the board and having students memorize it, which can make students less enthusiastic about learning. This showed there's a gap between teaching methods and student learning. To make English lessons more effective, this gap needs to be fixed, specifically on external factors.

Because the fifth-grade elementary students clearly struggle with English vocabulary, and students don't fully understand why, it's really important to research the external factors that cause these problems. This research aims to look into these factors deeply. By doing so, the researcher hopes to gain an understanding that can help teachers create better ways to teach. Then this study is called: An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in English Vocabulary Mastery at the Fifth Grade SDIT Cahaya Hati.

B. Identification of the problem

1. Students are having difficulty connecting the written form of words with their spoken sounds in English, which is hindering their vocabulary learning.

2. Teachers sometimes teached just by making students memorize words over, the teacher writes the vocabulary learned on the blackboard and the children write the vocabulary in the book, memorize it and submit it to the teacher. This is not very interesting for students.
3. Not all students were excited about learning new words. Even when teachers use fun things like pictures and cards, some students still don't want to learn. This shows that teachers need to make students more interested in learning.

C. The Limitation of the Problem

To make this research more specific, the researcher needs to limit the scope of the research. The scope of this study is limited to analyzing the type of students' difficulties in learning vocabulary and finding out the external factors causing the students difficulties in mastering vocabulary, especially 5th grade English students at SD IT Cahaya Hati.

D. Research Questions

Based on the background of the research, the researcher formulate research questions as follows:

1. What are the types of difficulties in English mastering vocabulary at fifth grade in SDIT Cahaya Hati?
2. What are the external factors that cause English mastering vocabulary difficulties at fifth grade in SDIT Cahaya Hati?

E. Research Objectives

Based on the formulation of the problem above, this research aims to:

1. To find out the types of difficulties in English vocabulary mastery at fifth grade in SDIT Cahaya Hati.
2. To analyze the external factors of difficulties in English vocabulary mastery at fifth grade in SDIT Cahaya Hati.

F. Significances of Research

In this research, the researcher will divide the significance of the research into two parts, they are theoretical and practical benefits.

1. Theoretical benefit

   To contribute to the theory about the causes of the students' difficulties in Mastering English vocabulary.

2. Practical benefit
   a. For the teacher

      This research can be made as a recommendation, it is providing various benefits of helping teachers a lot. It gives the teacher a better understanding, so they can adjust their teaching in a way that works better. They can also give more specific help to students who need it, which can improve how well students do

in school. Plus, it makes teachers better at their jobs by helping them come up with better ways to teach.

b. For the students

It is to improve student self-awareness, enabling the use of more effective learning strategies, enhancing academic achievement, boosting confidence, and developing students' metacognitive skills in learning.

c. For the researcher

It is the application of knowledge received in lectures in the form of theory, especially those related to English.

G. Definition of Key Terms

In order to have a better understanding and avoid misinterpretation, the researcher presents the definition of key terms applied in this research. The details are as follows:

1. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is a process of students' understanding of words which includes understanding the meaning, how to use proper pronunciation and spelling and how to write.

2. Difficulties

Oxford defines difficulty as a situation that creates a problem. In this case, difficulties in learning English vocabulary can be understood as a condition where learners face various challenges that hinder the English vocabulary learning process as it is hard to get the meaning, memorize, pronounce and write the vocabulary correctly.

3. External Factor

An external factor refers to a cause of learning difficulties that originates from a student's environment rather than from within the student themselves. These factors are external influences that can significantly impact a student's ability to learn and master a subject. According to Rofiqi & Rasyid (2020), these factors are typically categorized into three main areas: the family environment (such as parental support and background), the school environment (including teaching methods and available equipment), and the social environment (like peer and community influence).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter discusses some topics related to the definition of vocabulary, the important of vocabulary mastery, the difficulties in vocabulary mastery, factors that cause student's difficulties in vocabulary mastery.

A. Theoretical Theory

1. Definition of Vocabulary

According to Richards and Renandya (2002: 255), vocabulary is a key part of language skills and is essential for how students speak, listen, read, and write. Without a large vocabulary and ways to learn new words, students often can not reach their full potential and may feel discouraged from using language learning opportunities around them, like listening to the radio, talking with native speakers, using the language in different situations, reading, or watching TV. Having a large vocabulary is crucial for mastering speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Students with limited vocabulary and poor learning strategies struggle to improve and may feel unmotivated, missing learning opportunities. Therefore, it is essential to help students expand their vocabulary and develop effective word-learning strategies.

Vocabulary is a central element in language learning. As an element of language,it is considered as a contributing factor in

English language teaching. It is a part of language learning that needs to be grown and developed by both native and non native speakers before they learn basic grammar and pronunciation. From the learner's point of view, knowledge of vocabulary is more dependable than knowledge of grammar. This is in line with Wilkins (1972) who said : "without grammar very little can be conveyed,without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.

From the statement it can be concluded vocabulary is the first element in English. It must be mastered well by young learners to support the English mastery. Vocabulary has often been viewed as a basic element in language teaching, it is considered to be the most important aspect because it can widen the student's intellectual development. In learning a foreign language the students have to know what words mean. To get the meaning of words, the students should learn vocabulary.

2. Importance of Vocabulary

Learning new words is super important for people who are learning English as a second language. Tozcu and Coady (2004: 473) say that learning new words is a big part of getting better at a second language and doing well in school. It is also really important for understanding what you read and being good at reading and writing.

Vocabulary is one of the things students learn at all levels. It is impossible to succeed in language learning without mastering vocabulary. Vocabulary is the heart of language and very important in specific language use. Mastering vocabulary is one of the basic components to mastering English as a foreign language at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. In learning the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), vocabulary is one of the basic components that must be mastered. Without enough vocabulary, people cannot communicate effectively or express their ideas orally or in writing. Nilawati (as cited in Kartadi, Sudirman, & Indra Kusuma, 2024) argued that to support speaker interactions in communication, vocabulary is important because it can be used as the basis for arranging words into good sentence structures.

