

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Method of the Research

The research method used in this study was a qualitative descriptive case study. This approach is relevant because it will present a detailed, contextualized picture of the studied phenomenon (Yin, 2017). Using a descriptive case study, the researcher intended to reveal complex perceptions and issues relating to the challenges and solutions in teaching English to young learners.

3.2. Focus of the Research

The focus of this research was to investigate the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching vocabulary at the junior high school level and to explore the strategies they implemented to overcome those challenges. The researcher examined the teachers' perceptions and experiences in conducting vocabulary instruction, particularly in dealing with students' limited vocabulary mastery, diverse proficiency levels, motivational issues, and instructional constraints.

3.3. Setting and Participants

This research was conducted in a junior high school in Tasikmalaya, West Java, because preliminary observation revealed several challenges in teaching English vocabulary. Many students demonstrated limited vocabulary mastery, experienced difficulties in understanding simple English words, and tended to be passive during classroom activities. Even students who participated in the English Class still encountered difficulties in using basic vocabulary appropriately. These classroom conditions prompted the researcher to investigate the challenges faced by English teachers and the strategies they employed to overcome those challenges.

The participants of this research were three English teachers consisting of two female teachers and one male teacher. Their age ranged between 35 and 50 years old and had teaching experience ranging from 10 to 20 years. All participants had substantial experience teaching English at the junior high

school level, which enabled them to encounter diverse classroom situations and implement various strategies to address vocabulary learning difficulties.

In terms of educational background, all participants held a bachelor's degree in English Education and had participated in professional development activities such as teacher workshops, curriculum training, and subject-teacher forums (MGMP). They were responsible for teaching different grade levels, which provided them with broader exposure to students' varying proficiency levels and learning characteristics. These demographic characteristics are relevant to this study because experienced teachers with long teaching careers are more capable of reflecting on instructional challenges and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies they apply in vocabulary teaching.

The participants were selected based on several criteria: (1) having more than three years of teaching experience, (2) having experienced challenges and implemented solutions in teaching English vocabulary, and (3) being willing to participate in the research voluntarily. Their teaching experience of 10–20 years exceeded the minimum criterion and ensured the richness and depth of the data collected, which aligns with the nature of qualitative research that prioritizes detailed and meaningful insights rather than large sample sizes. To protect their confidentiality, the participants' real names were replaced with Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), and Participant 3 (P3).

Table 3 1 Matrix Participant

Participant	Age	Gender	Educational Background	Teaching Experience	Professional Experience
P1	35-50	Female	Bachelor's degree in English education	10-20 years	Active in MGMP, attended workshops and curriculum training

P2	35-50	Female	Bachelor's degree in English education	10-20 years	Participated in teacher training, curriculum development programs
P3	35-50	Male	Bachelor's degree in English education	10-20 years	Experienced in teaching multiple grade levels, joined professional forums

Regarding ethical considerations, the participants received clear explanations about the purpose, procedures, and significance of the study. They were asked to sign an informed consent form as a formal agreement to participate. They were also assured that their anonymity and confidentiality would be strictly maintained, and they were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any stage without any consequences.

3.4. Technique of Collecting the Data

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews because the questions could be developed based on the participants' perceptions and responses. Semi-structured interviews are a type of exploratory interview commonly applied in qualitative research to obtain in-depth data (Magaldi & Berler, 2020). According to Adams (2015), a semi-structured interview was conducted conversationally with one respondent at a time and employed a combination of closed and open-ended questions, often followed by probing "why" or "how" questions. The interview guidelines focusing on challenges and solutions in English teaching were adapted from Boayke and Ampiah

(2017). The researcher provided several open-ended questions during the interviews to enable the participants to give more comprehensive responses.

3.5. Technique of Analyzing the Data

Thematic analysis was employed to examine the collected interview data. Braun and Clarke (2013) define thematic analysis as a qualitative approach to analyzing data, applicable across various epistemologies and research inquiries. It serves to organize, describe, and report themes found within a data set. Moreover, it is a useful and effective technique for exploring the viewpoints of research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating abrupt insights.

To ensure alignment with the research questions, the data interpretation was guided by relevant theories in Chapter II, including vocabulary learning difficulties (Nation, 2013; Tomlinson, 2021; Webb & Nation, 2020) and effective vocabulary teaching strategies (Mayer & Fiorella, 2021; Teng, 2022; Nation, 2017; Schmitt, 2020), which functioned as analytical lenses in identifying challenges and solutions.

As outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013), there exist six stages in the process of thematic analysis, which include:

1) Familiarizing with the data

In this first stage, the researcher carefully read and re-read the interview transcripts to gain a deep understanding of the content. During this process, the researcher actively engaged with the data by highlighting significant statements, taking notes, and identifying early patterns related to students' experiences with extensive reading and its impact on vocabulary mastery. This step ensured that the researcher became fully immersed in the data, allowing for an initial interpretation before proceeding to generate the first set of meaningful codes.

2) Generating initial codes

In this step, the researcher organized the data into meaningful groups by singling out the aspects of the data that appeared compelling for analysis. Using a colouring method, the researcher differentiated potential patterns. However, the codes continued to encompass various pieces of information, necessitating simplification for theme identification. Then, the researcher's coding process was poised to uncover essential aspects of the data. Utilizing the colouring method facilitated the differentiation of each element pointed out by participants, leading to the formulation of initial codes.

