

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Vocabulary is the collection of words that a person knows and uses in a language, covering both receptive and productive aspects (Nation, 2020). The process of learning new words involves pronunciation, understanding definitions, and the ability to use them in sentences (Lessard, 2021). In learning English as a foreign or second language, vocabulary acquisition is more important than other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, because vocabulary is the foundation of communication (Lukas et al., 2020; Salawazo et al., 2020). Limited vocabulary can hinder successful language learning, especially for foreign or second language learners. Good vocabulary mastery is important for improving communication skills and academic success (Dauletova, 2022). Therefore, good vocabulary mastery is essential to improve communication skills and academic success.

In addition, motivation is one of the fundamental factors affecting learning, as it reflects an individual's willingness and desire to achieve certain goals (Sayeed, Essan, & Natiqi, 2024). Motivation is a multifaceted construct that includes the direction and magnitude of human behavior, the selection of specific actions, persistence in

performing them, and effort expended (Dörnyei, 2020). Brene Brown (2022) emphasizes the importance of self-confidence and emotional support in learning motivation, as without motivation, students tend to feel insecure and lack confidence. This can inhibit them from pursuing knowledge and developing new skills. Thus, motivation has an important role in creating an effective and supportive learning environment.

Many previous studies have highlighted the importance of effective strategies and methods in improving students' vocabulary acquisition in English language teaching. Bria, Bouk & Seran (2023) and Kyamko, Somicad, Belleza & Sadogiuo (2023) found that students' vocabulary acquisition experienced a significant increase when appropriate teaching strategies and methods were applied. Research by Aure & Teacher (2024) also supports these findings, showing that innovative teaching methods can significantly improve students' vocabulary acquisition.

Further research by Ye & Shi (2022) compared various vocabulary learning approaches, including traditional and innovative methods. They found significant learning gains in vocabulary knowledge across all groups using the featured method, model or media. Similar findings were also found by Handig, San Gabriel, Garcia & Domingo (2023), as well as Handig, San Gabriel, Garcia & Domingo (2023), which showed that different learning approaches can have

positive results in vocabulary acquisition.

Research on learning motivation focuses more on the factors that influence students' learning motivation. Nguyen & Tran (2021) and Naveed, Yasmeen, Siddiq & Ahmed (2018) showed that external factors such as social environment, family, friends, school environment, learning conditions, curriculum, and quality of teachers strongly influence high school and university students' English learning motivation. In addition, internal factors such as students' past knowledge and experience as well as students' attitudes towards learning English also play an important role in influencing their motivation.

Further research moves to the use of strategies, methods or media to increase students' learning motivation. Kareema, Amal, and Ahmed (2022) found that teachers who use different learning strategies can increase students' interest, increase their attention, and encourage them to engage in the learning process. Research by Firgiyana & Utomo (2024) and Suyahman, Pattiruhu, Zuhriyah, Rintaningrum & Manyullei, S. (2024) also showed that the use of appropriate learning strategies can significantly increase student motivation.

Although many studies have been conducted on vocabulary acquisition and motivation in English language learning, there are some gaps that need to be identified. First, most studies on vocabulary focus on effective teaching

strategies and methods, but few address how students' motivation can affect their vocabulary acquisition. Secondly, existing research tends to focus more on adolescent and adult students, while research on vocabulary and motivation in child learners is still lacking.

In addition, existing studies have mostly addressed learning outcomes rather than the learning process itself. Yet, understanding the learning process involving motivation and vocabulary acquisition is crucial to designing more effective teaching strategies. Thus, further research is needed to explore the relationship between motivation and vocabulary acquisition, especially in child learners, and focus on learning processes that can improve both aspects simultaneously.

In response to the above problems, researchers conducted a survey of seventh grade students and interviews with teachers at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School (The survey instrument can be seen in Appendix 1, the interview instrument can be seen in Appendix 2, the survey results can be seen in Appendix 3, and the interview results can be seen in Appendix 4). The survey results show that the main problem in learning English is that students view it as an obligation, not as a valuable lesson. The results of interviews with grade 7 English teachers at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School support this finding. Mrs. Siti Qomariyatun, the grade 7 English teacher, stated

that "students' vocabulary is very minimal because they did not learn English in the previous school (elementary school), and consider English a very difficult subject so they start from the beginning, such as spelling vocabulary." This indicates a large gap in students' basic English skills, which affects their ability to follow the curriculum at higher levels. This deficiency requires teachers to adopt a more fundamental and intensive teaching approach, starting with the introduction of phonetics and basic vocabulary.

