

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to this study. It includes the background of the study, research problem, research questions, research purposes, and research contribution

### **A. Research Background**

English is the most popular language in the world. The popularity of the English language is evident, as it is spoken by millions worldwide (Sa'diyah & Purpitasari, 2023). As a result, English become an international language. Because of this, teaching English as a foreign language has been widely conducted for years in many countries worldwide and some countries also put necessary English materials in schools. One of them is Indonesia. The government agreed that English material must be taught in Schools. For many years in Indonesia, it has been a compulsory subject from elementary school up to University. English as the international language in Indonesia is essential to be mastered by the students. Pennycook (2007) states that English is an important subject that a child can learn in school. Without knowing proper English, a child will not be able to communicate effectively by using the English language. Teaching in English has also become a trend to keep up with the international development of education.

Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has become one strategy teachers must master. English is essential to learn because it is the key to making students think broader and globally. There are four kinds of focus material in teaching EFL. These are speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Moreover, in language teaching, four skills are learned in school. The learner's language (speech or writing) is productive. Language directed as the learner (in reading or listening) is called receptive. Harris (1969) cited in Listyowati et al., (2023) stated that there are five components to evaluate speaking performance: Pronunciation, Grammar, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Comprehension. Therefore, by mastering all the factors, people can produce good speech. In learning to speak, students often get a problem to talk. Vocabulary is one of the important factors in teaching and

learning English besides sound system, grammar, and culture (Listyowati et al., 2023). This research has focused on vocabulary problems.

Vocabulary is a list or collection of words and phrases that are usually arranged alphabetically and the meaning of the word is explained. Mastering vocabulary helps people understand the meaning of words in context (Iwanti, 2020). Vocabulary mastery is vital for learners because they can use English if they have a lot of vocabulary. The teaching and learning process of English should be improved and changed. There are other ways to learn vocabulary. According to Richard (2001: 40), vocabulary is one of the obvious components of language. He adds that vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read, and write. It is the basic skill to know about the other skills of language. In the Indonesian context, Indonesian and English are frequently mixed because of their limited vocabulary. This study focuses on vocabulary mastery, defined as the ability to comprehend, remember, and use words effectively in spoken communication.

Some studies have found that students' limited vocabulary is their main barrier to effective idea expression in speaking (Khan et al., 2018; Panjaitan et al., 2022; Rullu & Daburan, 2020; Kasmainsi et al., 2023). Although speaking is natural, speaking in a language apart from our personal is something however straightforward. It needs to be used as the student's habit of speaking English (Sa'diyah & Purpitasari, 2023). Currently, there are schools in Indonesia that implement a boarding school system, where the school implements a mandatory English language system in their daily conversations, which can be called a Pesantren.

Pesantren is nowadays known as the Islamic Boarding School for Rural Communities, it was the oldest of Indonesia's Islamic educational organizations. According to Mastuhu (1994), Islamic boarding schools traditionally taught Islamic knowledge and values, emphasizing morality and character in society. The first Pesantren appeared in the archipelago 300-400 years ago and gradually spread across society, particularly in Java (Iksan et al., 2022).

Islamic boarding school is an educational institution that serves students from diverse places around Indonesia. There are diverse cultures, faiths, and languages. In addition, Most Islamic boarding schools use bilingual programs in the Islamic boarding school curriculum, this program is one of the additional programs that can be an advantage for the school because it can attract people's interest in sending their children to study in that school. In the initial survey, it was found that there were many activities carried out in bilingual programs at schools. The purpose of all the activities is carried out to improve student's language skills in class or the dormitory. One of these activities is the daily morning conversation carried out by this school and have a supportive environment for practicing the language because students are required to practice the language in their daily lives. For this reason, Assalam Islamic Boarding School or MTs Assalam Darul Faizah was chosen for this research.

Assalam Islamic Boarding School is the original name of this school foundation, but this Islamic boarding school has another name, namely Islamic Junior High School (MTs) Darul Faizah in the Ministry of Religion. This school has almost a thousand female students if combined with the high school level, the number of students in each grade is almost 150 to 200 students. for the age group of students, there are junior high and high school levels. This school has a bilingual program, namely studying English and Arabic as the language of instruction in school and the learning process. One of the language programs that is implemented in this school is a daily morning Conversation Activity.

Daily English conversation Activity is an English language training program that is carried out every day, in the morning after completing the morning prayer, while the time for carrying out this activity is 20 to 30 minutes each day. This program is provided so that Islamic boarding school children can improve their English language skills, especially vocabulary mastery because vocabulary acquisition is needed in all language skills. learning that is done with high frequency and practicing the language every day becomes a habit for students and helps in the learning process. According to Gultom (2015), a foreign language must be taught intensively in small classes with a high frequency of meetings and

it is best when conducted daily thus the students can achieve quick results and progress. To become fluent in using the language skills someone must take a long time to train.

