

# VISION

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## STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARD LEARNING ENGLISH IN AN ENGLISH COURSE

AdilaJefiza

Universitas Dharmas Indonesia

adilajefiza@gmail.com

### Abstrak

Kebanyakan mahasiswa telah belajar bahasa Inggris sejak di sekolah dasar. Namun, setelah belajar bahasa Inggris bertahun-tahun kemampuan bahasa Inggris mereka masih kurang memuaskan. Nah..Mengapa hal itu terjadi? Ada beberapa kemungkinan dimana mereka merasa tidak pentingnya bahasa Inggris. Sebagian mereka juga hanya belajar bahasa Inggris untuk memenuhi tuntutan tugas dan mendapatkan nilai. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini mencoba menginvestigasi motivasi mahasiswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris, terutama motivasi intrinsik dan ekstrinsik. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan penyebaran angket dan wawancara. Partisipannya adalah sejumlah mahasiswa di sebuah tempat kursus. Hasil dari penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa kebanyakan siswa lebih memiliki motivasi ekstrinsik daripada intrinsik dan mereka juga memiliki sikap yang positif dalam belajar bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: belajar bahasa Inggris, motivasi, sikap

### Abstract

Most students have learned English since elementary school. However, after learning English for many years their English skills are still less than satisfactory. Well .. Why does it happen? There are several possibilities where they feel no importance of English. Some of them also only learn English to meet the demands of the task and get the value. Therefore, this study tries to investigate students' motivation in learning English, especially intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This research was conducted with questionnaire and interview. Participants are a number of students at a course. The results of this study prove that most students have more extrinsic motivation than

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intrinsic and they also have a positive attitude in learning English.

Keywords: learning English, motivation, attitude

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, learning English has become more important in all levels of students. It has been taught from lower level until higher level. It has been a compulsory at primary and secondary school because it is used as a standard in national examination. Even, most of educated people should have learned it.

In learning English, students are supported by some reasons. Each student has different reason. For example, students want to learn English because they need to follow English song competition, so they will study hard to pronounce English well. Then, students who lived around people from many countries will learn English to be able communicate well. Based on some surveys cited in Tsuda (2003), majority of students thought that English is necessary for travelling, using computer, and entertainment such as movies or music. This reason will be a motivation that encourages them to learn English. The successful in learning will depend on the motivation. In other word, learning and motivation are closely bound together and influence one another heavily.

Apart from the importance of motivation and learning, some motivation problems could be found in learning English. In a school, the researcher has found that some students are lack of motivation in learning English. They thought English is difficult and they did not enjoy English class. They showed poor attitudes in learning English. In addition, some students were not satisfied with their English because after learning many years they still could not speak English well. Even, some university students said that they had learned English since they were in elementary school; however, it was still hard to communicate using English.

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Furthermore, successful in learning is closely related to motivation, as cited in Houston (1985) motivation is something that causes a person to act. Then, Brown (2001) added that motivation is the extent to which you make choice about goals to pursue and the effort you will devote to that pursuit. Some experts believes that students with positive attitudes and high level motivation will be more successful compared to those with negative attitudes and no motivation, cited in Thang (2011). It can be said that students who lack of motivation will not be encouraged to achieve success in learning.

In addition, Quinn (1985) divided motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic. She stated that if someone intrinsically motivated, he/she will perform the activity because he/she enjoy it. So, students who learn English because they think English is necessary, they will enjoy doing it. Nevertheless, students who learn English because they want to get certificate, they are extrinsically motivated. Additionally, Harmer (2007) claimed that external sources of motivation may come from the society students live in, people around them and students' natural curiosity. Thus, as a teacher, we need to know students motivation in learning and help them to build motivation intrinsically and extrinsically.

Moreover, motivation will affect someone responses and acts that is called attitudes. Brown (2000) stated that "attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents' and peers' attitudes, contact with people who are different in any number of ways." Brown (2001) added that attitude is characterized by large proportion of emotional involvement such as feelings, self, relationship in community. It seems that many stimulants lead individual to positive and negative attitudes.

So far, there are many studies that have been done in the field of motivation and attitudes in learning English. Tsuda (2003) investigated university students' responses in learning English. He found that two third of a group students do not like to study English because they had not had much feeling of success in their learning experience. At the same time, he also found that many of the students were interested in speaking with people overseas and they did not have any hostile feelings against English or English speaking countries.

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Another study done by Tamimi and Shuib (2009), investigated students' motivation in term of three motivational construct: instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, and personal motivation. Learners' attitudes, on the other hand, regard the use of English in social and educational context, and the culture of English speaking world was identified. They found that instrumental and personal reasons were regarded as important motives by the students. Then, for integrative reasons, the results provided evidence that learning English as a part of the culture of its people had impact to students' motivation. On the other hand, most of students had positive attitudes toward the social value and educational status of English. Students also showed their interest in the culture of English speaking world as represented by English movie.