Finally, vocabulary is the most essential skill when learning a new language. All other skills, like reading, writing, speaking, and listening, depend on and grow from a strong vocabulary. With more words at their disposal, learners can express themselves more clearly and precisely. This allows them to communicate more effectively and accurately with others.

3. Teaching Vocabulary for Young Young learner

Teaching Vocabulary in General Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of language learning because it provides the foundation for communication. Nation (2001) explains that knowing a word involves understanding its form, meaning, and use, while Thornbury (2002) emphasizes that vocabulary lies at the heart of language learning, since without enough words learners cannot build sentences or express ideas. Therefore, the goal of vocabulary teaching is not only to help students recognize words but also to ensure that they understand, remember, and are able to apply them effectively. Harmer (2001) also points out that vocabulary should not be taught as a mere list of words to memorize. Instead, learners need meaningful exposure, repetition, and practice so that words become part of their active knowledge rather than passive recognition. Although these principles apply to all learners, children have different needs compared to adults. Due to their developmental stage, young learners require special strategies in vocabulary learning. This makes it important to examine how vocabulary should be taught effectively at the elementary school level, with approaches that are concrete, engaging, and appropriate for their age.

Teaching Vocabulary for Young Learners According to Piaget, as cited in Cameron (2001), young learners have particular

developmental characteristics that influence the way they learn a foreign language. Since their cognitive abilities are still developing, children tend to learn best through concrete experiences rather than abstract concepts. For this reason, vocabulary should be introduced in meaningful contexts connected to objects, actions, and real-life situations. In addition, young learners generally have short attention spans and can easily lose interest if activities are not engaging. To maintain their focus and motivation, teachers are encouraged to use varied techniques such as games, songs, stories, and hands-on activities. Cameron (2001) further notes that children rely heavily on their senses, sight, sound, and touch to grasp meaning, which makes visual aids, realia, and gestures highly effective in vocabulary teaching.

Scott and Ytreberg (1990) also emphasize that children between the ages of 8 and 10 are beginning to develop logical reasoning, but their thinking remains closely tied to what they see and experience directly. This means that vocabulary teaching at the elementary level should rely more on concrete words, actions, and pictures rather than abstract explanations. They further highlight the importance of repetition and recycling of vocabulary, since children tend to forget new words quickly if the words are not reinforced through meaningful practice. Similarly, Shin and Crandall (2013), drawing on Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of

Proximal Development (ZPD), argue that children learn more effectively when guided and supported by teachers or peers. They recommend scaffolding techniques such as modeling pronunciation, using visual aids, and guiding practice through repetition. In addition, they stress the need for multimodal and engaging activities, such as songs, chants, games, storytelling, and Total Physical Response (TPR), to ensure repeated exposure to new vocabulary in enjoyable ways.

Taken together, these perspectives show that vocabulary learning for young learners is shaped by their cognitive development, their learning characteristics, and the quality of external support they receive. Therefore, effective vocabulary teaching at the elementary level should be concrete, contextual, repetitive, and engaging. Combining developmental insights with interactive and supportive teaching practices allows teachers to help young learners build a stronger foundation in English vocabulary while also maintaining their motivation and interest in learning.

Although various strategies such as using games, songs, stories, and visual aids are considered effective for teaching vocabulary to young learners, in reality many elementary students still face challenges in mastering English vocabulary. These difficulties may appear in different aspects of word knowledge,

such as form, meaning, and use, which will be discussed in the following section.

4. Difficulties in Mastery Vocabulary

Improving English learning and mastery quality is possible when understanding the challenges students face. Hasan (2000) mentions that students encounter difficulties in four main areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In reading, Rahmawati (2011) points out that students struggle because they don't understand how to comprehend texts and connect ideas between sentences. Writing is challenging because it requires complex and systematic thinking, as noted by Rukmini (2011). Speaking difficulties, according to Megawati and Mandarina (2016), often stem from a lack of vocabulary. Lastly, students find listening hard due to difficulties understanding English pronunciation.

Nation (2001) explains that mastering vocabulary involves knowing a word in terms of its form, meaning, and use. Each of these aspects can cause difficulties for learners, especially young learners. The difficulties can be described as follows:

1. Form
    a. Pronunciation: Learners may struggle to pronounce words that contain unfamiliar sounds not present in their first language.

b. Spelling: The mismatch between English spelling and pronunciation often makes words difficult to remember.
c. Word parts (morphology): Young learners may find it hard to recognize prefixes, suffixes, or root words.

2. Meaning
    a. Form–meaning link: Learners may have difficulty connecting the spoken or written form of a word with its correct meaning.
    b. Concepts and referents: Some words do not have a direct equivalent in the learners' native language, which leads to misunderstanding.
    c. Associations: It can be hard for learners to distinguish synonyms, antonyms, or related word.

3. Use
    a. Grammatical functions: Learners often find it challenging to use words correctly in sentences according to grammar rules.
    b. Collocations: Words are difficult to master when learners do not know which words are

commonly used together (e.g., “make a mistake” vs. “do a mistake”).

c. Constraints on use: Learners may also struggle to understand when a word is appropriate in formal or informal contexts.

Based on Nation’s framework (2001), vocabulary knowledge is not a simple matter of memorizing words, but involves knowing the form, meaning, and use of each word. For young learners, this theory is very relevant because their difficulties in learning English vocabulary often appear in these three aspects. For example, many Indonesian elementary students mispronounce English words (form), confuse meanings with similar words (meaning), “and at this stage their capacity to construct simple sentences with new words remains quite restricted (use).

5. Factors that Cause Students‘ Difficulties in Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery difficulties can happen to students with low abilities, but also to those with average (normal) abilities and even high abilities. These difficulties are caused by factors that prevent students from reaching their expected academic performance. The factors that cause learning difficulties include

internal factors within the student and external factors outside the student.

1. External factor

External factors influencing learning difficulties include three main aspects: the family environment, the school environment, and the community environment (Rofiqi & Rasyid, 2022).

a. Family environmental factors.

