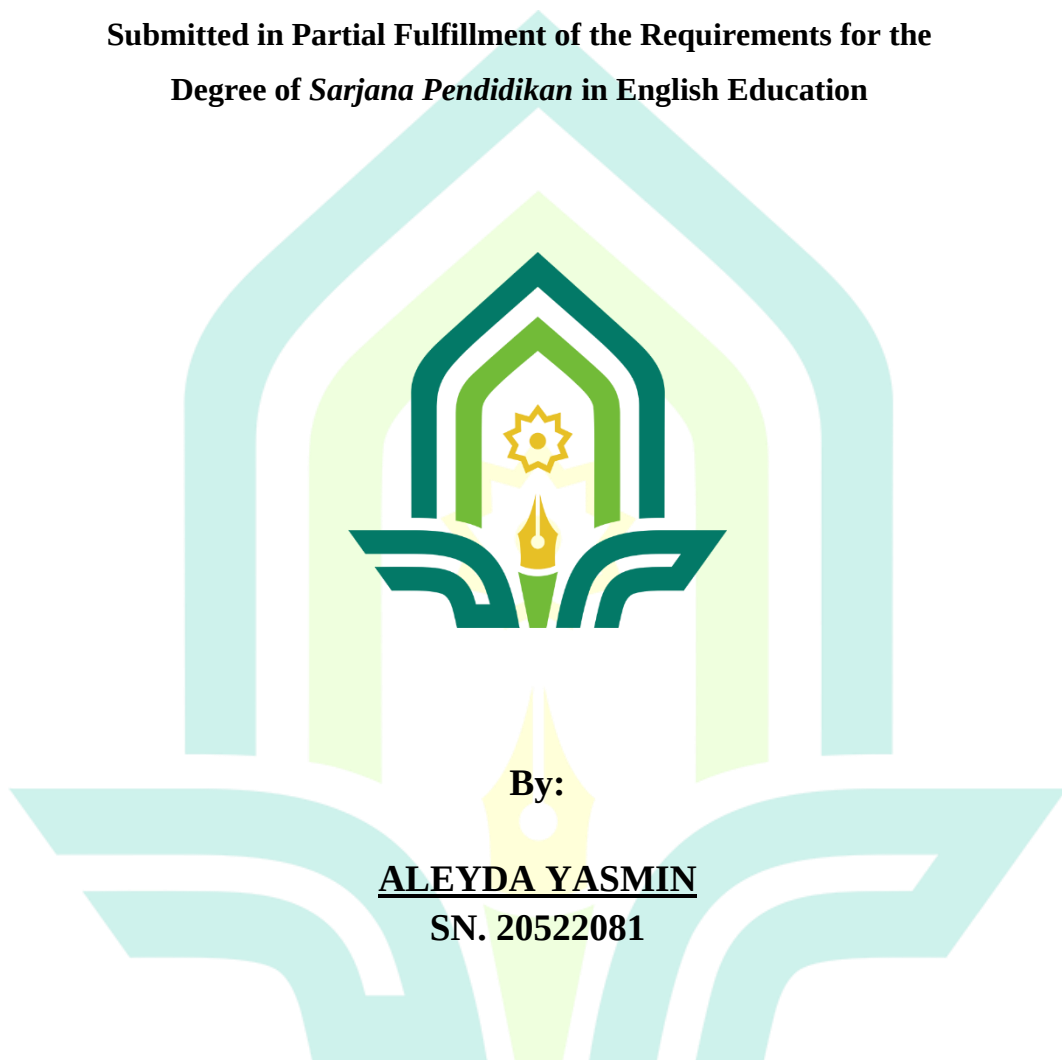


UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARY THROUGH WHATSAPP CHANNELS: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

A THESIS

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan* in English Education**



By:

