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## English Vocabulary Mastery Difficulties for Primary School Learners

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### Abstract

*English is one of the foreign languages that needs to be mastered to facilitate a person in communicating between countries. Difficulties that are often found in the process of learning English in elementary schools are vocabulary mastery. The original purpose of this study is to find out more about what forms of difficulties experienced by students in vocabulary domination material, find out what factors cause difficulties in vocabulary domination, and find out solutions to handle it. The researcher used qualitative research methods. The results share that there are many forms of difficulties experienced by elementary school students in mastering English vocabulary, including students who are not familiar with the use of English dictionaries, students lack understanding of English vocabulary in the material presented, students are not accustomed to using English in everyday life, students cannot mention vocabulary, synonyms and antonyms in writing, and students have not been able to write synchronous words with perfect spelling. The difficulties that occur are caused by internal factors as well as external factors. Efforts that can be made by the teacher to increase students' mastery of English vocabulary are by using media or learning methods such as the Running Dictation method, picture word domino card media, charades game method, Flash Card media, and TPR storytelling method.*

**Keywords:** Vocabulary Mastery Difficulties, Learning Strategies

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## INTRODUCTION

Harmer (2007) states that in English language learning, 'students are not only required to master the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing but also master components such as English neatness, collocations and vocabulary'. Vocabulary is one of the linguistic components in English language learning. Before learners examine English language skills, they should investigate vocabulary as the first step. In an exclusive context such as English language learning at the basic level, vocabulary is used to connect the four language skills. Vocabulary is related to using the four English skills, namely writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Vocabulary will be very useful in providing ideas. when reading a simple text in English, if the dominance of the learner's vocabulary is good, then the learner will practically capture the information or the original content of the text. when speaking and listening, if the dominance of the student's vocabulary is good, then the student can use his ability to communicate directly with other students who also use English. This shows that vocabulary is the foundation in analyzing English and is crucial in investigating a language.

Vocabulary is one of the linguistic components that students must master in studying English as a foreign language. So far, students have the ability to understand and use terms and their meanings. That is, when learning English well, students not only know the words, but also their meanings. For example, Rivers as cited in Nunan (1991) asserts that 'vocabulary is crucial to the successful use of a second language, because without a relative vocabulary, people cannot communicate and express their feelings in verbal and written form effectively. Therefore, vocabulary is an important element in language learning that must be mastered by learners at all levels of education. dominance of English vocabulary means the ability that exists in a person to be able to explore and know a word contained in English and as a basis for communication that is already

known by everyone both verbally and in writing, as a result it can give meaning when using the language (Rikmasari & Budianti, 2019).

The role of English in every aspect of life encourages teachers and learners to work well together to achieve the goals of English pedagogy and learning. so that learners can participate seriously in understanding and understanding the material provided, teachers must be more creative in designing learning. fundamental goals in communication can be achieved if students experience directly in providing English clearly in the learning process (Nurani et al., 2019). Teachers must be serious in providing pedagogy of English materials aphoristically as a result students can know the material well and make effective English learning.

English is often considered to be a difficult subject to understand by some students, especially at the elementary school level. The difficulty that is often found in the process of learning English in elementary school is the dominance of vocabulary. This is in accordance with the problems that researchers found at the elementary school level, according to a brief interview with the English teacher, it is said that students have not been able to mention the vocabulary requested by the teacher because the writing and reading are not aligned as a result students have difficulty pronouncing terms using valid. In addition, students have not been able to master English vocabulary in terms of writing appropriate terms using proper spelling. therefore, the researcher is interested in raising a title, namely "English Vocabulary Mastery Difficulties for Primary School Learners" to find out more about what forms of difficulties experienced by students in vocabulary mastery material, find out what factors cause difficulties in mastering vocabulary, and find out solutions to handle it using reading relevant references using the research title.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method. The data collection instruments that researchers use are literature studies or literature studies carried out by reading several sources relevant to the research title. The data validity technique uses source triangulation, which is to explore the truth of data from several references to previous scientific journals which are considered to have different points of view on each research and The data collection techniques used in this study are interviews and observations. These techniques are effective and efficient ways to understand existing phenomena and factors that may affect students' difficulties in vocabulary acquisition. The subject of this research is by interviewing the English teacher and some students in grade 5 at SD Mis Al-Ittiadiyah. The subjects of this research were also chosen based on the consideration of the possibility of parties who understand the research problem.

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In the research conducted, it aims to find out more about the forms of difficulties experienced by students in mastering English vocabulary, knowing what factors cause them to have difficulty mastering vocabulary, as well as solutions to handle them by reading references that are relevant to the research title.

### Forms of English Mastery Difficulties

In the process of learning English, there must be a difficulty in learning. These difficulties can lead to less than optimal learning outcomes. Students have difficulty with vocabulary in food and drink material. Students have difficulty when working on problems so that students get low scores. This happens because students are not familiar with the use of English dictionaries and students do not master English vocabulary in the material conveyed by the teacher, besides that students are also not used to using English in everyday life (Sucandra et al., 2022). This is in line with the opinion of Utami and Zuhdi (2020: 1) saying that learning difficulties in English occur with the condition that English is not used in everyday life, so students feel English is difficult. Students have difficulty understanding the instructions for treatment questions in the learning video, this may be due to students not reading and understanding the instructions for treatment questions carefully, so that students have difficulty dealing with questions.

Other research shows that students' vocabulary mastery is still low and there are still many students who have not been able to master English vocabulary in terms of word writing, namely mentioning vocabulary words in writing according to the meaning requested by the teacher,

mentioning synonyms and antonyms in writing, and writing words according to proper spelling (Sugiharti & Riftina, 2019).