It has a significant influence on the success of learning. The factors that occur include:

1. Parents.

1) How to educate children. Learning difficulties will occur in a child if parents pay less attention to their child's education and do not pay attention to the child's progress.
2) The relationship between parents and children. This is often forgotten by parents. Parents do not give affection to children, have a hard attitude, pamper children too much, and others.
3) Examples and guidance from parents. All parental behavior will be imitated by children. Keep in mind that parents are the closest example of a child.

2. Home condition.Home conditions are very crowded and noisy can make children uncomfortable to study, because it can interfere with concentration.

3. Economic condition. First, a lack of or poor economy can result in a lack of learning equipment, lack of funds provided by parents, and not having a good place to study. Second, excessive economics can cause children to be reluctant to learn, because they have too much fun and end up being too lazy to learn.

b. School environmental factors.

It has a great influence on children's lives, because they will be in the school building a third of their daily lives. The school environment is an official educational institution providing planned, directed and systematic education by professional educators with programs outlined in the curriculum within a certain period of time. The factors that occur include:

1. Teaching methods

It is the means used to achieve the goals that have been set. Teachers must know various methods for learning purposes. So, the teacher can determine the right method according to the existing situation and conditions.

2. The relationship between teachers and students.

Something undesirable can be created if the teacher-student relationship is not good, even though in this case the method used is maximal.

3. Learning equipment.

If this is complete and appropriate, it will facilitate the acceptance of the material that has been delivered by the teacher. On the other hand, if the learning equipment is incomplete, it will make the delivery of material less good and disrupt the smooth learning process. So, complete media will make teachers able to teach well and students can receive lessons and learn well.

4. School time.

Which is the time the teaching and learning process occurs in the morning, afternoon, evening, and evening. School time can affect student learning success. If school enters the afternoon or afternoon, then the conditions are not optimal for receiving lessons, because energy has been reduced. Therefore, school time that is too long will cause the child's condition to be not optimal to receive lessons. This difficulty is because students lack concentration and think of a tired body condition. So

choosing the right time can have a positive effect on learning.

c. Social environment.

This is one of the reasons that are quite strongly related to the difficulties of children in learning in the area where they live. The factors that occur in the social environment of society include:

1. Neighborhood. The lifestyle of neighbors who are not good will affect children who go to school, for example, often play gambling, drink alcohol, are unemployed, and do not like to study. This causes less learning motivation. However, if the neighbor is educated, such as students, students, doctors, engineers, lecturers, it will encourage students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn.

2. Mass media factor. This has a big influence on the personal formation and mentality of a child. This factor should not be underestimated, due to the fact that many children are more interested in using mass media than learning. Media factors include; cinema, TV, newspapers, magazines, and comics are all around us. So, if they spend too much time enjoying the media, it will hinder the learning process where they neglect and forget the learning task.

In summary, the review of these external factors demonstrates that a student's surrounding environment significantly influences their learning success, particularly in the mastery of English vocabulary. Various elements, including parental support and home conditions, the quality of pedagogical approaches and resources within the school, and broader community dynamics, collectively either facilitate or impede a student's learning progress. A comprehensive understanding of these external influences is therefore crucial, as it provides a holistic perspective on the underlying causes of learning difficulties and highlights how the learning environment contributes to these challenges.

2. Internal Factor

Internal factors are factors that come from within students, including:

a. Physiological factors, which are related to the individual's physical condition, such as illness, lack of health, and disability.

b. Psychological factors, which are a person's mental state which can affect the learning process, such as intelligence, talent, interests, and physical condition (Rofiqi & Rasyid, 2022).

A student's internal state is undeniably central to their ability to master English vocabulary. Physiological well-being ensures the body is ready for learning, as illness or discomfort can severely hamper concentration. On the psychological front, a student's intelligence, natural talent for languages, genuine interest in English, and strong motivation are pivotal. For example, a high level of intrinsic motivation to learn English words often translates into more dedicated effort and better retention, regardless of external circumstances. Therefore, recognizing and nurturing these internal aspects is fundamental to addressing vocabulary mastery difficulties

Based on the comprehensive theoretical perspectives presented, it is evident that difficulties in mastering English vocabulary are multi-faceted, arising from a complex interplay of both internal and external factors. The internal attributes of a student—including their physiological health and psychological states such as attitude, intelligence, and motivation—form the foundation of their individual learning capacity. Concurrently, external influences from the family (e.g., parental support, home environment), school (e.g., teaching methods, teacher-student relations, resources), and broader social environment (e.g., community values, media exposure) collectively shape the learning landscape (Rofiqi & Rasyid, 2022).

Understanding these diverse factors is crucial for this study because they provide a robust theoretical framework for investigating the challenges students face in vocabulary mastery. While acknowledging the significant role of internal factors, this research will specifically focus on examining the identified external dimensions. By comprehensively exploring the underlying causes of difficulties in English vocabulary acquisition stemming from the family, school, and community environments among students at Fifth Grade SD IT Cahaya Hati, this approach will allow for a more nuanced understanding of how specific external conditions contribute to or alleviate these learning challenges, ultimately informing more targeted and effective interventions related to the learning environment.

B. Relevant Studies

Typically, when conducting research, the topic you're investigating has likely been explored before. Existing studies on similar or identical subjects serve as a foundation for your research. Therefore, researchers must carefully examine how previous research relates to their current study. In this particular case, the research is relevant that is:

1. The first research is a studies relevant study by Anissa'ul Afidah (2021), titled "An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Mastery Vocabulary," investigated the challenges faced by fifth-grade

students in mastering English vocabulary related to daily activities. This study utilized a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The informants were an English teacher and four students. The findings revealed several key difficulties students faced, including trouble with remembering, interpreting, and pronouncing vocabulary. Furthermore, the researcher identified several supporting factors that influenced students' vocabulary mastery, which were related to the teacher, the learning environment, and available facilities. The study also highlighted various strategies that students employed to overcome these difficulties, such as memorization strategies, using learning media, and guessing strategies. The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the specific challenges of vocabulary acquisition at the elementary level, which is highly relevant to the present research.

