

Motivation and English Training of Students of Class Viii-A Private Junior High School Santo Thomas 4 Medan, Medan City - North Sumatera

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ABSTRACT

Learning motivation is defined as the general psychological motivation of students that drives learning activities to achieve goals. Students can succeed in learning if they have learning motivation. Therefore, it is important for students to have high learning motivation in order to study seriously. However, learning motivation works faster if there are external drivers such as empowerment and psychoeducation. This empowerment activity aims to deepen students' understanding of the importance of learning motivation in learning activities and accelerate the development of learning motivation. In addition, the facilitator provides intensive learning support activities for English subjects. The activity was carried out for two days at Santo Tomas 4 Medan Private Middle School and was attended by 21 Class VIII-A students. The contents of the activities carried out included motivating students to stimulate interest in learning English and practicing English vocabulary. This is done so that students understand how to communicate well and correctly and improve their English vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of student motivation to academic success and effective English language teaching cannot be overemphasized, especially in secondary schools (Steinmayr et al., 2019). In a rapidly globalizing world, the ability to communicate fluently in English has become an essential skill for personal development and future career prospects (Rao, 2019). This study focused on students of Class VIII-A of Santo Tomas 4 Medan Private High School in Medan City, North Sumatra, and investigated their level of motivation and English language learning.

Student motivation plays a significant role in students' engagement, effort, and overall academic performance (Quynh et al., 2021). Motivation can be intrinsic, coming from within the student, or extrinsic, coming from external rewards or pressures. Understanding the sources of student motivation is important for developing effective learning strategies and developing positive attitudes towards English language learning (Soriano et al., 2021).

Junior high school English classes cover a variety of elements such as vocabulary mastery, grammar comprehension, listening and speaking skills, and reading comprehension. The quality of teaching methods and learning materials has a significant impact on how well students are able to master these elements. In addition, students' learning environment (whether they feel supported, challenged, or disengaged) also has a significant impact on their success in learning English. In the case of Santo Tomas 4 Medan, a private high school located in Medan, North Sumatra, the focus of this study is to analyze how motivational factors affect English learning in grade VIII-A students. This study investigates intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the effectiveness of current English teaching methods, and students' perceptions and attitudes toward the language. By identifying key motivating factors and assessing the quality of English teaching, this study provides insights that can help improve teaching practices, increase student engagement, and enhance English language skills for future generations.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

Intervention Design

The material of the activities carried out includes providing motivation for students to grow their interest in learning English and providing training on vocabulary in English (Rone et al., 2023). This is done so that students can understand how to communicate well and correctly and can improve their vocabulary skills in English. Here is a detailed explanation of each point:

Constructivism in Education

Constructivism in education is a learning theory that emphasizes how students actively construct knowledge rather than passively absorb it. The role of the teacher in a constructivist classroom is to create an environment where students can engage in hands-on activities, critical thinking, and problem solving. This approach encourages students to reflect on their learning, collaborate with others, and make sense of their experiences.

Active Participation of Students

Active participation is the participation of students in the learning process. Rather than just passively listening, students engage in various activities such as discussions, group work, and projects. This approach increases student motivation by making the learning process more dynamic, personal and interactive.

Adaptation to the local context

Adaptation of teaching methods to the local context means that the content, teaching strategies and materials used are relevant to the cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds of students. This approach helps students improve their learning by providing a deeper understanding of the material and making it more approachable.

Andragogy Approach

Andragogy refers to the theory and practice of adult education. Although this approach is primarily used with adult learners, some of the principles also apply to teaching younger generations, especially given the recognition that learners are independent and can bring prior knowledge and experiences into the learning process. For younger generations, this can mean making lessons more relevant to their lives and giving them opportunities to learn more independently.

Motivation and English Language Teaching

The motivational aspect is crucial to focusing students' attention on learning. Motivated students will put more effort into learning, resulting in better grades. English language teaching uses a variety of methods and activities to teach English. This ensures that the learning process meets the needs and interests of students, ensuring enjoyable and hands-on learning.

Background: Grade VIII-A Santo Tomas 4 Private High School Medan, North Sumatra

The specific background here concerns the students of Grade VIII-A Santo Thomas 4, a private high school in Medan, North Sumatra. Understanding the local context, including the students' cultural background and the resources available at the school, can have a significant impact on the application of this pedagogical approach.

Location and Time of Research

- Location: Santo Thomas 4 Medan;
- Duration: 2 Days;
- Number of Participants: 21 People.