Next, Chalak and Kassaian (2010) investigated Iranian students' motivation and attitudes toward target language and its community by using AMTB (Attitude, Motivation Test Battery). They found that Iranian students learn English for both 'instrumental' and 'integrative' reasons and their attitudes toward the target language community and its members were generally found to be highly positive.

Moreover, Thang et.al (2011) also conducted study about attitudes and motivation of Malaysian students. The research showed positive attitudes toward learning English by Art and Science students. The finding also revealed a positive relationship between higher proficiency level and positive attitudes and motivation to learn English.

The fact above showed that, every student has various motivation and attitudes in learning English. The motivation and attitudes will lead students into successful or failed. It is important for teacher to investigate motivation of students first before determine teaching strategies in the classroom. Based on that, the research questions have been formulated.

## Research Questions

1. What are students' attitudes toward learning English?
2. Are the students motivated intrinsically or extrinsically towards learning English?

## Significance of Research

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The research is expected to make beneficial contribution to the field of English Education, especially for teacher in recognizing students' motivation. In particular, the research intend to:

1. Give explanation about students' positive and negative attitudes in learning English.
2. Describe students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation toward learning English.

## 2.METHOD

This research employs qualitative method. The data were collected using questionnaire and interview. In this research, the participants were students in an English Course that focused on improvement in speaking ability. The number of participants that involved in this research was 4 participants. They are college students. All of them also participated in interview. The participants were selected by using purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling also referred to judgment sampling, is the process of selecting a simple that is believed to be representative of given population (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). The researcher did not find difficulties in developing research there, because the researcher also worked as English teacher in that course. Thus, the students and teacher in that class were really helpful in giving their participation.

The data in this research were collected on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 by using some stages: questionnaire and interview.

### Questionnaire

In this study, a questionnaire was used to give information in written respond. As a general guideline, a questionnaire should be attractive, brief, and easy to respond to. The questionnaire was adapted from Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) cited in Thang et.al (2011). It consisted of 20 close ended questions that were divided into four parts: positive attitudes, negative attitudes, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Each part consisted of five questions that was written in English and also translated into Indonesia to ensure complete understanding. This questionnaire used likert scales as instrument. Likert scales

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required an individual to respond to a series of statements by indicating whether he or she strongly agree (SA), agrees (A), undecided (U), disagrees (D) or strongly disagrees (SD). However, in this research, the writer adopted Likert scale into four categories: SA, A, D, SD. Each response was assigned a point value, and an individual's score was determined by adding the point values of all the statements. 1 indicated SD, 2 = D, 3 = A, 4 = SA which score 3 and 4 indicated a positive attitudes and score 1 and 2 indicated negative attitudes (Gay et.al., 2009).

## Interview

Interview to the students was used as an instrument in collecting data. (Gray et.al (2009) mentions that interview is a purposeful interaction in which one person obtains information from another. Genesee (cited in Haris,2007) mentioned that by doing an interview, a researcher can probe the respondents for additional information in response to interesting or important answer that arise unexpectedly from the planed questions. Thus, the interview was done to get participants' response in depth and to examine attitudes, interesting and feelings.

The interview was done after students filled the questionnaire. All participants were interviewed. This interview was conducted to gain a spoken respond from the participants. The functions of interview in this research were to cross-check the data and to make sure that the data from the observations and questionnaire were really valid.

## Data analysis

The data collected in this research was two type of quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data of the questionnaire were analyzed in terms of means and percentages. For analyzing the qualitative part of the data, on the other hand, a content analysis method was used. In the analysis process, the interviewees' responses for each question were transcribed. After that, the responses were analyzed in terms of themes related to the study objectives.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Data from questionnaire

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The questionnaires were distributed to know students' motivation and attitudes in learning English. This questionnaire consisted of four parts: positive attitudes, negative attitudes, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