ALEYDA YASMIN

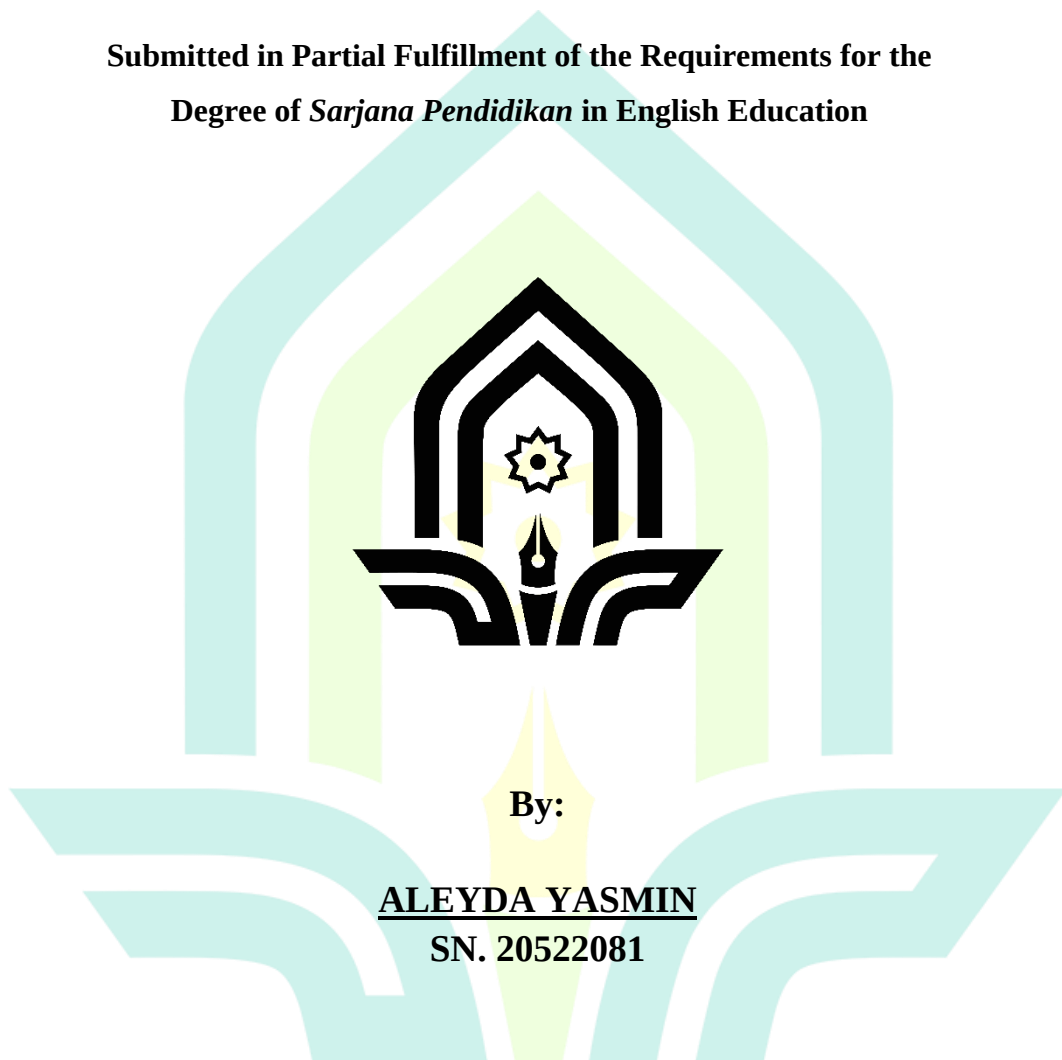
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**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
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2026**

**SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI
DAN PENGGUNAAN BANTUAN KECERDASAN ARTIFISIAL**

Dengan ini saya

Nama : Aleyda Yasmin

NIM : 20522081

Program Studi : Tadris Bahasa Inggris

Menyatakan bahwa yang tertulis dalam skripsi yang berjudul **“UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES IN LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARY THROUGH WHATSAPP CHANNELS: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY”** ini benar-benar karya saya sendiri, bukan jiplakan dari karya orang lain atau pengutipan yang melanggar etika keilmuan yang berlaku, baik sebagian atau seluruhnya. Pendapat atau temuan orang lain yang terdapat dalam skripsi ini dikutip berdasarkan kode etik ilmiah. Apabila skripsi ini terbukti ditemukan pelanggaran terhadap etika keilmuan, maka saya secara pribadi bersedia menerima sanksi hukum yang dijatuhkan.

Demikian pernyataan ini, saya buat dengan sebenar-benarnya.

Pekalongan, 25 Juni 2026

Yang membuat pernyataan,



Aleyda Yasmin

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NOTA PEMBIMBING

Kepada

Yth. Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan

UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan

c/q. Ketua Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris

di Pekalongan

Assalamu'alaikum, Wr. Wb.