2. The second research from Mhd. Ferdi Irvani (2019) This research entitled" An Analysis of Students‟ Difficulties in Vocabulary Mastery at the Tenth Grade Students of State Senior High School 1 Kampar." This research deals with students‟ difficulties in mastering English vocabulary. The formulation of this research was "What is the dominant difficulty in vocabulary mastery at the tenth grade students State Senior High School 1 Kampar?". Therefore, the objective of the research was to find out the

dominant difficulty in vocabulary mastery. This study was a descriptive research. The researcher used simple random sampling to take the sample. It means that every student had an equal chance of being selected to be a sample. The samples of this research were 65 students of 323 students at the tenth grade students of State Senior High School 1 Kampar. To collect the data, the researcher used a test. It consists of some indicators in students‟ difficulties in vocabulary mastery from Cameron (2002). The research findings revealed that the percentage of the students‟ difficulties in vocabulary mastery in pronunciation was (36.92%), spelling was (32.30%), grammar was (30.76%), and meaning was (30.51%). So, the dominant difficulty in vocabulary mastery at the tenth grade students State Senior High School 1 Kampar was pronunciation. The third study is a study entitled “An Analysis on The Factors of English Learning Difficulties Faced by The Ninth Grade at SMP Swasta Banuhampu by Annisa Fathin Zafira. This research was aimed to find out the factors of English learning difficulties for students in learning english. This research used qualitative research as a research methodology with a descriptive analysis research design and interviews with 21 students and the English teacher were employed. Data obtained from observation and interviews.The results of this study inform the factors of students' difficulties in learning English based on internal and external

factors. The researchers classify the problems they face from several factors of existing learning difficulties. The researcher groups the problems from physiological factors into 2 general categories, namely: (1) physical health (2) body defect. On psychological factors, the researcher groups problems into 3 general categories, namely: (1)intelligence (2) interested (3) motivation. On the school factor, the researcher groups problems into 3 general categories, namely: (1) parental support (2) noisy home atmosphere (3) economic problems. On School factors, the researcher groups problems into 3 general categories,namely: (1) teaching method is not varied (2) english learning facilities are inadequate. On social factors, the researcher groups problems into 2 general categories, namely (1) the living environment does not motivate to learn English, an (2) technological sophistication makes negligent in learning English.

The similarity between this study and previous studies lies in the use of a qualitative descriptive method and a shared theme of vocabulary learning difficulties. However, this study differs from previous ones in terms of the research subjects. While prior studies focused on middle school and high school students, this study specifically investigates elementary school students. The first and second studies had a very specific aim: to find out the exact problems students have when learning

new English words. They wanted to know in detail what makes it hard for students to understand the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation of new words. However, the third study had a broader aim: to analyze all the reasons why students might have trouble learning English. It did not just focus on vocabulary but also looked at other factors, both inside and outside of the student, that could make learning English difficult. Specifically, this research aims to find out the types of vocabulary mastery difficulties and find out external factors that particularly contribute to vocabulary learning challenges faced by elementary school students

C. **Conceptual Framework**

This research is intended to see the factors of students' difficulties in mastery English vocabulary. This research theory from Rofiqi & Rasyid represent by diagram as follow:

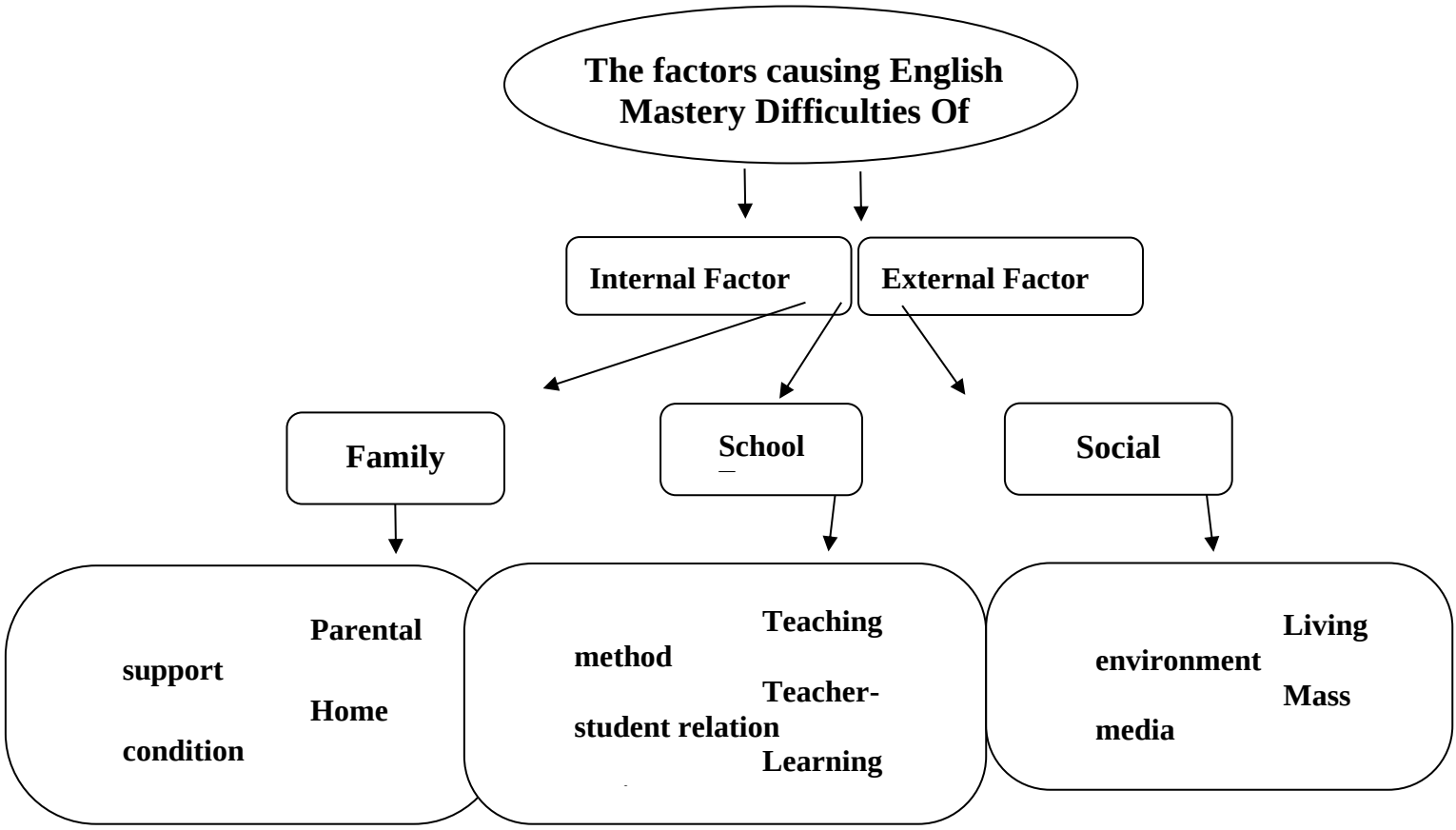


Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework

The figure above shows how the factors that caused students' difficulties in mastery vocabulary include: Internal and external factors but we will focus on external factors. First , on family factors, include: parental support, home condition and economic condition. Second, on school, include: teaching method, teacher-student relation, learning equipment and study time. Third, social factors include: living environment and mass media. The researcher wants to find out the factors of students' difficulties in English vocabulary mastery at fifth grade SDIT Cahaya Hati Bukittinggi in the academic year 2025/2026.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Type of Research

This research will be conducted by using a qualitative approach. It focuses on getting a depth data or description of a phenomena satire and then telling depth and detail. According to Rijali, (2018) qualitative research produces and processes descriptive data, such as transcription of interviews and observations. The design of this research is descriptive qualitative. The goal of descriptive research to describe phenomena and its characteristics. Qualitative research collects data qualitatively and the method of analysis is also primarily qualitative. This research uses a descriptive qualitative, to analyze the mastery difficulties experienced by students in learning English. The reason the research chose this descriptive research is because the researcher only focuses on describing data on students' difficulties in mastery vocabulary and factors that cause students' difficulties in mastery vocabulary.

To ensure a focused and thorough investigation, this research's scope is clearly defined. This study primarily aims to identify the types of difficulties students encounter in mastering English vocabulary and to analyze the external factors contributing to these challenges. The research will be conducted in fifth grade English students at SDIT Cahaya Hati. While acknowledging the influence of internal factors on learning, this

study will not analyze them in detail, thus allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the environmental aspects affecting vocabulary acquisition

B. Research Setting

This research will be conducted at SDIT Cahaya Hati, which is located on Jl. Pabelokan, Pakan Labuah, Kec. Aur Birugo Tigo Baleh, Kota Bukittinggi, West Sumatra.

C. Informants

Informant is the important aspect in a research, it gives the data that is needed by the researcher. Tohirin said that the informant is a person who would give the information. In this research the researcher chooses an English teacher and the students in grade 5 for the informant, the informant chosen in order to take information for this research.

D. Sampling Technique

To select the informants, the researcher will consider several key criteria. First, the informants are fifth-grade students at SDIT Cahaya Hati Bukittinggi. Second, students who have low daily English scores or who haven't reached the minimum passing score : 75 (KKM). Third, students must be willing to participate in this study. Fourth, the teacher confirms that the student is below the KKM in English by observing a consistent pattern of low performance across a range of daily assessments and activities. The study's informant comes from 3 classes, but the researcher will select students who fit the established criteria to be interviewed. The researcher will only include informants who meet these qualifications

because this research will focus more on an in-depth exploration of cases and/or phenomena.

E. Instrument and Technique of Data Collection

According to Sugiyono (2016:305), the researcher is the instrument in qualitative research. This means the researcher becomes the primary tool for recording information throughout the study. The researcher directly enters the field to find and collect the necessary data. If the research focus becomes clear, the instruments that will be used in the study may be developed further to complement the data. The instruments will serve as a guide for conducting observations and interviews.

This study employed a number of tools to assist the researcher in gathering the data in order to analyze it. The tools are an interview and an observation.

a. Observation

Observation can be interpreted as a research instrument where researchers write down or record certain behaviors of the sample being studied while the researcher observes and listens. On the other hand, by observing language learning activities in an educational setting, researchers can gain a nuanced understanding of the environmental and social factors influencing vocabulary development.

The instrument that will be used in this research is fieldnotes. There are lists of observation checklists that will be used during

observation in the class. Observations are during the learning process. In this case, the researcher will observe all learning activities in the classroom like the way students learn, and student participants. On the other hand, the researcher also writes notes about difficulties that happened during the learning process

b. Interview

Interviews are crucial in qualitative research, enabling researchers to explore individuals' subjective experiences, perceptions, the way they are learning, participation and emotions regarding vocabulary acquisition difficulties.

In this study researchers will use semi-structured interviews, the interview will use a set of predetermined questions and the respondents answer in their own words. Some interviews will use a topic guide that serves a checklist to ensure that all respondents provide information on the same topics. The interviewer can probe areas based on the respondent's answers or ask supplementary questions or clarification. Semi structured interviews are useful when there is a need to collect in-depth information in a systematic manner from a number of respondents or interviewers.

Interviews will be conducted after making observations. Therefore,the researcher will interview the teacher and students. It aims to clarify and emphasize the results of observation. In this case, to find out more information about the difficulties faced by

students in learning vocabulary in English and the factors that influence these difficulties. In the interview, the researcher used interview guidelines. Then the students' answers were conducted using a voice recorder.