The survey results show that the majority of students tend to learn English with a less effective method, which is only memorizing from books or dictionaries. However, the interview with the teacher revealed that the teaching method applied was different and more interactive. The teacher uses the singing method, where students are invited to sing English songs, so that they feel more enthusiastic and happy in learning vocabulary. In addition, the teacher also applies the word repetition method, where the teacher first says the English vocabulary, then the students say it back in Indonesian. According to the teacher, this method is quite helpful in increasing students' motivation in learning English.

Survey results show that most students find English a difficult subject, especially in the aspect of pronunciation. This challenge is often caused by the phonetic difference between students' mother tongue and English, which makes

it difficult for them to imitate the correct sounds and intonation. Interview results with the grade 7 English teacher at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School also revealed two main challenges: students' difficulties in pronunciation and students' low interest in the subject. Difficulties in pronunciation often arise due to phonetic differences between students' mother tongue and English. In addition, many students lack interest in learning English because they find it difficult and confusing.

These challenges are the biggest obstacles in the classroom, affecting learning effectiveness and student motivation.

The role of the teacher in helping students learn English is very important, as the teacher serves as the main facilitator in the learning process. The results of a survey of grade 7 students of Hidayatul Qomariyah Wustha Islamic Boarding School show that their English teacher is considered quite good and interesting in teaching the subject. This finding is supported by the interview results which revealed that the grade 7 English teacher uses singing activities of popular English songs to increase students' motivation. This method capitalizes on students' interest in music to introduce new vocabulary and language structures in a fun and memorable way.

Besides the role of teachers, schools also play an important role in students' learning process, especially in

providing adequate facilities to develop their potential. Good facilities, such as comfortable classrooms, access to quality learning materials, and advanced educational technology, are needed to support an effective learning process. The survey results show that students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School feel that they need rewards for their achievements as an additional form of motivation. In addition, encouragement and support from teachers are also considered very important by students to increase their motivation and confidence in learning. Learning facilities such as dictionaries, English books and other learning media can help students access the necessary information and enrich their learning experience.

Meanwhile, the interview results show that the school environment at Pondok Pesantren Wustha Hidayatul Qomariyah does not really motivate students in learning English. The grade 7 English teacher explained, "The effect is not too big, because they are away from

gadgets and rarely communicate in English with peers." The lack of exposure to technology and lack of communication practice are the main obstacles in motivating students. As a solution, the teacher found that singing popular English songs could increase students' motivation. This method capitalizes on students' interest in music to introduce new vocabulary and language structures in a fun and memorable way. This strategy shows that integrating

popular culture in language teaching effectively increases students' interest and motivation. Research also supports the use of music as an effective learning tool, as it can increase students' emotional engagement and memory of the material being taught.

The interview results also show that to overcome the barriers in learning English, teachers need to develop more creative and interactive teaching methods, as well as provide extra support to help students overcome pronunciation difficulties and increase their interest. Schools should also facilitate teachers by providing facilities that support effective teaching and motivate students. The grade 7 English teacher explained, "Adding facilities related to English lessons, such as interesting books, dictionaries, and technology-based facilities, is very important. Because when students see technology-based media, they are already excited, especially if they can operate it." Thus, a combination of innovative teaching methods and adequate facility support can help improve the quality of English learning in schools.

In addition to creative teaching methods, the provision of extra support is essential in overcoming specific challenges, such as pronunciation. Pronunciation is often a significant hurdle for English learners, especially for those in non-native environments. Teachers need to give focused attention to this area through supplementary materials and

personalized feedback. This extra support can come in the form of dedicated pronunciation drills, the use of audiovisual resources, or peer learning activities that emphasize correct pronunciation. Tailored support helps students build confidence and improves their spoken English.

Moreover, schools play a crucial role in facilitating teachers by providing the necessary resources and infrastructure. The availability of relevant facilities directly influences the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. For example, the inclusion of multimedia equipment, language labs, and other technology-based resources can greatly enhance the learning experience. As mentioned by the grade 7 English teacher, when students are exposed to technology-based tools such as interactive media or educational software, their motivation and enthusiasm for learning increase significantly.