Setelah melakukan penelitian, bimbingan dan koreksi naskah skripsi saudara:

Nama : Aleyda Yasmin

NIM : 20522081

Program Studi : Tadris Bahasa Inggris

Judul : **University Students' Experience in Learning Vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels: A Narrative Inquiry**

Saya menilai bahwa naskah skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan kepada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan untuk diujikan dalam sidang munaqasyah.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatiannya, disampaikan terimakasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum, Wr. Wb.

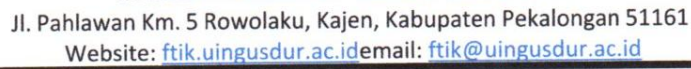
Pekalongan, 29 Juni 2026

Pembimbing,



Fachri Ali, M.Pd.

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Prof. Dr. H. A. Arslan, M.Ag.
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1. My beloved parents, Nur Afantin and Hafis Kristianto, who have always given unconditional love, patience, and care. Thank you for every prayer you have made and every sacrifice you have given, which have become the greatest source of strength for me in completing this thesis and achieving my bachelor's degree. May Allah always reward your kindness with blessings, health, and happiness throughout your lives. Aamiin.
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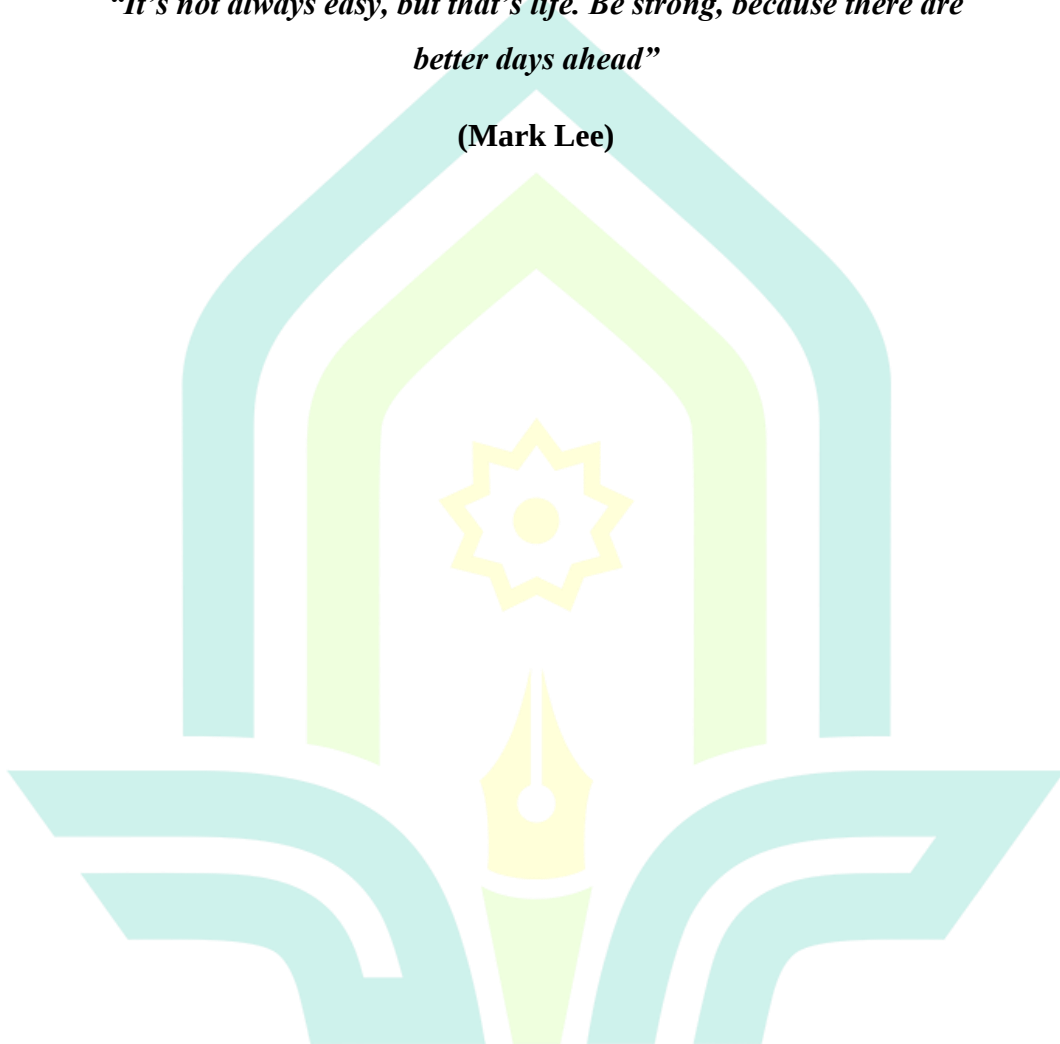
MOTTO

