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**ANALYSIS OF STUDENT'S PROBLEMS IN MASTERING VOCABULARY: A CASE STUDY AT SMPN 4 PANGALENGAN**

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## This study aims to determine students' problems in vocabulary mastery. In this study, researchers investigated students' problems in vocabulary mastery at SMPN 4 Pangalengan. This study applies a descriptive method that uses qualitative analysis of research data. Researchers collect data that supports this study by conducting interviews, questionnaires, and observations. Participants in this study were 7th grade students, there were seven students as subjects in this study.The results of this study obtained that students' problems in vocabulary mastery were lack of student interest and motivation. There are two factors that cause lack of student interest and motivation (1) students' difficulty in memorizing vocabulary, (2) because of the use of smartphones which is the main factor in this problem.

**Keywords**: Vocabulary, Problems, Smartphones

**Abstract:**

**INTRODUCTION**

This research aims to dig deeper into the problems that occur in the field regarding vocabulary mastery among junior high school students. This research is interesting to carry out because it indicates a lack of interest and motivation in students' learning, especially in vocabulary mastery. According to Gisma Wijaya (2018), most of the difficulties faced by students in mastering vocabulary are difficulties in pronunciation, how to spell, how to understand, the meaning of words, and low student motivation to learn.

This vocabulary is of course an important part of conveying a message. It can be concluded that a person's success in learning their mother tongue, national language, or even a foreign language, in this case English, must be accompanied by good vocabulary mastery. Because of course this ability has an impact on other language abilities; Speaking, listening, writing and reading skills (Solihati et al, 2016).

In the learning process, what students should have is interest and motivation. Because in this case student interest and motivation are very necessary for the teaching and learning process to run so that learning objectives can be achieved. According to Filgona et al. (2020), ”Learning success depends on whether students are motivated or not”. Therefore, this research encourages teachers as facilitators to be able to attract students' interest and motivation to learn.

This research is important to conduct to find out the problems or causes of students' low interest and motivation in learning vocabulary mastery. With this research, it is hoped that these problems can be resolved so that there is a solution to attract students' interest and motivation in learning vocabulary mastery.

This research was carried out by identifying factors that influence vocabulary mastery, then finding out how teachers use teaching methods, as well as identifying the impact on understanding the material and this research can also explore solutions that can be applied to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study used descriptive qualitative method. The descriptive qualitative method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior (Andri Marta Sudirja n.d.). According (Rengkuan,n.d.) qualitative research is a research method as the main tool in collecting data that is directly related to the instrument or research subject. In this research, researchers used qualitative research methods to find out and explore students' problems in mastering vocabulary. In qualitative research, researchers analyze and then explain the results of the analysis in the research. The data sources used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data taken directly by the author in the field through observation and interviews. Secondary data is data that does not come directly or originally from respondents but is obtained through documentation or literature studies to strengthen or provide additional research data.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**English Vocabulary Mastery Problems**

Based on the interview results, it was found that there were several problems faced by students in mastering vocabulary. The main problem faced by students is the lack of interest and motivation of students. According to the teacher at the school, *“jadi neng, masalah utama di sekolah ini dalam penguasaan kosakata adalah kurangnya minat dan motivasi siswa untuk belajar*”. This statement was found from the results of pre-observations conducted by researchers before conducting further research. The needs and motivation of an individual/person become their motivation in learning, because motivation will increase if someone has a significant interest (Dan et al., 2008).

Researchers have analyzed the answers from the interview results both through questionnaires and face to face interviews and the results are 68% of students have quite low interest and motivation and 31% of students are quite motivated and interested in learning English. The results of direct interviews with 9 participants, as many as 7 students said that their interest and motivation to learn to master vocabulary are still quite low and 2 students have quite high motivation to learn to master vocabulary because one of them is a student who actively participates in English extracurricular activities.

 Some students stated that they had difficulty memorizing vocabulary, the difficulties experienced by students included reading and the most common difficulty experienced by students was pronunciation. The first participant said, “*Kesulitan saya menghafal kosakata dari mengucapkannya*” “I have difficulty memorizing vocabulary from pronouncing it, because it is difficult and often convoluted”. The second participant said, “*Saya memiliki kesulitan pelafalan kosakata dalam membaca dan mengucapkan, karena cara membaca Bahasa inggris tidak sesuai dengan apa yang ditulis jadi susah diucapkan*” “I have difficulty pronouncing vocabulary in reading and speaking, because the way of reading English does not match what is written so it is difficult to pronounce”. The third respondent said the same thing, “*Saya sulit menghafal kosakata karena susah banget mengucapkannya*” “I have difficulty memorizing vocabulary because it is very difficult to pronounce”. And the fourth participant said, “*Saya memiliki kesulitan karena bahasa inggris bukan bahasa sehari-sehari*” “I have difficulty because English is not an everyday language”.