In order to gather data for this study, the researcher will employ the descriptive approach, which includes conducting interviews and observations.:

1. Observation
    1) 1.The researcher asks permission before do the observation
    2) the researcher enters the class
    3) The researcher does the observation in the classroom when the English teacher teaching English, the researcher takes a seat at the back or in front of class to investigate the factors causing English learning vocabulary difficulties of students.
    4) The researcher records teaching and learning process
2. Interview
    1) The researcher asks permission to the teacher before do the interview
    2) The researcher meets the teacher and some students then bring a list of interview guide questions
    3) The researcher asks the teacher and a few students a series of questions concerning the reasons behind vocabulary learning challenges in English.

4) The researcher records and writes the result of the interview with the teacher and some students.

F. Trustworthiness of Data

To establish the trustworthiness of the data, specific verification techniques are necessary. The implementation of these techniques is based on several criteria. In qualitative research, these criteria include: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To verify the trustworthiness of the research data, the following activities will be conducted:

1. Credibility: The researcher will employ data source triangulation by comparing information obtained from interviews with observations and relevant documents. Additionally, member checking will be conducted by asking informants to review interview transcripts and initial summaries of findings to ensure accuracy and alignment with their perspectives.
2. Transferability: The researcher will provide a thick description of the research context, informant characteristics, and the details of the phenomena under study. This aims to enable readers to assess the extent to which the research findings are relevant to similar situations or contexts.
3. Dependability: To demonstrate the consistency of the research process, the researcher will create a comprehensive audit trail. This includes detailed records of informant selection, data collection

procedures (date, time, interview location), transcription, and data analysis stages.

4. Confirmability: The researcher will maintain objectivity in data interpretation by minimizing personal biases. The aforementioned audit trail process will also help demonstrate how findings and conclusions were drawn directly from the raw data, rather than based on researcher assumptions. By implementing these strategies, the researcher hopes to generate credible and accountable research findings that offer

G. Techniques of Data Analysis

According to Sugiyono (2017), data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and arranging the data obtained from interviews, field notes, documentation, or other sources, in order to make them understandable, reduce them into manageable units, synthesize them, and search for form or themes. This process ultimately allows the researcher to draw conclusions and verify the findings.

In qualitative research, Sugiyono outlines that data analysis is conducted continuously and interactively, involving three key components:

1. Data Reduction

This refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data that appears in written-up field notes or transcripts. Data reduction occurs throughout the research, from the beginning of data collection to the final stages of analysis. It helps the researcher sharpen, sort, focus, discard, and organize data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified.

2. Data Display

After reducing the data, researchers need to organize and present it in a form that allows for conclusion drawing. Sugiyono emphasizes that qualitative data displays are usually in the form of textual narratives, matrices, charts, or flow diagrams. These visual representations help the researcher see what is happening and plan further analysis or action.

3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The final step involves interpreting the meaning of the data. Researchers draw tentative conclusions early on, which are then tested for validity and consistency throughout the process. The conclusions are verified continuously as more data is collected and patterns become clearer.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher presented the data that were collected in December-February at fifth grade in SDIT Cahaya Hati Bukittinggi. The data were presented to answer the research question: " What are the external factors that cause English mastering vocabulary difficulties at fifth grade in SDIT Cahaya Hati

Two instruments were employed in this study. They were observations and interviews. In this part, the researcher describes and analyzes the results of each instrument. The findings contain both the data description and the method of data analysis.

A. Data description

The data description is focused on the factors of students' difficulties in mastery vocabulary. The data collection started from January until February. The data were obtained in the form of observation and interview.

1. Observation

The data was in form observation related to teacher and students in the learning process in the classroom. The observation was done for one meeting in V, which consists of three classes. The classroom observation recorded the teaching and learning process in English class by using a smartphone from the beginning until the end of the class. During the

observation conducted in the classroom, the researcher saw that there are factors of students's difficulties in mastery vocabulary in the classroom. These data would be described as below:

Table 1. Observation guideline of the factors student's difficulties in Mastery English vocabulary, grade fifth at SDIT Cahaya Hati

External Fact.Categories	Item	Y	N
1.Teaching Method	1. The teacher uses different ways, such as games, pictures, or real objects, to teach new words.		✓
	2. The teacher explains the meaning of new words clearly.	✓	
	3. The teacher explains how to use new vocabulary in sentences.	✓	
	4. The teacher gives students opportunities to practice new vocabulary (speaking, reading, or writing).	✓	
	5.The teacher helps students review previously learned vocabulary.	✓	

2. Teacher Relation	6. The teacher is patient when students have difficulty understanding vocabulary.	✓	
	7. The teacher gives praise or positive responses when students try to use new vocabulary.		✓
	8. The teacher gives attention and guidance to students who have difficulties individually.		✓
	9. Students seem hesitant or afraid to ask the teacher when they do not understand vocabulary.	✓	
3. Learning Equipment	10. The teacher uses visual aids such as pictures, word cards, or real objects.		✓
	11. The classroom has visual media that support English vocabulary learning.	✓	
	12. The learning materials (textbooks or worksheets) provide sufficient vocabulary practice		✓
	13. Audio or digital media are used to help students learn vocabulary pronunciation.		✓
Study Time	14. The time for English vocabulary learning is	✓	

	sufficient for explanation and practice.		
	15. There is specific time to review or repeat previously learned vocabulary.	↓	
	16. English vocabulary learning is disrupted by other school activities.		↓
Other	17. Some students have difficulty pronouncing English vocabulary correctly	↓	
	18. Students appear confused or need teacher assistance when learning new vocabulary.	↓	

Source: Rofiqi & Rasyid, M.Z. 2020 Diagnosis Kesulitan Belajar Pada Siswa, Pemekasan: literasi, Nusantara.p.15-23

Based on the table above, the researcher can conclude that the external factors of student's difficulties in English vocabulary mastery are school factors. Based on school factors : teaching method, teacher-student relation, learning equipment, study time.