“Allah tidak membebani seseorang melainkan sesuai dengan kesanggupannya”

(Q.S Al-Baqarah:286)

“It’s not always easy, but that’s life. Be strong, because there are better days ahead”

(Mark Lee)



ABSTRAK

Seiring pesatnya perkembangan teknologi digital, berbagai platform telah dimanfaatkan untuk mendukung pembelajaran kosakata, termasuk Saluran WhatsApp. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman mahasiswa dalam mempelajari kosakata bahasa Inggris melalui Saluran WhatsApp. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain penyelidikan naratif. Peserta penelitian terdiri dari tiga mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan catatan pembelajaran, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa para peserta memiliki pengalaman positif dan negatif dalam mempelajari kosakata bahasa Inggris melalui WhatsApp Channels. Pengalaman positif meliputi pemahaman kosakata melalui penjelasan kontekstual dan kalimat contoh, meninjau kembali materi pembelajaran dan paparan berulang terhadap kosakata, menghubungkan kosakata berdasarkan kategori dan makna yang serupa, serta menggunakan kosakata dalam aktivitas sehari-hari. Sementara itu, pengalaman negatif meliputi kesulitan dalam menggunakan kosakata secara tepat serta kesulitan dalam mempertahankan ulasan kosakata yang konsisten. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa saluran WhatsApp dapat mendukung pembelajaran kosakata secara mandiri dengan menyediakan penjelasan kontekstual, kalimat contoh, dan paparan berulang terhadap kosakata. Penelitian ini juga menyarankan agar pendidik memberikan kesempatan kepada mahasiswa untuk berlatih menggunakan kosakata yang baru dipelajari dalam kalimat mereka sendiri serta mendorong ulasan kosakata secara teratur guna memperkuat pembelajaran kosakata.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran Kosakata, WhatsApp Channels, Pengalaman Mahasiswa.

ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of digital technology, various platforms have been used to support vocabulary learning, including WhatsApp Channels. This study aimed to explore university students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels. This study employed a qualitative approach using a narrative inquiry design. The participants were three students from the English Education Program. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and learning logs and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that the participants had both positive and negative experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels. The positive experiences included understanding vocabulary through contextual explanations and example sentences, reviewing learning materials and repeated exposure to vocabulary, connecting vocabulary based on categories and similar meanings, and using vocabulary in daily activities. Meanwhile, the negative experiences involved difficulties in using vocabulary correctly and maintaining consistent vocabulary review. These findings imply that WhatsApp Channels can support independent vocabulary learning by providing contextual explanations, example sentences, and repeated exposure to vocabulary. This study also suggests that educators should provide opportunities for students to practice using newly learned vocabulary in their own sentences and encourage regular vocabulary review to strengthen vocabulary learning.

Keywords: Vocabulary Learning, WhatsApp Channels, University Students' Experiences

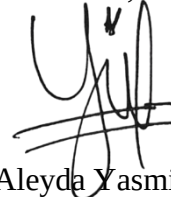
PREFACE

All praise and gratitude are conveyed to Allah SWT, who has granted His mercy, love, guidance, health, and patience so that the thesis entitled *“University Students’ Experiences in Learning English Vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels: A Narrative Inquiry”* can be completed. This thesis is submitted to the English Education Department of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor’s Degree in Education. The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the support of many people. Therefore, in this occasion, I would like to express sincere gratitude to:

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Pekalongan, June 25, 2026

The writer,



Aleyda Yasmin
SN. 20522081

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER	i
SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI.....	ii
NOTA PEMBIMBING	iii
APPROVAL SHEET	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
MOTTO	vi
ABSTRAK	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
PREFACE	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF APPENDICES	xi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Problem Identification.....	5
1.3 Problem Restriction.....	6
1.4 Formulation of the Problem	7
1.5 Aims of the Study	7
1.6 Operational Definitions.....	7
1.7 Significance of the Research.....	7
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Theoretical Framework	9
2.2 Previous Study	17
2.3 Conceptual Framework	20
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	22
3.1 Research Design.....	22
3.2 Setting and Participants.....	23
3.3 Data Collection.....	24
3.4 Data Analysis	26
3.5 Data Trustworthiness	27
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	29
4.1 Findings.....	29
4.2 Discussion	47
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION.....	66
5.1 Summary of the Findings	66
5.2 Recommendation.....	67
REFERENCES.....	69
APPENDICES	72

