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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

English is an international language that plays an important role in education, especially in facing global challenges in the twenty first century. Mastery of English enables students to access various sources of information, broaden their global knowledge, and communicate effectively in academic and social contexts. At the elementary education level, English learning becomes an important part of strengthening children's foreign language abilities. Li, Kong, and Zhang (2023: 2–4) state that English learning in children is more effective when it is supported by the home environment, particularly through the role of parents in accompanying and motivating children to learn.

In Indonesia, English learning for children aged 6–12 generally takes place at the elementary school level as part of a more structured process to strengthen foreign language skills. At this age range, children begin to have more stable cognitive abilities to understand vocabulary, simple sentence structures, and basic instructions in English. Aslamiah (2022: 104–106) explains that elementary school children need consistent guidance because they are still in a developmental stage that requires support from their closest environment, especially the family. Therefore, even though children may



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have received early exposure to English at previous levels, the role of parents remains an important factor in supporting English learning for children aged 6–12 so that the learning process can run optimally both at school and at home.

In the Indonesian context as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) country, the use of English in daily life is still very limited. This condition causes children's exposure to English, especially outside the school environment, to be minimal. Li et al. (2023: 5–6) emphasize that limited language exposure can hinder the development of children's English skills if it is not balanced with support and reinforcement at home. Therefore, the role of parents in supporting children's English learning at home becomes very important to help children review, understand, and practice the language they learn at school.

Parental support in children's English learning at home can be shown in various forms, such as giving learning motivation, guiding children when doing homework, supervising learning activities, and providing simple learning facilities according to the family's ability. Nurafifah (2025: 6–7) found that parental support in home learning activities has a positive effect on children's learning motivation and attitudes. This shows that parental support has a significant contribution to the success of English learning for elementary school children.

However, the level of parental support in children's English learning at home is not always the same. One factor that influences parents' ability



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to provide learning support is educational background. Wei and Wang (2024: 8–10) reveal that parents with a low educational background tend to have limited knowledge and confidence in assisting their children's learning, especially in academic subjects that involve foreign languages such as English. As a result, the support provided is often limited to simple supervision without optimal learning guidance.

This phenomenon is also found in the Lorong Silaturahmi 1 area, Tembilahan. Based on preliminary observations, not all elementary school-aged children in this area attend formal education, so the number of children who can be respondents in this study is limited. In addition, some parents are known to have low educational backgrounds, and some have never received formal education. This condition affects parents' ability to support their children's English learning at home, both in providing learning guidance and helping children understand the material learned at school.

Due to limited support at home, children tend to rely only on English learning obtained at school without further reinforcement from the family environment. In fact, children's English learning will be more optimal when it is continuously supported at home. Alias, Kamal, and Ginanto (2024: 125–127) state that studies on parental support for children's English learning at home are still relatively limited, especially in communities with diverse educational backgrounds.

Based on these conditions, there is a gap between the importance of parents' roles in supporting children's English learning at home and the



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reality found in the field. Therefore, this study is important to examine the role of parents in supporting children's English learning at home, particularly through the aspects of motivation, guidance, supervision, and facilitation. This study is expected to provide empirical insights into the forms and levels of parental support in communities with limited educational backgrounds and to serve as a basis for developing parental assistance programs to improve the quality of children's English learning.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem described previously, several main problems related to the role of parents in supporting elementary school children's English learning at home can be identified as follows:

1. Limited educational background and English proficiency of parents

Some parents have a low educational background, and some have not received formal education, which results in limited understanding of basic English learning. This condition causes parents to experience difficulties in assisting their children in learning English at home, such as helping them understand vocabulary, pronunciation, and simple materials learned at school. As a result, parents' roles in providing academic guidance cannot be carried out optimally, and children receive limited reinforcement of English learning outside the school environment.



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2. Limited time of parents to assist children's English learning at home

In addition to limited educational background, some parents also face time constraints in assisting their children's learning due to work demands and family economic responsibilities. This condition leads to minimal parental assistance and supervision of children's English learning activities at home. Consequently, children's learning process becomes less controlled, and they tend to rely only on English learning obtained at school.

3. Limited learning support at home in terms of awareness and supporting facilities

Some parents are not fully aware of the importance of their role in supporting children's English learning at home. In addition, limited learning facilities, such as English reading books, learning media, and other supporting learning resources, make the home learning environment less conducive. This condition reduces children's opportunities to practice and strengthen their English skills continuously outside school hours.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This study is limited to the role of parents in supporting English learning of children aged 6–12 at the elementary school level, with a focus on the forms of support provided in the home environment. The aspects



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examined in this study include motivation, guidance, supervision, and facilitation carried out by parents in assisting their children's English learning at home. This study is conducted only in the Lorong Silaturahmi 1 area, Tembilahan. Therefore, the findings reflect the specific conditions and characteristics of this area and are not intended to be generalized to other regions or broader contexts. In addition, this study does not discuss the English learning process at school, teaching methods used by teachers, or other external factors such as the school environment and peer influence that may also affect children's English proficiency. The research data are obtained through questionnaires completed by parents. Therefore, the results of this study depend on the respondents' level of understanding, honesty, and openness in providing their answers.