This theory is related to the theory of constructivism learning theory based on Lev S. Vygotsky. The central tenet of constructivism is that human learning is constructed and that learners construct new knowledge based on prior learning (Chand, 2024; Brabrand, 2008; de Kock et al., 2004; Phillips, 1995). The study supports the ideas of Vygotsky (1978) on the value of peer-led learning, Nation (2001) regarding repetition and contextual learning, and Thornbury (2002) regarding meaningful vocabulary exercise.

## **B. Research Problem**

As highlighted by Thornbury (2005), insufficient vocabulary knowledge limits learners' ability to express themselves in English, leading to frustration and decreased confidence. Based on the theory, one of the common challenges in developing speaking skills is students' limited vocabulary. Thus, improving vocabulary mastery is a key step toward enhancing speaking skills. The study identifies a recurring issue in Pesantren students, limited vocabulary hampers their ability to speak effectively in English. This results in students often feeling frustrated and unsure of their ability to express themselves in English, even when they know the meaning of what they want to say.

The initial survey at the Islamic Boarding School shows that the children of the Assalam Islamic Boarding School are still very poor with their English language skills, especially in their ability to speak English because they still often use Indonesian during English week. Based on the observation, the problem is that some students are confused about using the sentence in conversation. It is because they do not believe in their ability to speak. In this case, students did not know the meaning of the words that they said in English, which prevented students from talking. The result is that students are just silent and confused when they want to say the sentences in English. On the other hand, when they want to answer a question, students know the answer but do not know the meaning in English so the

students are just silent and do not answer the question. The fact that students' vocabulary mastery was still far from being satisfactory needed to be improved.

Several previous studies are related to this study based on the research above. This previous research contains information and other insights that support this study. The first is research conducted by Aulia et al., (2021) this study involved a purposive sample of 7th-grade students by using one group pre-test and post-test, which provided measurable insights into the effectiveness of teaching methods and valuable evidence supporting the effectiveness of daily conversation programs in enhancing EFL speaking skills. The second research by Iksan, Husnaini, & Masruddin (2022), this journal examines the implementation and impact of the Weekly English Program using the Fun Learning Method. The program was designed as a community service initiative to enhance teachers' and students' English skills through creative and engaging activities. The study involves teachers and students and uses qualitative descriptive methods through observation and interviews to assess the program's effectiveness. The third is research conducted by Aipudin (2018), This study examines the use of video conversation as a technique to enhance students' vocabulary mastery and speaking skills. The research focuses on 22 students in the 10th grade. The study employed is Classroom Action Research (CAR), conducted in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

Besides that, Rongga Milla et al (2022), This research explores the correlation between vocabulary mastery and speaking skills in eighth grade. The study used an ex-post facto research design and employed the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to examine the relationship between two variables: vocabulary mastery (independent variable) and speaking skill (dependent variable). The study demonstrates a significant correlation but does not explore causal mechanisms. Additionally, Muchlas et al (2016), This journal investigates the Daily Conversation Method (DCM) as a strategy for improving students' speaking fluency in foreign languages, specifically English and Arabic, at a modern Islamic boarding school. The study explores students' perceptions of the DCM's

application. The influence of DCM on their speaking fluency. The research uses collecting data through questionnaires administered to 97 students.

In addition, Umaralieva et al (2023), This previous study provides an important foundation for understanding vocabulary acquisition strategies. However, there is a significant gap in exploring how these strategies impact speaking fluency and real-time vocabulary application, particularly through peer interaction and feedback. This research contributes to the field by focusing on the practical application of new vocabulary through Daily Morning Conversations (DMC), offering new insights into the impact of routine-based learning on both vocabulary retention and speaking fluency. This gap is crucial to address, as it enriches the understanding of how vocabulary learning can be effectively integrated into real-life communication. Additionally, Al-Qahtani (2015), This study provides a solid foundation in understanding the importance of vocabulary in language learning and various techniques used to teach it. However, there are several research gaps that this study addresses, particularly in terms of speaking fluency, peer interaction, long-term vocabulary retention, and the specific effectiveness of Daily Morning Conversation (DMC) as a teaching method. By incorporating these elements, this research contributes valuable insights into how vocabulary learning can be optimized through interactive and routine-based activities, benefiting both vocabulary retention and speaking fluency.

On the other hand, this research has several gaps with several studies, such as those by Aulia et al. (2021) and Iksan et al. (2022) explored speaking skills in the context of EFL learners. However, limited attention has been given to how vocabulary acquisition specifically influences these skills, making this research particularly valuable in the context of Pesantren students. Then most other studies measure speaking fluency quantitatively, it does not explore the specific role of vocabulary acquisition, which is the focus of this research; next, students' perspectives, whereas, in this research, the researcher concentrates on the experiences of teachers' perspectives on implementing the activity; additionally, for data gating this research use observations, test, and interviews; last, the case study approach is used for data analysis, while detailed descriptions of people and



places limit in-depth exploration of a system based on extensive data collection (Creswell, 2012).