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Interview Questions.....	72
Appendix 2 Learning Log Form	73
Appendix 3 Transcription of the Interview	74
Appendix 4 Participants' Learning Log	90
Appendix 5 Curriculum Vitae	102



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of English language learning that university students must master. Nation (2001) states that vocabulary is the main foundation in second language learning. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, university students will face difficulties in understanding texts, expressing ideas, or communicating effectively. Schmitt (2000) also emphasizes that vocabulary is a prerequisite for the development of other skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Pamesti (2024) further highlights that English proficiency, including vocabulary mastery, has become an essential competence for the younger generation. With a wide vocabulary, university students can understand course materials more deeply, write arguments accurately in academic writing, and participate actively in discussions. However, in reality, many university students still struggle to master English vocabulary adequately.

In the vocabulary learning process, university students encounter various challenges. Schmitt (2000) explains that one of the biggest obstacles is the difficulty of retaining words in long-term memory, especially when learning takes place without meaningful context. Conventional methods such as memorizing vocabulary lists are often monotonous and less authentic, giving university students little opportunity to practice new words in real communication situations. In addition, limited classroom time results in

insufficient exposure to vocabulary variation. Nation (2001) asserts that vocabulary mastery requires repeated encounters with the same words in different contexts.

This condition shows that vocabulary learning in traditional classrooms has not been able to provide consistent and contextual exposure. Therefore, university students need additional learning resources outside the classroom that can give them opportunities to continually interact with English vocabulary. This need is becoming more apparent since university students' learning habits have also changed significantly. They now rely more on mobile devices to access information or learn new things. Because of this habit, media that can be accessed anytime and anywhere has become increasingly important for university students. Flexible access allows them to interact with vocabulary continuously. These conditions make various digital platforms an increasingly relevant option to support their learning process.

One platform that is becoming increasingly popular among university students is WhatsApp, particularly through the WhatsApp Channels feature. In the context of Indonesian university students, the relevance of this platform becomes even stronger considering that smartphone integration in the learning process has become a common practice. WhatsApp, as the most frequently used application for communication among Indonesian university students, has great potential to be developed as a learning medium. Previous research by Zahro (2022) found that WhatsApp has been used to support online learning by facilitating communication and interaction between students and teachers. Its

familiar characteristics make WhatsApp Channels usable as a means of English language learning without technological adaptation barriers. Moreover, WhatsApp Channels facilitates informal and self-directed learning, allowing university students to manage their own learning time, pace, and strategies according to their individual needs.

The WhatsApp Channels feature offers several advantages that can potentially support vocabulary learning. Its one-way communication format allows material to be delivered in a more structured manner without irrelevant conversations, which often occur in WhatsApp groups (La Hanisi, 2018). Additionally, university students can revisit the Channel content whenever needed, helping meet the repeated exposure required in vocabulary learning as described by Nation (2001). Chusnatayaini and Nafi'yah (2024) also found that the flexibility of accessing material through WhatsApp can support improvements in university students' vocabulary achievement. Furthermore, automatic notifications from the Channel act as reminders that encourage university students to check new content regularly, which can strengthen independent learning habits (Ta'amneh, 2017).

However, the use of WhatsApp Channels also has limitations. The one-way format removes the opportunity for university students to discuss, ask questions, or seek clarification directly. This may make the learning process more passive and highly dependent on university students' internal motivation to access and review the material independently. Hamad (2017) emphasizes that active engagement is an important component in language learning through

digital platforms, but this may be difficult to achieve in a broadcast-style format like the Channels. On the other hand, variations in the level of motivation and learning independence among university students can also affect the effectiveness of learning through WhatsApp Channels. Moreover, not all university students have effective independent learning strategies. Schmitt (2000) explains that vocabulary learning not only requires exposure but also active use in various contexts, something that may not be fully facilitated by the structure of WhatsApp Channels.

