

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Teaching is one of the essential processes in human development, not only helping people gain knowledge but also shaping their individual personalities, as well as fostering cognitive, social, and psychological growth (Benzerrough, 2021). According to Brown (2001), teaching means providing guidance, learning facilities, and creating conducive learning environments. It is about assisting students in their learning journey and managing the conditions under which learning occurs. The definition underscores the multifaceted role of teachers, who are not just conveyors of information but facilitators of learning. Similarly, Raba (2017) emphasizes that effective teaching strategies are vital in shaping students' learning outcomes, directly influencing their engagement, understanding, and application of knowledge.

English language teaching has become an essential component of education in Indonesia, widely recognized as a key to unlocking opportunities in the globalized world. As English has established itself as the lingua franca of international communication, proficiency in the language is now crucial for participation in the global economy, science, technology, and education (Graddol, 2006). Reflecting this global significance, Indonesia's curriculum emphasizes the importance of English, acknowledging its role in addressing international challenges and its status as a necessary skill, particularly in the education sector (Isadaud et al., 2021). Within this context, the teacher's role in English language

learning becomes even more critical, as the ability to communicate effectively in English is now essential for both personal and professional growth.

Unlike neighboring countries such as Singapore and the Philippines, where English is a second language, Indonesia designates English as a foreign language (Gunantar, 2016). This makes teaching English in Indonesia presents unique challenges and opportunities. Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape requires teachers not only to master English but also to possess insights into social, cultural, and character matters. As stated by Diem & Umar (2020), pre-service and in-service EFL teachers need to develop good English language skills. Additionally, they need to have extensive knowledge of other cultures in order to work effectively in today's multicultural classrooms. Moreover, Hidayati (2017) emphasizes that developing the curriculum for Indonesian English Language Teaching (ELT) must reflect cultural and religious values. Integrating ELT with Islamic values helps address concerns such as "westernization" or "missionarism" and support teachers to creatively develop and improvise resources due to the limited availability of materials with Islamic values.

Pesantren, as a key Islamic educational institution, plays a significant role in the Indonesian education system. It is renowned for its unique integration of religious and general education. According to Raharjo (cited in Hakim, 2023), pesantren has developed a distinct identity from the beginning of its growth, serving as both a center for the spread of Islam and an educational institution. Ningsih et al. (2023) similarly emphasize that pesantren is an inseparable part of Indonesia's national history and educational journey. As the oldest Islamic educational institution in the country, pesantren contributes not only to the

development of Islamic education but also to the broader educational landscape of Indonesia.

Some potential challenges might occur in English Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, particularly within the Pesantren environment, which integrates islamic values with general academics. According to Copland, Garton, and Burns (cited in Marzulina et.al, 2021) there are three main challenges commonly English teachers face in teaching English, as follows; teachers' proficiency, classroom management, government policy and curricula. Addittionally, Lynch (2008, as cited in Fajaryani et al., 2018) stated that there are three major challenges in teaching English include a lack of learner motivation, insufficient time and resources, and overcrowded classrooms. In this context, students may have varying levels of interest in learning English, requiring teachers to adopt creative and relevant strategies to engage and motivate them in learning english. Furthermore, the diverse background of students adds complexity to the classroom dynamics, as teachers must balance linguistic challenges with maintaining student interest.

Determining the most effective strategies is essential for teachers, especially those teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), to ensure a smooth and productive learning process. The implementation of teaching strategies needs to align with students' abilities and conditions to maximize their learning outcomes. Teachers must be adaptable, utilizing various approaches to meet the diverse needs of their students. For example, the integration of communicative activities, collaborative tasks, and interactive strategies can greatly enhance student motivation, engagement, and language retention. As Raba (2017) emphasizes, the

effectiveness of teaching is measured by the quality of learning outcomes, which must be durable, functional, and applicable. In EFL classrooms, especially in pesantren settings, teachers may face unique challenges in balancing religious education with general academics. Therefore, selecting appropriate strategies that foster active, constructive, and goal-directed learning is crucial for addressing these complexities and ensuring that students develop essential skills for independent learning and collaboration.