Furthermore, this research considers the implementation of daily morning conversation to increase students' vocabulary mastery which is interested in solving the vocabulary problem and improving third-year students' mastery of English vocabulary at the Assalam Islamic Boarding School Sukabumi through developing English Vocabulary teaching materials based on daily morning conversation activities.

### **C. Research Questions**

Based on the background of the research, there are three problem statements, they are:

1. How are the daily morning conversation activity conducted to enhance students' vocabulary mastery?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the impact of the daily morning conversation activity on vocabulary acquisition?
3. How is the students' vocabulary retention through the Daily Morning Conversation Activity?

### **D. Purposes of The Study**

The purposes of the research are;

1. To describe the daily morning conversation activity conducted to enhance students' vocabulary mastery.
2. To explore teachers' and students' perceptions of the impact of the daily morning conversation activity on vocabulary acquisition.
3. To analyze the development of students' retention of new vocabulary through the Daily Morning Conversation Activity.

## **E. Research Contributions of The Study**

This study on the Daily Morning Conversation (DMC) program addresses both theoretical and practical elements of vocabulary acquisition and teaching approaches, making it a significant contribution to the field of language education.

### **1. Theoretical Contributions**

This study's validation of vocabulary acquisition theories offers empirical backing for well-established theories, including Nation's (2001) focus on contextual learning and repetition for vocabulary retention. Thus, the claim made by Thornbury (2002) regarding the significance of teaching vocabulary through relevant contexts. Nonetheless, it emphasizes how these theories can be applied in informal learning environments, such as the regular dialogues in bilingual classrooms.

Examining motivation in language learning, the study supports Dörnyei's (2001) motivating tactics by discussing how the Daily Morning Conversation program subtly encourages student motivation through real-world application. It emphasizes how necessity-driven learning settings might improve language acquisition. However, the combination of conative, affective, and cognitive factors: by applying the cognitive, emotional, and conative components to teacher views, the study expands on Agisni's (2013) paradigm and provides a comprehensive understanding of how routine activities influence language acquisition.

### **2. Practical Contributions**

Implementation of routine-based learning programs. The study provides a practical framework for implementing vocabulary-focused programs, such as the DMC, which schools can adopt to promote bilingualism or enhance vocabulary acquisition in daily activities.

Guidance for teaching strategies. The research identifies effective practices, such as the use of repetition, contextualized examples, and peer-led facilitation, that can be incorporated into language learning programs. It also



highlights areas for improvement, such as incorporating interactive activities and integrating broader linguistic components like grammar and fluency.

Supporting educational policy in bilingual settings. By showcasing the effectiveness of structured vocabulary programs in a bilingual Islamic boarding school, the study provides a model for other institutions aiming to balance language learning with cultural and institutional goals.

Insights into teacher roles: The findings emphasize the multifaceted roles of teachers as facilitators, motivators, and guides, offering actionable insights for educators to enhance their approach to vocabulary teaching outside formal classroom settings.

### 3. Contributions to Students' Learning

First, enhanced vocabulary acquisition. The DMC program demonstrates how structured and consistent routines can significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery, enabling them to use new words in meaningful contexts. Second, Development of Confidence and Communication Skills: By encouraging active participation in daily conversations, the program fosters students' confidence in using English or Arabic, promoting both practical and academic language skills.

### 4. Institutional Contributions

Alignment with Institutional Vision: The study highlights how routine activities like DMC can support the vision of bilingual institutions, emphasizing language as a cultural and educational asset. Moreover, Model for Program Evaluation: The research provides a framework for evaluating and refining language programs, helping institutions identify strengths and areas for improvement.

This study bridges the gap between theory and practice by demonstrating how structured, routine-based activities like the DMC program can effectively enhance vocabulary mastery in speaking skills. It offers practical strategies, theoretical validation, and insights into motivation and engagement, making it

a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and institutions seeking to improve language education.

## **F. Research Limitation**

Although this study offers valuable information, some drawbacks were noted. The first is limited generalisability, which indicates that the study was limited to a small sample of 15 students and was carried out in a particular setting—an Islamic boarding school. The results might not accurately reflect larger populations or more diverse educational environments. The second, Emphasis on Vocabulary Mastery implies The study mainly examined vocabulary development, with little attention paid to other aspects of language, such as grammar, fluency, or pronunciation. Third, Time Restrictions imply The DMC's 20–30 minute daily duration and the observation period of 10 sessions limited the depth of study, especially when it came to long-term retention and overall linguistic development. Last but not least, subjective data mean Individual perspectives, which may be impacted by institutional culture or personal prejudices, may be reflected in the dependence on teacher interviews.