These conditions indicate that the success of learning through WhatsApp Channels is determined not only by the quality of the content but also by how university students experience and interpret their learning process. Unfortunately, most previous studies have focused more on the effectiveness of WhatsApp in improving learning outcomes, while exploration of university students' experiences remains limited. Not many university studies have explored in depth how university students personally engage with content on WhatsApp Channels, how they manage independent learning time, or what challenges they face while using this platform for vocabulary learning.

In reality, based on initial observations, WhatsApp Channels provides simple and easily accessible vocabulary materials that help university students interact with English words more regularly outside the classroom. The structured delivery of content and flexible access allow university students to revisit materials at any time, which may support repeated exposure in vocabulary learning. However, despite these benefits, the use of WhatsApp

Channels also presents several challenges. The one-way communication format limits opportunities for discussion, clarification, and active interaction, even though active engagement is essential in language learning. Some university students may become passive recipients who only read the materials without using the vocabulary actively in meaningful contexts. Therefore, it is important to conduct an in-depth study on university students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels. The findings of this study are expected to help determine the extent to which WhatsApp Channels truly supports university students' vocabulary development.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the explanation in the background of the study, the researcher identifies the problems as follows:

1. Vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of English language learning, but many university students still face difficulties in mastering English vocabulary adequately.
2. Conventional vocabulary learning methods are often monotonous and provide limited opportunities for repeated exposure and meaningful use of vocabulary in different contexts.
3. WhatsApp Channels has the potential to support English vocabulary learning by providing flexible access, contextual explanations, example sentences, and repeated exposure to vocabulary, but its one-way format may also limit interaction and active engagement.

4. Previous studies have mostly focused on the use of WhatsApp in improving learning outcomes or vocabulary mastery, while research specifically exploring university students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels is still limited.
5. There is still limited understanding of how university students experience learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels, including both positive and negative experiences in the learning process.

1.3 Problem Restriction

Based on the problem identification above, this study limits its focus in order to make the research more specific and manageable. This study focuses on university students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels. The participants of this study are limited to university students of the English Education Program who actively use WhatsApp Channels as a medium for learning English vocabulary. The study specifically explores students' experiences in understanding vocabulary through contextual explanations and example sentences, reviewing and revisiting vocabulary, connecting vocabulary based on categories and similar meanings, and using vocabulary in daily activities. In addition, this study also explores the difficulties experienced by students in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels. The data are limited to students' experiences obtained through semi-structured interviews and learning logs.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

This study provides one research question: “How do university students experience learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp channels?”

1.5 Aim of the Study

Based on the problem described, this study aims to explore university students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp channels.

1.6 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms in this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to the study as follows:

1. Vocabulary is the core of language proficiency and the basics of listening, speaking, writing, and reading (Richards and Renandya, 2002).
2. WhatsApp Channels is a one-way broadcast tool on WhatsApp that allows administrators to send updates, such as text, photos, videos, stickers, and polls, to their followers (WhatsApp, 2023).
3. University Students' Experience refers to how university students directly experience the learning process and reflect on what happens, so that the experience is transformed into meaningful knowledge (Eyler, 2009).