The importance of providing adequate learning materials and facilities cannot be overstated. Access to up-to-date resources, such as interesting English books, dictionaries, and language apps, can encourage independent learning and allow students to practice outside of the classroom. This is especially relevant in today's digital era, where students are accustomed to interacting with technology. Schools that invest in modern teaching aids create a conducive environment that not only supports teachers but also makes learning more engaging for students.

In conclusion, a combination of innovative teaching methods and adequate facility support is vital for improving the quality of English learning in schools. Teachers need to be equipped with creative strategies and resources to engage students effectively, while schools must ensure the provision of tools that facilitate these methods. By working together, teachers and schools can overcome the barriers that hinder English language learning and foster an environment that motivates students to achieve better outcomes.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the results of surveys and interviews conducted with students and teachers at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School, there are several main problems identified in English language learning.

1. Students view English as an obligation, not as a valuable subject
2. The English teacher stated that the students' vocabulary was minimal because they did not learn English in elementary school.
3. The learning methods used by students tend to be less effective, such as memorizing from books or dictionaries.
4. Students perceive English as a difficult subject, especially in the aspect of pronunciation
5. The school environment is less supportive in motivating students to learn English.

C. Limitation of the Problem

In the limitation or scope of this research, the main focus is on seventh grade students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School. This study focuses on the effect of learning motivation on their mastery of English vocabulary. Data was collected through surveys and interviews with students and teachers at this institution. While trying to take into account various internal factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as the influence of the learning environment in the classroom, this study does not consider in depth external factors such as family support, students' social environment outside school, and learning media used outside the classroom.

D. Research Questions

Based on the above background, the problems in this study can be formulated in the following research questions:

1. How does the learning motivation of seventh grade students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School affect their mastery of English vocabulary?
2. What factors influence students' motivation level in learning English vocabulary at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School?

E. Reseach Objectives

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the effect of learning motivation on the mastery of English vocabulary among seventh grade students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Explains how the learning motivation of seventh grade students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School affects their ability to master English vocabulary.
2. Identifying factors that influence students' motivation level in learning English vocabulary at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School.

F. The Significants of the Research

This research has significant value both theoretically and practically in the context of language education. The main objective is to understand how learning motivation affects English vocabulary acquisition among seventh grade students at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School. By identifying the factors that influence learning motivation, this study is expected to provide deeper insights into the relationship between motivation and language acquisition, as well as offer a basis for the development of more effective teaching strategies. Theoretically, this study makes an important contribution to the field of language education, especially in understanding the relationship between learning

motivation and English vocabulary acquisition.

By exploring the factors that influence students' motivation, this study can enrich the academic literature and offer new insights into the dynamics of language learning in a pesantren environment. This research can also be used as a basis for further studies on the interaction between learning motivation and other aspects of language learning. It has the potential to assist academics and researchers in developing more comprehensive theories related to language learning and student motivation.

Practically, this study has significant practical implications for teachers, education managers and policy makers. The results of this study can help teachers at Hidayatul Qomariyah Islamic Boarding School and similar educational institutions to develop more effective teaching strategies that can improve students' learning motivation and, in turn, their English vocabulary acquisition. In addition, this research can serve as a guide for education managers in designing programs and policies that support a conducive learning environment to improve students' motivation and language skills. Thus, this study has the potential to improve the quality of English language education in pesantren and other schools.

Overall, this research not only enriches the academic literature but also offers significant practical benefits to various related parties in the education system. With a focus

on learning motivation and vocabulary acquisition, this study is expected to make a sustainable contribution in improving the quality of English language learning in the wider educational environment. Through a better understanding of the factors that influence motivation and vocabulary acquisition, educators and educational managers can design more effective strategies to support students' overall language development.

G. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

The operational definitions of the keywords in this study provide a clear understanding of the concepts used, namely Learning Motivation and English Vocabulary Mastery.

1. Learning Motivation is an internal and external drive that influences students' desire to learn and actively participate in English learning. English
2. Vocabulary Mastery is a student's ability to understand, remember, and use English vocabulary effectively in a variety of contexts.