



STUDENTS' INTERESTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to elucidate and explain about students' interests in English learning. Then, this study applied the descriptive qualitative method which described an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic, formed with words. the subjects of this study were 42 students of second semester at Institut Teknologi Kelapa Sawit Indonesia in Medan. Moreover, the technique of data collection was administering the open questionnaire regarding students' interests in English learning. Then, the technique of data analysis used Miles, Huberman, and Saldana steps such as 1) data condensation, data display, and 3) data verification. The findings showed that the students had great interests in English learning that indicated by enjoying and being happy during the learning process, focusing and being enthusiastic when doing the activities, taking some notes of the English lesson, being motivated and active in the classroom, reviewing the previous material and trying to improve the English skills. Furthermore, they had great interests in English learning because of the interesting, comfortable, and enjoyable teaching. Moreover, they felt English was very important and they wanted to improve their skills in English. Then, the findings have the implication and contribution to the development of learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia.

Keyword: English, Interest, Language, Learning, Student

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INTRODUCTION

One factor that greatly affects student learning outcomes is interest, and it becomes a very important factor to make students pay attention, focus and be actively involved in the learning process (Ariadi et al., 2021). Then interest is one of the factors that influence the emergence of motivation in in active learning activities. Idami (2022) said that students have a very high interest in learning English, and they have great opportunities in learning English influenced by their interests. Moreover, teaching English as a foreign language is quite a challenging task for teachers that they must find the right strategies for students to have interest in their English language learning (Amjah, 2014). Then, there are several things that indicate a high interest in learning: 1) students show a tendency, so they continue to pay attention to the lesson intensely 2) there is a feeling of pleasure and loving for the subject matter 3) there is the



emergence of a sense of pride and satisfaction in the things they do 4) students show a preference for what they are interested in, and 5) they show active participation and enthusiasm in learning activities. There are many activities that people do relate to their interest and they are being intrinsically motivated while doing something. Moreover, interest in learning is a situation that indicates a phenomenon that arises and is experienced by a person because of the interaction between the individual and the surrounding environment.

Furthermore, the student's interest English learning is very important since it impacts to their achievement in their learning process. Moreover, Rachman (2018) found that the students had high students' interest in learning English had good scores in English subject at school. Besides, students' interest is one of the important elements to stimulate their learning of the English language. Hence, through meaningful and interesting activities, and the support of teaching materials, teachers will be able to attract students' interests in learning English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interest is the attitude of a person's tendency towards the object of an activity that is liked or favoured with pleasure, attention, and activeness in doing it (Zulkifli & Setiawan, 2020). Then is a powerful motivational process that energizes learning, guides academic and career trajectories, and is essential to academic success. Moreover, it is both a psychological state of attention and affect toward a particular object or topic, and an enduring predisposition to reengage over time. It is closely relative to feeling, mainly a pleasure and it can be seen on what the individual like to do, see, hear, and read (Hadi & Tahir, 2022).

Moreover, it plays a very important role in learning since a person is not interested in learning something, it will not work well, but if someone has an interest in the object of the problem then it can be expected results well. Then, it captures the desire to engage in activities in the moment and refers to a temporary experience of interest while being engaged with a task. The state of interest combines positive affective qualities, such as feelings of enjoyment and curiosity, with cognitive qualities of focused attention, as well as perceptions of value and personal importance.

Besides, being in a state of interest means that positive affective reactions and cognitive functioning are intertwined, which makes cognitive engagement and focusing of attention feel



relatively effortless. Thus, the state of interest is an ideal state, and one to strive for whenever possible. This is not only because this state of being interested is typically charged with positive feelings and engagement, but also because interest can energize higher levels of performance. Interest is characterized as an undivided activity that combines the assessment of personal importance of the activity and positive emotional evaluations of the activity. Accordingly, during interesting activities, there is no conflict between what people think is important for them and what they like to do.

Moreover, interest is a phenomenon that emerges from individuals interacting with their environments. The intrinsic quality of interest lies in the positive interaction between a person and a task, which finds its expression in a state of interest and occurs independently of extrinsic outcomes. Then, interest as an energizer of task-related behaviour is relevant in almost every teaching and learning context because students become more engaged and learn more when they are interested in the topic. Furthermore, the match between personal preferences and opportunities provided by the environment with two general and complementary avenues for intervention as follows:

1. Build on existing individual interest:

Provide content material and tasks designed to facilitate the connection of academic content to be learned with already existing interests.

2. Generate situational interest:

Provide stimulating tasks, activities, and materials that use universal structural features (i.e., problems, challenges) to trigger and maintain situational interest for all students.

Then, one way to develop interest in activities is to help students find meaning and value in those activities, and one type of task value that has proven to be a powerful predictor of interest, effort, and performance is utility value. When students do perceive value in course topics, however, they develop greater interest in the course, work harder, perform better, persist longer, and are more likely to take additional courses and complete their degree programs.