In addition to the difficulties experienced by students in mastering vocabulary as explained above, the researcher found other factors that influence students' interest and motivation to learn. The researcher found inhibiting factors or causes of students' lack of interest and motivation to learn in mastering English vocabulary, namely Smartphones. From the data that has been taken from 3 classes, 99% of students have personal smartphones and they bring them to school. Researchers have interviewed respondents about the smartphones they own and use, whether or not they have an effect on their interest and motivation to learn vocabulary mastery. On average, students use their smartphones not for studying but for playing games and playing social media.

Smartphones do affect the lack of interest and motivation in learning for students, especially in vocabulary mastery learning. Their interest and motivation to learn are diverted by watching viral news that often appears on their social media homepages and the existence of interesting content but not learning content that makes them lazy to learn. Not only do they feel lazy to learn vocabulary, but there is also a translation application that makes it easy for them to copy text into the application, then click on the application and automatically change the language of the text into English, without them learning each word so that their vocabulary mastery is not good.

From the results of observations that have been carried out in grade seven, researchers observed the teaching and learning process, Researchers observed the teaching and learning activities of teachers and students from the start of learning until learning is finished. The teacher provides game-based learning using flash card media with the theme *home sweet home*. The technique used by the teacher in this learning is games and the method used is discussion. The teacher provides initial competencies regarding basic vocabulary about *rooms of a house and things in the house* as well as the basic structure of using *there are / there is*. In this learning activity, students are required to be able to compose very short and simple descriptive texts, then describe a room in the house by paying attention to social functions, text structures, and linguistic elements correctly and according to context, this is one of the learning objectives that the teacher wants to achieve.

From the research results, students prefer game-based learning, and also some students said they wanted to learn with a new atmosphere, for example learning outside the classroom so that students are happier to learn and motivated. From this perspective, researchers found several ways to overcome the lack of student interest and motivation. The first is that teachers must prepare more game-based materials and not increase the material in the form of text. For example, teachers provide memorization of at least 15 English vocabulary words and then provide a guessing game according to the memorized vocabulary, if students can guess the word asked, the teacher can give a reward to the student.

Reward is something we give to someone because he/she does something (Pratama & Sukarno, 2021). Reward is a positive reinforcement, where the teacher gives praise or awards to students when they successfully complete the assigned task well (Nisa Febianti, 2018). The form of reward is quite varied, it can be in the form of objects, praise, or added value and others. The reward aims to make students more motivated, interested in learning, and enthusiastic in learning because students will get something from their success.

To overcome students to be more motivated in learning, teachers are expected to provide quite varied materials, for example using technology such as computers and projectors. In addition to flashcards, teachers can use projectors and computers or laptops as learning media. Teachers can make some pictures along with captions in English for vocabulary mastery learning, the pictures can be made by powerpoint, in the powerpoint the teacher can add various colors and can add the desired sounds. So that students do not get bored with learning that is only in the form of books or text.

 The next way teachers can provide learning outside the classroom, for example in the library or in the school environment. For example, by looking for any objects in the school environment then students note and change them into English so that in this activity students are able to add vocabulary by looking for objects in the school environment.

 Apart from several ways to overcome the lack of student interest as above, there are other factors that can also support students to increase student interest and motivation such as environmental factors and habits. so that teachers are expected to always provide the habit of using good and correct English when learning so that it is easy for students to remember. parental support is also one of the external factors that is quite important to increase student interest and motivation to learn.

**CONCLUSION**

From the results of the study showed that the problem of students in vocabulary mastery: case study at SMPN 4 Pangalengan is the lack of interest and motivation of students. From the results of the interview there are several causes of the lack of interest in student motivation, such as difficulty in pronunciation, some students consider English not an everyday language but a second language so they are not used to pronunciation and it is quite difficult for them.

 Smartphones are a cause that is quite influential in the lack of interest and motivation of students because smartphones can divert their interest and motivation to learn. There are several efforts to overcome the lack of interest and motivation to learn vocabulary mastery such as teachers providing game-based learning, teachers can give rewards to students, teachers can create more varied materials using technology such as computer media and projectors, and teachers can provide learning outside the classroom to help them remember vocabulary easily.

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