In relation to this issue, many studies have been conducted by several researchers. For example, Linda (2022) identified issues such as students' lack of awareness about English's importance, diverse backgrounds, students' busy schedules besides learning about regular subject, students' competence and motivation, teachers' hectic schedules, and inadequate facilities at Pesantren Hidayatullah Muaro Jambi. Teachers addressed these challenges by emphasizing English's significance to students, offering extra lessons outside the school, using the appropriate teaching methods, and giving a lot of motivation to the student by give them encouragement in learning.

Another study conducted by Sari (2023) examined both internal and external factors affecting English instruction in pesantren. Internal factors include pedagogical approaches, student motivation, and the challenge of aligning students' cultural identities with the learning process. External factors involve curriculum limitations, classroom management issues, and varying levels of teacher proficiency. Sari highlights the necessity for teachers to adapt their strategies to engage students effectively in learning English, underscoring the importance of organized efforts to improve English teaching quality in pesantren.

Furthermore, Girsang and Chadijah (2021) identified key strategies used by teachers to motivate students. These strategies include varied teaching strategies, providing praise for achievements, and addressing individual learning needs. The study emphasizes that effective teaching strategies tailored to students' diverse characteristics can significantly improve motivation and learning outcomes

Based on the explanations and findings from previous studies, there is a lack of empirical research on teachers' strategies to motivate students in English language learning at Pesantren As'ad Jambi. Most studies on the challenges and strategies of English language teaching have focused on other regions. This study specifically addresses this gap by examining Pesantren As'ad. The research aims to explore the effective strategies for motivating students to learn English and to identify the challenges teachers face in implementing these strategies. Therefore, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of teaching strategies within the context of this pesantren.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates research questions as follow:

1. What strategies do teachers at Pesantren As'ad Jambi use to motivate students in learning English?
2. What challenges do teachers face in implementing the strategies they used in Pesantren As'ad Jambi?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

Based on the research questions above, the purpose of this research is to:

1. Identify the strategies that teachers use to motivate students in learning English at Pesantren As'ad Jambi.
2. Explore the challenges faced by teachers in applying the strategies they used and examine how they overcome these challenges.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

This study focuses on examining the strategies used by English teachers to motivate students in learning English at Pesantren As'ad Jambi. Since this research is limited to a single Islamic boarding school, its findings may not be directly applicable to other pesantren or educational institutions in different regions. Additionally, the study only involves two English teachers at the Madrasah Aliyah level, which limits the range of teachers' perspectives and may not fully capture a broader variety of teaching strategies. Despite these limitations, this study aims to provide valuable and in-depth insights into the specific challenges faced by teachers at Pesantren As'ad Jambi and the motivational strategies they use to engage students in learning English.

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give contribution to English teachers, students, and other researchers.

1. For English teachers.

This research is expected to be able to provide insights into valuable information on effective strategies for motivating students in English language learning, helping teachers refine their approaches and address common challenges. By examining both successful strategies and the difficulties faced,

teachers can gain practical insights to enhance their teaching practices and better support their students.

2. For Students

This research is expected to indirectly benefit students by Understanding the strategies employed by teachers to motivate students in learning English at a Pesantren can enhance students' engagement and performance. By identifying these strategies, the research can contribute to creating a more stimulating and supportive learning environment, ultimately helping students improve their English language skills and achieve better academic outcomes.

3. For future researchers.

This research will contribute to the broader academic understanding of teachers' strategies in English language learning within Islamic educational contexts. It can serve as a foundation for future studies, providing insights and data that other researchers can build upon to further investigate and develop effective teaching strategies in similar educational contexts.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

There are several terms the researcher uses in this study. The following are the definition of key terms to clarify and explain the terms of the title and to avoid ambiguity in this study.

1. Pesantren: An Islamic boarding school in Indonesia, where students live and study religious as well as general education under the guidance of teachers or kyai (Islamic scholars).

2. Teaching Strategies: The methods and approaches used by teachers to facilitate learning and achieve educational objectives.
3. Motivation: In the context of this research, motivation refers to the factors or strategies that influence students' enthusiasm and willingness to engage in learning English. It encompasses both intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.
4. English Language Learning: This term refers to the process of acquiring proficiency in English, including the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.
5. Challenges: Challenges are the difficulties or obstacles faced by teachers in implementing effective teaching strategies.