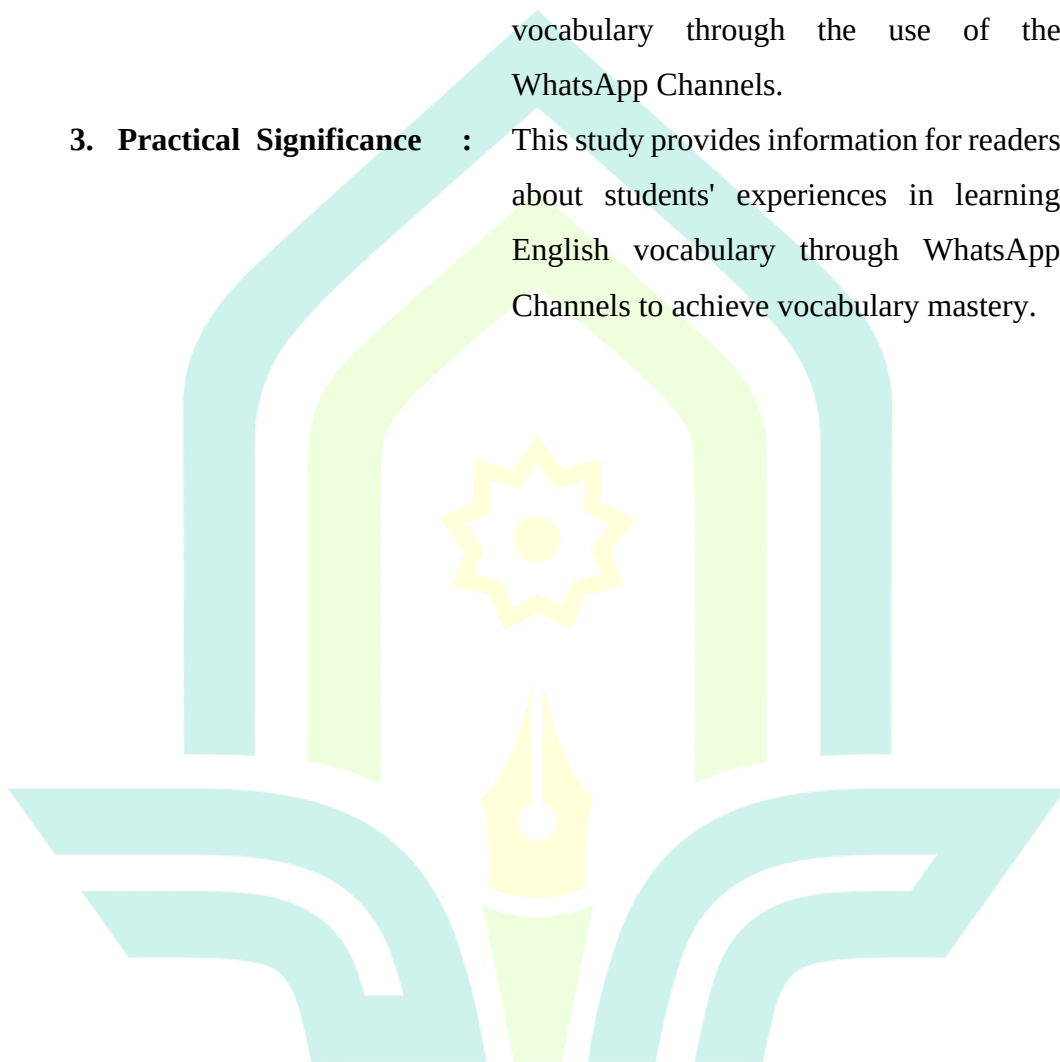
1.7 Significance of the Research

1. **Theoretical Significance** : This study supports Nation's (2001) Vocabulary Learning Theory by showing how university students experience vocabulary learning through WhatsApp

Channels as a digital learning platform. In addition, this study enriches the existing literature on digital vocabulary learning through WhatsApp Channels.

2. Empirical Significance : The study will offer empirical insights into students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through the use of the WhatsApp Channels.

3. Practical Significance : This study provides information for readers about students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels to achieve vocabulary mastery.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study explored university students' experiences in learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels based on Nation's (2001) Vocabulary Learning Theory. The findings showed that the participants had positive learning experiences by understanding vocabulary through contextual explanations and example sentences, while also learning how vocabulary is used in different situations. The participants also reviewed learning materials, encountered repeated exposure to vocabulary, grouped vocabulary into categories and connected words with similar meanings, and used newly learned vocabulary in daily communication and self-created sentences. These positive learning experiences reflected several vocabulary learning processes proposed by Nation (2001). The implication of these positive learning experiences is that vocabulary learning through WhatsApp Channels can be supported by providing contextual explanations, example sentences, opportunities for repeated vocabulary review, vocabulary categorization and comparison activities, and meaningful opportunities for students to use newly learned vocabulary in daily communication.

The findings also showed that the participants had negative learning experiences while learning English vocabulary through WhatsApp Channels. These experiences were related to using vocabulary correctly and maintaining regular vocabulary review. Although WhatsApp Channels provided flexible

