

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

English has become a global language with a significant role in education, technology, business, and communication. In the era of globalization, the ability to communicate effectively in English is no longer optional; it is a key competence for students who aim to succeed academically and professionally (Eljazouli & Azmi, 2024). Proficiency in English enables individuals to access a wide range of information, participate in international discourse, and engage with diverse cultures (Baxromovna, 2025). In educational contexts, mastering English is crucial for developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and other 21st-century skills, which are highly demanded in both national and global environments. Therefore, fostering effective English language learning in schools, particularly at the secondary level, is essential to prepare students for future challenges.

Despite the recognized importance of English, learning outcomes in many schools remain uneven. In Indonesia, several studies have shown that secondary school students often face difficulties in mastering various aspects of the language, including vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Agustiana et al., 2023). At MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu, English teaching has shown similar patterns.

Observations and preliminary data indicate that students' motivation in English classes is often low, participation is inconsistent, and the achievement of language competencies varies significantly among students. Many students report difficulties in understanding language structures, expressing themselves confidently, and applying English in meaningful contexts. These challenges are exacerbated by factors such as limited exposure to English outside the classroom, insufficient teaching resources, and traditional methods that may not engage students effectively (Suryanto, 2025).

This situation reveals a significant gap between the intended outcomes of English language instruction and the reality experienced by students. While the curriculum outlines clear goals for competence in English, including communicative skills and language fluency, the implementation in the classroom sometimes fails to achieve these targets (Inatj, 2025). The gap is also reflected in students' perceptions: some students feel that English learning is monotonous, difficult, or irrelevant to their daily lives, which can reduce motivation and engagement. On the other hand, teachers face challenges in adapting their teaching strategies to the diverse needs, learning styles, and proficiency levels of students. This gap highlights the need for a detailed examination of teaching strategies and their effectiveness in enhancing student learning.

Teaching strategies play a crucial role in bridging this gap. Effective strategies can increase students' engagement, promote collaborative learning, and facilitate meaningful language acquisition (Prastiyowati et al., 2025). Innovative approaches, such as project-based learning, peer tutoring, interactive activities, and the use of multimedia resources, have been suggested to enhance the quality of English learning. However, it is unclear to what extent these strategies are applied in practice at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu, and how students perceive their effectiveness. Understanding students' perceptions of teaching strategies is essential, as positive perceptions are often linked to increased motivation, active participation, and improved learning outcomes (Zaim et al., 2024). Conversely, if teaching strategies are perceived as ineffective, students' engagement and achievement may decline.

Conducting research on English teaching strategies and students' perceptions at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu is therefore highly relevant. This study aims to explore how teaching strategies are implemented, how they are received by students, and what impacts they have on students' language learning. By focusing on descriptive qualitative analysis, the research seeks to provide a detailed and contextual understanding of classroom practices and students' experiences (Nirwan et al., 2024). The findings are expected to provide practical insights

for teachers to refine their instructional methods, enhance students' motivation, and foster a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment. Moreover, this research can contribute to the broader field of education by offering evidence-based recommendations for improving English language teaching in secondary schools.

In addition, this study addresses a broader educational need: developing students' competencies in English not only for academic success but also to prepare them for the globalized world. In the current era, students who are proficient in English are better equipped to access global knowledge, communicate across cultures, and participate in international programs or competitions (Pokrovskaya & Raitina, 2022). By investigating the link between teaching strategies and student perceptions, this research contributes to identifying effective pedagogical approaches that can enhance students' readiness for future academic and professional challenges. Ultimately, understanding English teaching strategies at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu can serve as a model for similar educational settings across Indonesia, promoting a more effective and student-centered approach to language learning.

In conclusion, the importance of English language learning, the observed challenges in student engagement and achievement, the existing gap between teaching goals and

classroom reality, and the necessity to improve instructional practices all underline the significance of this research (Kuswanto, 2025). This study is designed to provide a comprehensive description of the teaching strategies employed by English teachers and the perceptions of students toward these strategies, contributing both to practical improvements in classroom teaching and to academic knowledge in the field of education.

## **B. Identification of the Problem**

Based on the background of the study, several main problems in English language learning at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu can be identified as follows:

1. The effectiveness of English teaching strategies in the classroom

Despite the implementation of various teaching methods by English teachers, some strategies have not been able to fully enhance students' motivation, participation, and learning outcomes. In addition, there is a noticeable gap between the expected competencies outlined in the curriculum and the actual achievements of students in vocabulary, language structures, speaking, writing, and comprehension skills.

## 2. Students' perceptions of the teaching strategies

Limited information is available regarding how students evaluate and respond to the teaching strategies applied by teachers. Understanding students' perceptions is crucial, as their positive or negative responses can directly influence motivation, engagement, and the effectiveness of the learning process.

### C. Limitation of the Problem

To maintain the focus of the research and avoid overly broad discussion, this study is limited to:

1. This study is limited to ninth-grade students at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu.
2. The study focuses on the teaching strategies applied by a single English teacher.
3. The research examines the teaching strategies that are currently applied in the classroom, including interactive activities, project-based learning, peer tutoring, and other techniques observed during data collection.
4. Data are collected using interviews and questionnaires only.
5. The study emphasizes students' perceptions of teaching strategies and their impact on motivation, participation, and English language learning.

#### **D. Research Questions**

Based on the background described above, the problems in this study are formulated into the following two research questions:

1. What teaching strategies are employed by English teacher at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu?
2. How do students' perceive the teaching strategies employed by their teachers on their English language learning?

#### **E. The Purposes of the Research**

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate the teaching strategies employed by English teacher at MTsN 1 Kota Bengkulu.
2. To analyze students' perception on teaching strategies employed by the teachers on their English language learning.

#### **F. The Significance of the Research**

This study makes a significant contribution to the development of English language learning theory by examining the implementation of game-based learning. Theoretically, this research can provide empirical evidence that supports or challenges existing educational theories related to language acquisition, such as constructivism,

behaviorism, or communicative language teaching. It may lead to the development of new theoretical frameworks that outline effective teaching strategies for language instruction, contributing to the body of knowledge in language education. And if the research explores the use of technology in teaching strategies, it can contribute to theoretical discussions on the role of technology in enhancing language learning outcomes.

This research also provides teachers with evidence-based strategies that they can implement in their classrooms to enhance student learning and engagement in English language skills. Also, it can inform professional development programs, equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to adopt effective teaching strategies.

By identifying effective teaching strategies, the research can lead to improved student performance in English language skills, fostering greater confidence and proficiency among learners. This findings can raise awareness among parents and the community about the importance of effective teaching strategies, encouraging their involvement in supporting students' language learning.

#### **G. Operational Definitions of Key Terms**

In this study, several key terminologies will be used to support the understanding of the concepts discussed, which are explained as follows:

1. Teaching strategies refer to the methods and techniques that educators use to facilitate learning and enhance student engagement. These can include direct instruction, collaborative learning, project-based learning, differentiated instruction, and the use of technology in the classroom.
2. Language learning is the process of acquiring the skills to understand, speak, read, and write in a new language. It involves learning vocabulary (words), grammar (rules for sentence structure), pronunciation (how words are spoken), and comprehension (understanding spoken and written language). It also includes practicing speaking and listening in real-life situations to become more fluent and confident.