### **Factors that Cause Vocabulary Mastery Difficulties**

#### **a. Internal Factors**

Internal factors are factors that arise from within students, including student learning attitudes, student health, student motivation and intelligence.

1. Learning attitude in learning is one of the students' tendencies to act in a certain way. The positive behavior of classroom students is the beginning of good behavior in future learning. Conversely, if students behave negatively, it can cause difficulties for students to learn in a way that leads to maximum learning outcomes.
2. Students' physical health is a very important factor in learning. In this study there were several students who experienced dizziness when learning or memorizing vocabulary in learning English and could not concentrate when learning English was taking place in class. Physical health is the most important factor and is very important in all activities. If a student's physical health is disturbed, he feels tired, weak, restless, sleepy, sleepy. If the body is weak, lack of blood or malfunction.
3. Student motivation is very important to foster the spirit of learning in students. In addition to the motivation of the students themselves, teacher motivation is also very necessary to provide motivational support so that students feel motivated to learn. Students who are highly motivated to learn English participate in learning with great enthusiasm.
4. The intelligence of each student is different and the development of students is also different, some are fast and some are slow. This is in accordance with the opinion (Anditiasari, 2020) (10th) that high intelligence affects student learning progress, under the same conditions high intelligence students perform better than low intelligence students.

#### **b. External factors**

1. External factors arising from outside students are differences in learning methods, learning environment and use of facilities and infrastructure.
2. Learning methods. Learning methods are very important and need to be considered by the teacher. Teachers must have a learning strategy or method whose purpose is to feel excited and enthusiastic during class learning, so as to eliminate boredom caused to students. In general, students are easily bored when they are in class, it is certainly a challenge for teachers to come up with learning strategies or methods, such as making quizzes or games that students are interested in, to make students excited about learning English, and of course to eliminate boredom in students. In addition to focusing on learning methods, teachers must also conduct learning assessments to see how well students understand the material provided. This can be seen from how active students are in the classroom when the teacher plays games or quizzes during the lesson. Based on the observations made by the researchers, the researchers saw a different classroom situation when the teacher taught with games or quizzes and the situation when there were no games or quizzes. If the teacher sees that there are students who are passive, the teacher gives a few questions while reminding the material that has been delivered before until the student is fluent and understands.
3. Use of learning media. The use of media is very useful to convey the subject matter. Based on the results of learning observations, teachers do not use video media in the delivery of food and beverages. Teachers do not use YouTube videos, videos related to the topic. Inadequate teaching tools or media exacerbate activities, which can cause learning difficulties (Kurniani Ningsih et al., 2021).
4. Facilities and Infrastructure. Based on the results of interviews and surveys, the school distributes English textbooks to students to help them learn, the classroom conditions look hot because there are no fans in the room. With poor classroom conditions causing poor learning so that learning becomes difficult.
5. Students' Family Environment. Family is the first and main education for students. In contrast, it turns out that families can also be the cause of student learning difficulties, this happens due to inappropriate patterns or ways of educating children applied by parents, such as lack of parental attention to their children's education, such as indifference so that they pay less attention to their children's learning progress, of course this is one of the factors causing

English learning difficulties in students. If parents are authoritarian and rude to children, it will certainly have an impact on the unhealthy mental health of children. Children will feel unhappy and uncomfortable at home. Children will prefer to go and play with their friends, causing them to be lazy to study. A little attention from parents has a positive impact on children. This can reduce children's learning difficulties when studying in class. Simple forms of parental attention such as asking children about their PR, children's activities at school that day, joking with children even though briefly parents must be able to build communication with children..

### C. Solutions to English Vocabulary Difficulties

- a. Do not change the subject before the student achieves a higher grade in the KKM. This helps create motivation in students to get better grades.
- b. Before the lesson starts, review the students' vocabulary. The purpose of this task is to check how well students remember English vocabulary.
- c. Choosing the right teaching method can help the teacher in delivering the material.
- d. Audio-visual media or video is a tool used by teachers to convey subject matter, so teachers must be active in creating and developing a learning environment that is packaged in an interesting way so that students respond positively and actively in learning. So that it can increase learning interest and motivation to learn English (Hidayati et al., 2012).
- e. Learning should be able to create a comfortable and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion of the research that has been described, it can be concluded that grade 5 Mis Al-Ittiadiyah Elementary School still has difficulty in mastering English vocabulary about food and drinks. There are two factors that make it difficult for students to learn English, namely internal factors and external factors. (1) internal factors, students themselves that affect difficulties in English vocabulary include student learning attitudes, student physical health, low learning motivation and student intelligence. (2) external factors, namely factors outside of learning itself that affect difficulties in mastering English vocabulary, including uninteresting learning methods, the unavailability of learning media, poor facilities and infrastructure and the student's family environment.

The solutions that researchers can convey in this study are as follows: (1) Do not change subjects before students achieve higher grades in the KKM. This helps create motivation in students to get better grades. (2) Before the lesson starts, review the students' vocabulary. The purpose of this task is to check how well students remember English vocabulary. (3) Choosing the right teaching method can help the teacher in delivering the material. (4) Audio-visual media or video is a tool used by teachers to convey subject matter, so teachers must be active in creating and developing a learning environment that is packaged in an interesting way so that students respond positively and actively in learning. So that it can increase interest in learning and motivation to learn English. (5) Learning must be able to create a comfortable and pleasant learning atmosphere.

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