Moreover, the indicators of students' interest are such as attention that they will focus while the teacher explains the material. Moreover, interest in learning can be seen by the awareness to make their notes while learning process. Then, teachers' attention makes the students motivated in learning. Besides, interest in learning can be seen by the students'



involvement by asking if do not understand the material and answering the question from the teacher. Furthermore, if the students become interested in learning, they will show enthusiasm to the activities to participate and be active in learning process.

METHOD

This study applied the descriptive qualitative method which described an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic, formed with words (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The subjects of the study were 42 students of second semester at Technology and Information System Study Program at Institut Teknologi Sawit Indonesia in Medan. Moreover, the technique of data collection was open questionnaire regarding students' interest in English learning. Then the technique of data analysis used Miles, Huberman, and Saldana steps such as 1) data condensation, 2) data display, and 3) data verification.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The data were taken by administrating the open questionnaire to the students regarding to English learning, and the description is shown as follows:

Table. 1. Students' Interests in English Learning

Students' Interests Items	Responses	Frequency
1. I enjoy learning English.	Yes	42
2. I am happy when learning English.	Yes	42
3. I am happy when doing the task.	Yes	42
4. I focus on listening the explanation from the lecturer.	Yes	42
5. I am enthusiastic when doing the activities during the learning process.	Yes	42
6. I always take a note during the learning process.	Yes	42
7. I am motivated by lecturer's explanation.	Yes	42
8. I ask the lecturer when I do not understand the lesson.	Sometimes	42
9. I answer when the lecturer asks me.	Sometimes	42
10. I am active during the learning process.	Yes	42
11. I want to study the material which has been explained in the class.	Yes	42
12. I always try to improve my English skill	Yes	42
Total		42

Table. 1 showed that the students enjoyed learning English since the lecturer delivered the English subject interestingly therefore, they understood the material easier. moreover, they were happy when learning and doing the English task. Then they focused on listening the explanation from the lecturer and became enthusiastic when doing the activities during the



learning process. Besides, they always took the note and were motivated by lecturer's explanation during the learning process. However, they did not ask the lecturer frequently when they did not understand the lesson and did the same way when they answered the questions from the lecturer. Furthermore, they were active students, always reviewed the lesson and improved their English skill. Moreover, the students had much more interests in learning English and had some reasons why they felt such a way that shown in following table:

Table. 2. The Reasons of Students' Interests in English Learning

The Reasons of Students' Interests	Responses	Frequency
1. Interesting teaching.	Yes	42
2. The importance of English subject	Yes	42
3. Doing tasks is student's responsibility.	Yes	42
4. Improving English skills.	Yes	42
5. Comfortable and enjoyable learning.	Yes	42
6. Reviewing the lesson by taking a note.	Yes	42
7. Understandable explanation.	Yes	42
8. Being shy to ask the lecturer.	Yes	42
9. Having responsibility to answer the questions.	Sometimes	42
10. Having much enthusiasm in English learning	Yes	42
11. Improving comprehension English subject.	Yes	42
12. Having better English skill in the future	Yes	42
Total		42

Table. 2 indicated that the students had high interests in English learning because the lecturer taught them with interesting skills teaching, and they felt that English was very important in this era. moreover, they did the tasks because it was their responsibility as the students, and they wanted to improve their English skills. Then, they got interested in learning because the learning process was comfortable, and it was enjoyable activity. Furthermore, they took the notes during the learning process since they needed to review the lesson and they had great interest in English learning because the lecturer explained the lesson clearly so that they could understand it easily. however, sometimes they did not ask the lecturer about the lesson that did not understand because of they felt shy to ask her, but they tried to answer the lecturer's questions because it was their responsibility. Moreover, they became active and enthusiastic students because their had much enthusiasm and interests in English learning. Then, they wanted to improve their comprehension and had better English skills in the future.



CONCLUSIONS

Student's interest is very important in learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia since it is not the native language of Indonesian people. The findings show that 42 students are interested in English learning indicated by enjoying, being happy, focusing on being enthusiastic, taking a note, being motivated being active, wanting to study and trying improve their skills. However, it is about 42 students answered that they sometimes ask or answer the questions from the lecturer because of their shyness. Therefore, the English educators have a great challenge to get their students be interested in language learning especially English acquisition. There are some efforts to make students have interests in English learning such as provide the interesting teaching, motivate the students to learn and improve their skills in English, create the enjoyable environment, and encourage them to have discussion related to the English material in the classroom. Furthermore, the findings have the implication and contribution to the development of learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia. Moreover, they also give the contribution to the English educators to improve their efforts in getting students' interests in English learning.

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