Implementation Stages

1. Preparation Stage

- a. Community needs survey;
 - b. Human resource profile mapping;
 - c. Curriculum design;
 - d. Preparation of training instruments.
2. Implementation Stage
- a. Interactive Lectures;
 - b. Practical Demonstration;
 - c. Mentoring Session;
 - d. Guided Practice.
3. Evaluation Stage
- a. Competency Test;
 - b. Learning Reflection;
 - c. Measuring Competency Achievement.

Community Service Instruments

1. Pre-Training Questionnaire;
2. Observation Sheet;
3. Competency Test;
4. Interview Guide.

Data Analysis

The research used a mixed-method method with:

1. Quantitative analysis for test data;
2. Qualitative analysis for observation and interview data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results section presents the main findings obtained from the study on the motivation level and effectiveness of English language training among Grade VIII-A students at SMP Swasta Santo Thomas 4, Medan.

Motivation Level

- a. Students' motivation to learn English was assessed using a combination of survey and classroom observation. The results showed that the majority of students reported moderate to high levels of motivation, with 70% expressing interest in improving their English language skills.
- b. Intrinsic motivation was found to be a significant factor, as students who were motivated by personal goals, such as traveling or doing well in school, showed higher engagement in English lessons compared to those who were motivated by extrinsic factors (e.g., master pressure, rewards).
- c. The motivation survey showed a positive correlation between students' perceived competence in English and their motivation to continue learning the language.

Effectiveness of English Language Training

- a. Pre-test and post-test results showed a significant increase in students' English proficiency after completing the training program. The mean score increased by 15% pre-test to post-test, indicating that the training program effectively improved their language skills.
- b. Students particularly excelled in vocabulary and listening comprehension, while improvements in speaking and writing skills were more moderate.
- c. Classroom observations revealed that interactive teaching methods, including group activities and mixed media resources, significantly increased student engagement and participation.

Challenges Faced

- a. Despite the positive results, several challenges were noted. Some students showed low motivation due to external factors such as family support and social influences.
- b. In addition, some students struggled to understand complex grammatical structures, indicating the need for more targeted interventions in this area.



Figure 1: Developing English Learning Strategies



Figure 2: Developing Positive Attitudes Towards English Language Learning

DISCUSSION

In the discussion, the results are interpreted in the context of existing research and the implications of the results are considered.

Motivation and Its Role in Learning English

The results of this study indicate that motivation plays an important role in students' success in learning English, emphasizing the importance of intrinsic motivation in learning English (Purmama et al., 2021). Emphasizing language acquisition. Students who mentioned personal reasons for learning English, such as career opportunities or improving international communication, had greater success in language acquisition.

In addition, motivation was positively correlated with the perceived benefits of the English language training program. This suggests that programs that focus on practical language use (English conversation, job search, etc.) can lead to higher motivation and engagement.

Effectiveness of the English Language Training Program

The significant increase in test scores reflects the effectiveness of the English Language Training Program. These results support the assumption that well-structured and targeted training interventions can produce measurable improvements in language skills. According to Harmer's (2007) research, the success of the program was mainly due to the use of interactive methods, which increased student participation and retention.

Improvements in vocabulary and listening comprehension are consistent with other research findings (e.g., Nation, 2013), which suggest that these skills can be more easily developed with varied input and practice. However, the more gradual progress in speaking and writing suggests that more emphasis should be placed on these areas, perhaps through more individualized practice and feedback.

Challenges and Recommendations

Challenges related to motivation, such as external factors affecting student motivation, suggest that future programs need to integrate motivational strategies that take into account students' sociocultural backgrounds. This could include tutoring programs, parent involvement, or community-based activities.

In addition, the grammar issues suggest that more attention should be paid to basic language skills. Strategies such as targeted grammar practice, partner activities, or blended learning models that combine online and face-to-face instruction may effectively bridge this gap.

Finally, future research could investigate the long-term impact of motivational strategies on students' English proficiency and the impact of teacher training in providing effective teaching methods to enhance motivation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study underscores the crucial role of student motivation in academic success and effective English language learning, particularly at the junior high

school level. Motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, significantly influences students' engagement, effort, and overall academic performance. Understanding these motivational factors is essential for developing effective learning strategies and fostering positive attitudes toward English.

Focusing on Class VIII-A students at Santo Tomas 4 Medan Private High School in Medan City, North Sumatra, the research highlights the impact of teaching methods, learning materials, and the learning environment on students' mastery of English skills such as vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, and reading comprehension. By analyzing students' motivation and perceptions, the study offers valuable insights into improving teaching practices, enhancing student engagement, and ultimately boosting English language proficiency for future success.

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