Table 3 2 Generating initial codes

Excerpt	Initial Codes
Sometimes they just do what they can when asked to read, for example, if they are asked to read the name of a fruit or a tail, for example, Apple, they just do what they can with the letters so they don't know how to read it correctly.	Pronunciation and Retention Problems
To teach vocabulary, I usually use pictures and words more. So what? So it's more interesting and easier to remember too.	Visual and contextual media

If it is related to students' abilities, students' absorption capacity varies, sometimes it is difficult to understand.

Diverse Students' Proficiency Levels

because now at elementary school level there is no English subject, so many students now don't know simple vocabulary for daily activities, apparently they don't know the names of objects

Low students' vocabulary foundation

Their focus is also lacking due to the sheer number of lessons. Furthermore, English class is only once a week, so there's simply not enough time.

instructional Constraints

I use Quizlet and Canva, which are very effective. I also use World Wall and Quiziz because they motivate students.

Technology-Assisted Instruction

Typically, when it comes to dialogue, students are given assignments related to the topic of the material they're studying. The assignments involve interviewing a friend, which is then compiled into an English dialogue. Students will gradually learn to discover and add new vocabulary as they

Daily Vocabulary Practice

conduct the interview and as they compose the dialogue.

I also use word games like Game based activities crossword puzzles, or group themes based on the material being taught, such as culinary arts.

Table 3 3 List of initial codes and their frequency

Initial codes	Frequency
Pronunciation and Retention Problems	7
Visual and contextual media	9
instructional Constraints	10
Technology-Assisted Instruction	10
Diverse Students' Proficiency Levels	8
Low students' vocabulary foundation	9
Daily Vocabulary Practice	8
Game based activities	9
Total	70

3) Searching for the theme

In this step, the researcher arranged the data codes into potential themes, reflecting on how diverse codes could intertwine to construct an overarching theme. Throughout the sorting phase, the researcher used visual representations like tables, mind maps, or writing with a brief description. The conclusion of this phase would

showcase the identification of themes, sub-themes, and their relations.

Table 3 4 Process of searching for potential themes

No	Initial Codes	Potential Themes
1	Low students' vocabulary foundation	Limited Vocabulary Mastery and Retention
2	Pronunciation and retention problems	
3	Diverse students' proficiency levels	Learner Diversity
4	Instructional constrains	Instructional Constraints in Vocabulary Teaching
5	Visual and contextual media	Interactive and Multimedia-Based Vocabulary Instruction
6	Technology-assisted instruction	
7	Game-based activities	
8	Daily vocabulary practice	Vocabulary Practice through Meaningful Use

4) Reviewing themes, defining & and naming themes

In the review phase, the researchers revisited the findings from the third step, giving rise to various potential outcomes. The first possibility involves excluding a candidate theme if there is insufficient data to validate it or if the theme exhibits excessive diversity. The second possibility entails combining distinct themes if there are two separate themes that can be merged. The last

possibility involves breaking down the candidate themes into separate themes.

Table 3 5 Process of Searching for Themes

No	Sub themes	Themes
1	Limited Vocabulary Mastery and Retention	Challenges in Teaching Vocabulary to Junior High School Students
2	Learner Diversity	
3	Instructional Constraints in Vocabulary Teaching	
4	Interactive and Multimedia-Based Vocabulary Instruction	Teachers' Strategies to Overcome Vocabulary Teaching Challenges
5	Vocabulary Practice through Meaningful Use	

5) Defining and naming themes

In this phase the researcher defined and refined the themes selected for analysis, delving into the data within each to identify the fundamental essence of the themes. At the conclusion of this phase, the relationships of the themes become evident, initiating the task of assigning brief, instantly informative names to each theme, ensuring readers quickly grasp the essence of each.

Table 3 6 Defining and Naming Themes

Themes	Definition
Challenges in Teaching Vocabulary to Junior High School Students	This theme refers to various difficulties experienced by English teachers during the process of teaching vocabulary to junior high school students. These challenges emerge from students' limited vocabulary foundation, difficulties in pronunciation and retention, differences in students' language proficiency levels, and instructional constraints such as time allocation and classroom conditions. In the context of English as a foreign language, these factors hinder students' ability to understand, remember, and use English vocabulary effectively, thus affecting the overall teaching and learning process.
Teachers' Strategies to Overcome Vocabulary Teaching Challenges	This theme describes the strategies employed by teachers to cope with the challenges encountered in teaching English vocabulary to junior high school students. The strategies include the use of interactive and multimedia-based instruction, such as visual media, digital tools, and game-based activities, as well as encouraging daily vocabulary practice through meaningful use in speaking and writing activities. These approaches aim to increase students' engagement, motivation, and

understanding, and to facilitate more effective vocabulary acquisition in the classroom.

6) Producing the final report

In this phase, the researcher created a written text that conveyed the data, presenting a concise, coherent, logical, and non-repetitive was reported in this phase. Furthermore, the report offered adequate evidence regarding the data's themes, with the researcher providing narrative analysis that discussed arguments relevant to the research question.

3.6. Time and Place of The Research

This research was conducted at one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. Meanwhile, this research was conducted from September 2023 to February 2026. The research time in question referred to the period for the implementation of the study as outlined below:

Table 3 7 Research Schedule

Description	Sep 2023	Dec 2023	Sep 2024	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Apr 2026	June 2026
Research Proposal writing							
Research Proposal Examination							
Data Collection							
Data Analysis							
Report							
Thesis Result Seminar							
Thesis Examination							