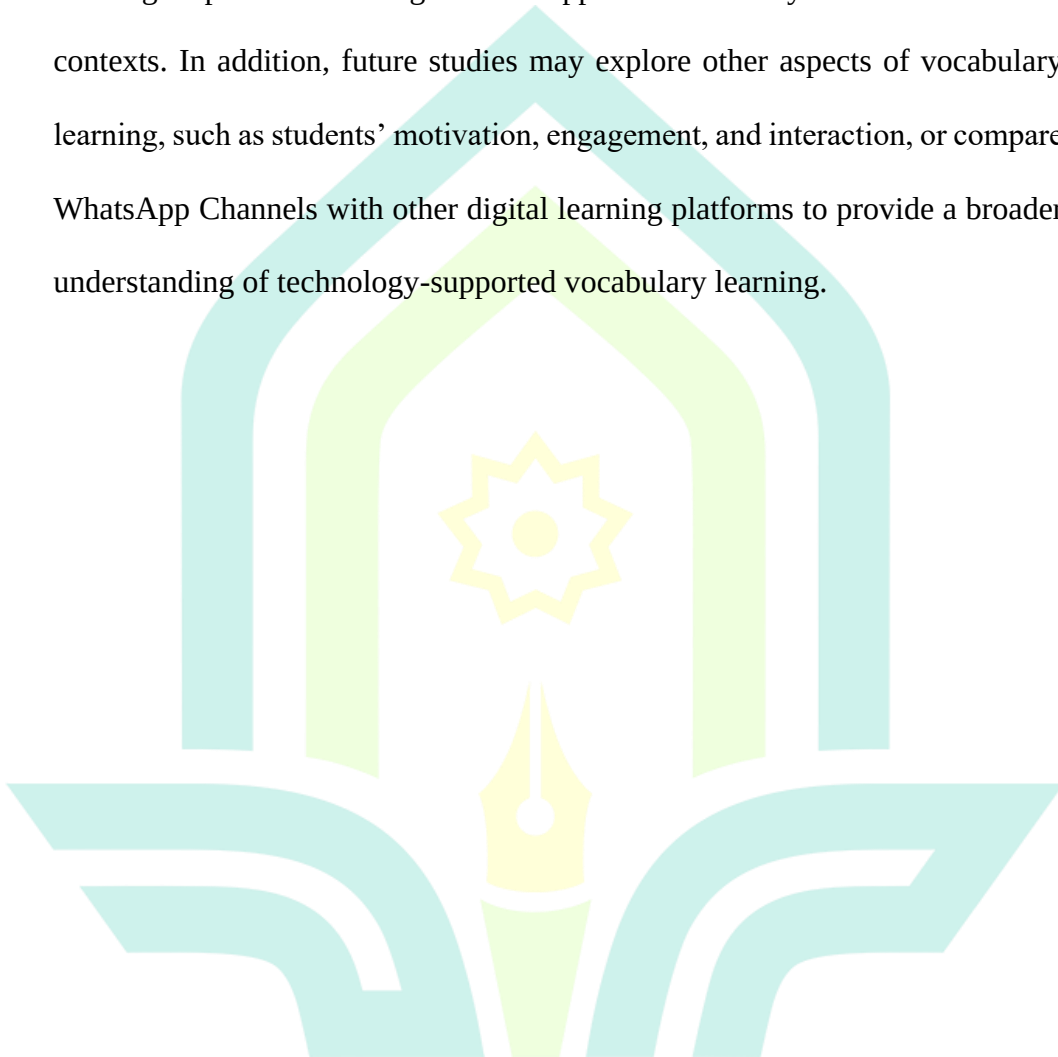
access to vocabulary learning materials, the participants still experienced difficulties when using newly learned vocabulary in their own sentences and did not always review previously learned vocabulary consistently. The implication of these negative learning experiences is that vocabulary learning through WhatsApp Channels should be supported by contextual vocabulary practice, such as sentence-completion activities and opportunities for students to create their own sentences, together with regular review activities that encourage students to revisit previously learned vocabulary and strengthen their vocabulary knowledge over time.

5.2 Recommendation

In this section, the researcher would like to provide several recommendations. For students, they are encouraged to use WhatsApp Channels more actively and consistently to support vocabulary learning activities. Students are also expected to not only memorize vocabulary meanings but also understand contextual usage and practice vocabulary in daily communication activities.

For English educators or vocabulary content creators, they are advised to provide more contextual explanations, example sentences, and interactive vocabulary materials through WhatsApp Channels to help students understand vocabulary more effectively. In addition, vocabulary materials should be organized more clearly and consistently to support students in reviewing vocabulary more easily

For future researchers, future studies are recommended to involve more participants and different educational contexts to obtain broader insights into English vocabulary learning through WhatsApp Channels. Future research may also investigate learners from different educational levels to examine how learning experiences through WhatsApp Channels vary across educational contexts. In addition, future studies may explore other aspects of vocabulary learning, such as students' motivation, engagement, and interaction, or compare WhatsApp Channels with other digital learning platforms to provide a broader understanding of technology-supported vocabulary learning.



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