No	Statements	Strongly disagree	disagree	agree	Strongly agree
1	English is an important part of the education program			25%	75%
2	I plan to learn as much English as possible				100%
3	I find learning English is very interesting			50%	50%
4	When I have English exercises, I will finish it immediately		25%	25%	50%
5	I would read English newspapers and magazines as often as I could		50%	50%	
6	It is hard to learn English.		50%	25%	25%
7	I prefer to read materials in bahasa Indonesia rather than English.	25%		25%	50%
8	I force myself to listen to the teacher during English classes.	25%		50%	25%
9	During English classes, I become completely bored.	25%	50%		25%
10	Learning English is a waste of time.	100%			
11	Learn English in order to improve my English language skills.				100%
12	Learning English will allow me to be more at ease with English speakers.				100%
13	Learning English allows me to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.			25%	75%
14	I learn English because it is something that I always want to do.				100%
15	I study English because I enjoy learning it.			25%	75%
16	Learning English is useful in getting a good job.			25%	75%
17	I learn English because I need it to further my studies overseas.	25%		50%	25%
18	I study English because I want to do well in my examination.	25%	25%		50%
19	I study English in order to please my family.			50%	50%
20	I feel that no one is really educated unless he is fluent in English language.	25%		25%	50%

The questionnaire number 1-5 investigated students' positive attitudes in learning English. Statement no.1 told about importance of English. 75% students strongly agreed and the rest agreed that English is an important part of education program. Then, according to all of participants, they strongly agreed to plan learning English as much as possible. In expression of students' interest in learning English, 50% students agreed and the rest strongly agreed (statement no.3). Statement no 4 and 5 showed students' effort in learning English. A half of students read magazines and did exercise to learn English and others did not. From this part,

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most of students have positive attitudes to learn English and it will lead them to good proficiency. As cited in Thang (2011) that positive attitude had positive relation with higher proficiency level.

Moreover, the questionnaire number 6-10 showed students' negative attitudes in learning English. 50 % of students thought that English is hard to learn and more than 50% preferred to read materials in their native language rather than English. It is a line with one of participants comment, *...I prefer to use learning material written in bahasa Indonesia rather than English, because sometimes English is hard to be understood.* Then, only 25% students disagreed that English is uninteresting. Most of them expressed that English is uninteresting and made them completely bored. On the other hand, all of them disagreed that learning English is a waste of time. Thus, although they felt that learning English is hard and uninteresting, they did not think it is a waste of time.

Furthermore, students' intrinsic motivation in learning English is expressed in statement number 11-15. Most of them strongly agreed that learning English is useful in order to improve their language skill and for their social interaction with native speakers. This data expressed students' integrative motivation as a desire learning language to communicate with people from target language. In addition, 75% students also learned English to participate with other ethnic and other cultures. Then, according to all of students learning English was something that they wanted to do and most of them enjoyed learning English. Thus, most of students had good intrinsic motivation in learning English.

Next, students' extrinsic motivation is showed in statement number 16 until 20. The statement number 16 told about English for future career. It showed 75 % students strongly agreed that English is useful in getting a good job and 25% agreed. Then, 50% students agreed that they learned English for continuing study overseas, 25% agreed and 25% strongly disagreed. The next statement showed students' instrumental motivation because they learned English in order to do well in examination, a half of them strongly agreed, 25 % disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed. The two last statements expressed external influences in learning English.



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Most of students learned English in order to please their family. Then, a half of them strongly agreed that someone is really educated if he/she is fluent in English, 25% of them agreed and 25% strongly disagreed. In conclusion, most of students also extrinsically motivated to please family and for future career. It seems that their extrinsic motivation was only limited to achieving personal career goals.

Based on data above, most of students had positive attitudes in learning English, but some of them also had negative attitudes. In learning English, most of them are supported by extrinsic motivation rather than intrinsic motivation. They were motivated by getting good career and continuing study overseas.

## **Data from interview**

Some questions in interview were adopted from questionnaire. The interview was used only to clarify if the data from the questionnaire were valid and reliable. After being checked, the result of interviewing from three participants showed supported result of the questionnaire. The data will be concluded here:

### 1. Students' motivation in learning English

Students' motivation can be divided into extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. More than half students said that they learned English for pleasant family and as a demand of department in University. That showed their extrinsic motivation. They also explained that learning English is useful for them to get a good job, communicate with people from other countries and to get looking more educated. As one of them said, *...I learn English because I want to pass a job interviewed in a big company.*"

### 2. Students' attitudes in learning English

Most of students plan to learn English as much as possible. They tried to improve their English by watching English movie, listening to the song, reading some books written in English, and practicing with friends. However, if they had to choose, they preferred to read books material written in bahasa Indonesia rather than written in English.

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## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data that analyzed and the research finding, it can be concluded that extrinsic motivation is a primary resource of students' motivation in learning English. The result provided evidence that students learned English for their future career, education and social interaction. In reference to students' attitude, the finding revealed that the students have positive attitudes toward the importance of English and use of English in educational context. This finding will be useful for the teacher in determining strategies and techniques to build students' intrinsic motivation. The last point, this study has limitation in participants that cannot be generalized in different participants. So, the next studies need to be applied in a control group to make data more general.

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