2. Interview

To complete the data for study , the researcher interviewed the English teacher for information about this study and 9 students of grade fifth at SDIT Cahaya Hati, which all students were taken from fifth grade. The interview was conducted on the 23rd january until 4th

february 20 The interviews consisted of 5 items questions for the teacher and 7 items questions for students regarding difficulties in mastery of English vocabulary. Interviews were conducted by researchers directly. Researchers came to school and conducted interviews with teacher and students. The interview was recorded using a smartphone.

a. Interview teacher

The interview with the English teacher was conducted to obtain deeper information regarding external factors that influence students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary, particularly from the perspective of teaching practices, classroom conditions, and learning support. The interview was carried out using a semi-structured approach to allow the teacher to explain teaching experiences and challenges in detail.

Based on the interview results, the teacher explained that English lessons for fifth-grade students are conducted once a week with a limited time allocation. Each class receives one meeting per week, which is considered insufficient for intensive vocabulary practice and reinforcement. As a result, students have limited opportunities to repeatedly practice and strengthen their vocabulary mastery.

Regarding students' difficulties, the teacher stated that the main problems faced by students were related to writing and memorizing English vocabulary. Many students found it difficult to spell English words correctly due to the differences between pronunciation and

written forms. Although some students showed interest in learning English, their focus and motivation were often inconsistent, which affected their ability to retain vocabulary.

In terms of teaching methods, the teacher reported using various instructional media such as games, flashcards, digital applications, videos, and presentation tools. These methods were used to make vocabulary learning more engaging. However, the teacher acknowledged that not all students were able to fully benefit from these methods, especially those who required more individual guidance. Due to the large number of students in one class, providing intensive assistance to students with learning difficulties during regular class time was challenging.

The teacher also emphasized the importance of parental involvement in supporting students' vocabulary learning. According to the teacher, communication with parents was established, especially for students with learning difficulties. Some parents responded positively and provided additional support, such as enrolling their children in tutoring programs. However, not all students received consistent learning support at home, which affected their progress in vocabulary mastery.

Furthermore, the teacher mentioned that school facilities related to English learning were limited. The school did not have a language laboratory, and English learning resources were mainly limited to

textbooks and modules provided by the school. Although there was an English Day program implemented once a week, the teacher believed that additional facilities and learning time would better support students' vocabulary development.

In summary, the interview with the teacher indicates that students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary are influenced by several external factors, including limited instructional time, challenges in teaching large classes, insufficient learning facilities, and varying levels of support from students' home environments.

b. Interview students

The researcher also interviewed 9 students of fifth grade. Students provide explanations for all question items. The explanation of these items can be explained as follows:

The student interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth information about students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary from their own learning experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. The participants of this interview were nine fifth-grade students who were identified as having difficulties in learning English vocabulary. The interviews were carried out using a semi-structured format to allow flexibility while remaining focused on the research objectives.

Based on the interview results, most students stated that learning English vocabulary was difficult for them. The main difficulty

reported by the students was related to the difference between the written form and the pronunciation of English words. Several students mentioned that they found it hard to pronounce English vocabulary correctly, while others experienced difficulties in writing words according to the correct spelling. In addition, many students admitted that they easily forgot vocabulary that had been previously taught, especially when it was not reviewed regularly.

Regarding teaching methods, students expressed greater interest in learning activities that involved games, songs, and videos. These methods were considered more enjoyable and helped them understand vocabulary more easily. However, the students reported that such activities were not frequently used in class. As a result, some students felt less motivated and had difficulty maintaining focus during vocabulary lessons.

The interview findings also revealed that many students tended to remain silent when they did not understand English vocabulary. This behavior was influenced by feelings of laziness to ask questions, lack of confidence, or fear of disturbing the teacher. Nevertheless, some students stated that they felt more comfortable asking the teacher directly rather than asking their classmates when they faced difficulties.

From the perspective of the home environment, most students did not receive regular support in learning English

vocabulary at home. Parents generally prioritized other learning activities, such as Qur'an memorization or other school subjects. Moreover, exposure to English through media such as television, games, or books at home was limited and not optimally used as a learning resource.

Overall, the interview results indicate that students' difficulties in mastering English vocabulary are influenced by several external factors, including classroom teaching methods, limited learning support at home, and minimal exposure to English outside the classroom.

B. Data analysis

This section presents the analysis of data obtained from students' interviews and classroom observation. The analysis is organized based on the research questions of the study, focusing on the types of students' difficulties in English vocabulary mastery and the external factors influencing those difficulties.

1. Types of Students' Difficulties in English Vocabulary Mastery

Based on the analysis of interview data from fifth-grade students, several types of difficulties in English vocabulary mastery were identified.

The first difficulty relates to vocabulary writing and spelling. Many students reported that they found it difficult to write English words correctly because the spelling is different from pronunciation. This difference caused

confusion and made students unsure when completing written tasks or quizzes. Observation data also showed that students often hesitated or made errors when asked to write vocabulary independently.

The second difficulty concerns memorizing and retaining vocabulary. Most students stated that they often forgot English words that had been learned in previous lessons. This problem usually occurred when the vocabulary was not reviewed or practiced regularly, both in class and at home. The observation results support this finding, as limited time was allocated for vocabulary review during lessons.

Another difficulty identified is related to reading and pronunciation. Some students experienced difficulty pronouncing English words correctly, especially unfamiliar vocabulary. During observation, several students appeared hesitant or stopped when reading English words aloud, indicating a lack of confidence in pronunciation.

In addition, several students showed low confidence and passive learning behavior. Interview data revealed that some students preferred to remain silent when they did not understand vocabulary lessons. They felt shy, unmotivated, or afraid of making mistakes. This behavior was also observed in the classroom, where only a few students actively participated in vocabulary activities.

Overall, the main types of difficulties in English vocabulary mastery include writing and spelling difficulties, limited vocabulary retention, pronunciation problems, and low learning confidence.

2. External Factors Causing Students' Difficulties in English Vocabulary Mastery

The analysis of interview and observation data indicates that students' difficulties in English vocabulary mastery are influenced by several external factors, which include school factors, family factors, and social factors.

a. School Factors

From the classroom observation, it was found that the time allocated for English lessons was limited, with English being taught only once a week. This limited exposure reduced students' opportunities to practice and reinforce vocabulary. In addition, although the teacher used various teaching strategies such as games, songs, and visual media, these activities were not consistently applied in every lesson.