D. Research Question

Taking into account the context, problem identification, and limitations discussed previously, the research question of this study is formulated as follow: *How is the role of parents in Lorong Silaturahmi 1, Tembilahan in supporting their children's English learning at home in terms of motivation, guidance, supervision, and facilitation?*

E. Objective of the Research

Based on the research question that has been formulated, this study aimed to find out *the role of parents in Lorong Silaturahmi 1, Tembilahan in supporting their children's English learning at home in terms of motivation, guidance, supervision, and facilitation.*



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F. Significance of the Research

This study is expected to provide meaningful benefits for various parties involved in English learning, particularly in understanding the role of parents in supporting English learning of elementary school children at home. The data obtained from this study provide an overview of the level of parental support, which includes motivation, guidance, supervision, and facilitation in children's English learning, especially in the Lorong Silaturahmi 1 area, Tembilahan. The significance of this study is described as follows:

1. For Teachers

The results of this study can help teachers understand the real conditions of parental support for children's English learning at home. Teachers can identify aspects of support that have been implemented well and aspects that still need improvement, such as learning motivation, academic guidance, supervision, and the provision of learning facilities. With this understanding, teachers can design more contextual learning strategies and build more effective communication and cooperation with parents in supporting the development of children's English skills.

2. For Parents

This study is expected to increase parents' awareness of the importance of their role in supporting children's English learning at



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home. Parents can gain a clearer understanding of simple yet meaningful forms of support that can be provided, such as giving motivation, accompanying children during study time, supervising learning activities, and providing learning facilities according to the family's ability. Thus, parents are expected to become more active and confident in supporting their children's English learning process.

3. For the Researcher

This study provides the researcher with deeper experience and understanding of the role of parents in elementary school children's English learning. In addition, this study contributes empirical data and academic insights to the field of English language education, particularly related to parental involvement in foreign language learning in the home environment.

4. For Future Researcher

The findings of this study can be used as references for future researchers who are interested in examining similar topics with different contexts, subjects, or approaches. This study can also serve as a basis for developing research instruments or examining other variables related to parental support in children's English learning at home.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and to clarify the terms used in this study, several key terms are defined as follows:



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1. Parental Support

According to Pomerantz, Moorman, and Litwack (2018: 384–386), parental support refers to the various forms of assistance, encouragement, and involvement provided by parents to support their children's learning and development. Parental support includes emotional support, guidance, supervision, and parents' active participation in children's learning activities, which contribute to children's academic achievement and overall development.

Furthermore, Wei and Wang (2024: 9–10) explain that direct and contextual parental support in the home environment plays an important role in strengthening children's foreign language learning. Parents act as learning companions by providing encouragement and assistance, even when they have limited academic knowledge. Therefore, parental support helps create a positive learning environment that supports children's English learning.

In this study, parental support refers to all forms of support provided by parents to help their children learn English at home. This support includes giving learning motivation, providing academic guidance, supervising learning activities, and providing simple learning facilities according to the family's ability. Based on Nauvianti's theory (2023: 45–55), parental support is measured through four indicators: motivation, guidance, supervision, and facilitation.



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2. Children's English Learning

According to Sari and Wahyuni (2020: 112–113), children's English learning is the process of learning English as a foreign language through activities that are appropriate to children's characteristics and developmental stages. English learning for elementary school children emphasizes the mastery of basic vocabulary, simple speaking skills, and the habitual use of language in meaningful contexts. Therefore, English learning for children should be carried out through learning activities that are appropriate to their age characteristics and developmental stages to make the learning process more effective.

In this study, children's English learning refers to the process by which children acquire and practice English as a foreign language through learning activities that are appropriate to their age characteristics. It includes English learning activities carried out at home, such as doing school assignments, practicing vocabulary, and reviewing learning materials with parental support.

3. Home Learning Environment

According to Li, Kong, and Zhang (2023: 4–6), the home learning environment is the physical, social, and emotional setting at home that supports children's learning and development. The home learning environment plays an important role in increasing children's motivation, engagement, and attitudes toward English learning. A



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positive home learning environment supports children in learning comfortably and continuously, enabling them to gain better learning experiences through parental involvement.

In this study, the home learning environment refers to the physical, social, and psychological conditions at home that support children's learning process. It is defined as a home setting that allows children to learn English comfortably and continuously through parental support.

4. Young Learners

According to Aslamiah (2022: 104–106), young learners are children who have unique learning characteristics based on their cognitive, emotional, and social developmental stages. They require appropriate learning approaches and parental support, especially in the process of learning a foreign language.

In this study, young learners refer to elementary school children aged 6–12 years. At this stage, children are in a phase of cognitive and emotional development that requires guidance and appropriate learning approaches. Thus, this study focuses on the role of parents in supporting English learning of children within this age range in the home environment.