The observation also showed that students had limited opportunities to practice writing vocabulary actively, such as writing on the board or doing guided spelling exercises. This condition contributed to students' difficulties in mastering vocabulary spelling.

Teacher–student interaction also influenced learning. While the teacher provided support and feedback, some students still felt hesitant to ask questions, which affected their understanding of vocabulary lessons.

b. Family Factors

Interview data revealed that parental support in learning English varied among students. Several students stated that they rarely practiced English at home and did not receive assistance from parents in reviewing

vocabulary. Most parents tended to focus more on other subjects or religious studies.

In addition, many students did not attend English courses or tutoring outside school. As a result, students had limited exposure to English vocabulary beyond the classroom, which affected their vocabulary retention.

c. Social Factors

Social factors also played a role in students' vocabulary difficulties. Some students were easily distracted by friends during class, which reduced their focus on learning activities. Observation data showed that peer interaction sometimes interfered with students' concentration, especially during vocabulary practice.

Outside the classroom, exposure to English through media such as television, games, or digital content was inconsistent. While a few students were exposed to English media, most students reported minimal use of English in their daily environment.

Summary of Data Analysis:

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that:

1. Students experience difficulties in writing, memorizing, and pronouncing English vocabulary, as well as low learning confidence.
2. These difficulties are influenced by external factors, including limited instructional time and practice at school, lack of consistent support at home, and minimal exposure to English in students' social environment.

C. Discussion

After describing and analyzing the data using observation and interviews, it can be known the information about the external factors of students' difficulties in English vocabulary mastery can be seen from several factors that are school factors, family factors and social factors.

This section discusses the research findings by relating them to relevant theories, particularly Nation's theory of vocabulary knowledge and Rofiqi's theory of external factors influencing learning difficulties.

1. Types of Students' Difficulties in English Vocabulary Mastery (Nation's Theory)

Based on the findings from observations and student interviews, the fifth grade students at SDIT Cahaya Hati experience several types of difficulties in English vocabulary mastery. These difficulties are closely related to the aspects of vocabulary knowledge proposed by Nation.

First, many students face difficulties in pronunciation. Students often feel confused because English words are pronounced differently from how they are written. According to Nation, vocabulary knowledge includes knowledge of the spoken form of words. The findings indicate that students have not fully mastered this aspect, which causes hesitation and lack of confidence when reading words aloud.

Second, students experience difficulties in spelling or writing vocabulary. Several students reported that they know the word when they hear it, but they cannot write it correctly. This problem is related to Nation's concept of written

form, which requires learners to connect sound and spelling accurately. Limited practice in writing vocabulary contributes to this difficulty.

Third, difficulties in understanding and remembering word meaning were also found. Many students easily forget vocabulary learned in previous lessons, especially when the words are not reviewed regularly. Nation states that vocabulary mastery requires repeated exposure and use in meaningful contexts. The limited repetition in class makes it difficult for students to retain vocabulary for a long time.

These findings show that students' vocabulary difficulties involve several interconnected aspects of vocabulary knowledge, as described by Nation.

2. External Factors Causing Vocabulary Difficulties (Rofiqi's Theory)

The students' difficulties in vocabulary mastery are also influenced by external factors, as explained by Rofiqi, which include school, family, and social factors.

From the school factor, the limited time allocation for English lessons (once a week) reduces students' opportunities to practice and review vocabulary. In addition, although the teacher uses various teaching media, large class size and limited time make it difficult to provide individual attention to students who need more support.

Regarding the family factor, many students receive limited support for learning English at home. Parents tend to prioritize other subjects, and English practice is rarely done outside school. This lack of reinforcement at home affects students' ability to remember and use vocabulary.

From the social factor, students are sometimes distracted by their peers during lessons, which affects their focus. Exposure to English through mass media such as television or digital games is also limited or not used effectively as a learning resource.

CHAPTER V

A. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion presented in Chapter IV, this study draws several conclusions regarding students' difficulties in English vocabulary mastery at the fifth grade of SDIT Cahaya Hati.

First, the study found that students experience various types of difficulties in mastering English vocabulary. These difficulties include problems in pronunciation, spelling (writing), understanding word meaning, and remembering vocabulary. Many students struggle because English pronunciation and spelling are different from Indonesian, which makes reading and writing vocabulary challenging. In addition, limited repetition and practice cause students to easily forget vocabulary that has been previously taught. These findings are in line with Nation's theory, which states that vocabulary mastery involves knowledge of word form, meaning, and use.

Second, the study also identified several external factors that contribute to students' vocabulary difficulties. Based on Rofiqi's theory, these factors include school factors, family factors, and social factors. School-related factors involve limited instructional time, large class size, and limited opportunities for individual guidance. Family factors include lack of parental support and limited English practice at home. Social

factors include peer distractions and limited exposure to English through mass media or daily environments.

In conclusion, students' difficulties in English vocabulary mastery at SDIT Cahaya Hati are influenced by both linguistic aspects of vocabulary knowledge and external environmental factors. Therefore, students' vocabulary development requires support not only from classroom instruction but also from family and learning environments outside school.

B. Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher would like to offer several suggestions for improvement.

1. For English Teachers

   English teachers are encouraged to provide more varied and interactive vocabulary teaching strategies, such as games, songs, and visual media, and to increase repetition of vocabulary. Teachers may also consider giving more individual attention to students who experience learning difficulties.

2. For Students

   Students are suggested to practice English vocabulary more frequently, both inside and outside the classroom, and to be more active in asking questions when they do not understand the lesson.

3. For Parents

   Parents are encouraged to support their children's English learning at home by motivating them, helping them review vocabulary, and providing simple exposure to English through daily activities.

4. For Future Researchers

   Future researchers are suggested to conduct similar studies with a larger number of participants or to focus on other aspects of English learning, such as grammar or speaking skills, to gain deeper insights into students' learning difficulties.

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