Journal of Innovative and Creativity
Journal Homepage: https://joecy.org/index.php/joecy
e-mail: journaljoecy@gmail.com

Faculty of Education
University of Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai
ISSN 2775-771X (Online)
ISSN 2962-570X **(Printed)**
5 (1) 2025, Page 619-626

Students' Motivation in Learning English at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu

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Published: January, 2025

ABSTRAK

Motivasi merupakan salah satu aspek terpenting dalam proses pembelajaran. Tanpa motivasi, tujuan pembelajaran sulit tercapai. Ketika siswa memiliki motivasi dalam proses pembelajaran, mereka akan lebih memahami materi, terutama Bahasa Inggris. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui motivasi siswa dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris di kelas VII MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner motivasi siswa yang terdiri dari sepuluh item dan wawancara yang berisi lima pertanyaan. Data dianalisis menggunakan persentase dan penjelasan deskriptif. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa siswa pada umumnya memiliki motivasi yang tinggi. Berdasarkan hasil kuesioner dan wawancara, dapat disimpulkan bahwa siswa kelas VII MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu memiliki motivasi yang kuat dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris. Hasil kuesioner menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa setuju dengan pernyataan positif, yang menunjukkan bahwa mereka senang belajar Bahasa Inggris. Lebih lanjut, hasil wawancara menunjukkan bahwa siswa sangat tertarik untuk belajar Bahasa Inggris. Namun, guru perlu lebih kreatif dalam menggunakan media, strategi, atau materi dalam proses belajar mengajar untuk lebih meningkatkan motivasi siswa.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Motivasi, Motivasi Siswa

ABSTRACT

Motivation is one of the most important aspects of the learning process. Without motivation, learning objectives are difficult to achieve. When students possess motivation in the learning process, they will better understand the material, especially English. The purpose of this study is to determine the students' motivation in learning English among seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected through a student motivation questionnaire consisting of ten items and an interview containing five questions. The data were analyzed using percentages and descriptive explanations. The main findings show that the students are generally highly motivated. Based on the results of the questionnaire and interviews, it can be concluded that the seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu possess strong motivation in learning English. The questionnaire results revealed that most students agreed with the positive statements, indicating their enjoyment in learning English. Furthermore, the interview results show that students are highly interested in learning English. However, teachers should be more creative in using media, strategies, or materials in the teaching and learning process to further enhance students' motivation.

Keywords: English Learning, Motivation, Student Motivation

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INTRODUCTION

Motivation is the key to success in the learning process. There are several definitions of motivation proposed by experts. Dwinalida & Setiaji (2022) state that motivation is considered an essential component that determines students' success in learning English. Motivation is also defined as the direction of a person's behavior or what causes someone to want to repeat a behavior, and vice versa (Lens & Vansteenkiste, 2020). In addition, Norvilitis et al. (2022) also assert that motivation and academic

achievement, as reflected in GPA, are positively correlated across all educational levels, from elementary school to university.

From the overall explanation above, it can be illustrated that motivation is a combination of effort and desire that provides reasons for a person's actions, wishes, and needs to achieve learning goals. According to Urhahne & Wijnia (2023), motivation refers to the underlying reasons for behavior characterized by willingness and volition. Motivation involves a constellation of beliefs, perceptions, values, interests, and closely related actions. By being motivated, students become more enthusiastic in learning, which in turn encourages them to learn English more effectively. Teachers must recognize the importance of motivation in language learning, and through certain adjustments, they can help students enhance their motivation (Seven, 2020).

Through the study of learning theories and their historical development, teachers must gain insight into the harmony and conflicts that exist within current educational theories (Apple, 2023). Unfortunately, students' motivation in Indonesia remains relatively low because they sometimes lack self-confidence. This often occurs because teachers do not fully understand their students' feelings toward English. Therefore, this study is useful for helping readers—especially teachers—understand the extent of students' motivation and the reasons behind it. Without the desire to learn, it is very difficult for learners to achieve effective learning (Habibie, 2020). It can be said that teachers must be aware of the importance of motivating students and intensifying their motivation.

In relation to motivation, it can generally be divided into two types: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation refers to the condition in which learners want to learn the target language in order to better understand and become acquainted with its speakers and integrate into their culture (Darvin & Norton, 2023). Meanwhile, instrumental motivation describes the learners' drive that focuses on practical benefits, such as for study, work, or specific social purposes (Getie, 2020).

Malureanu & Enachi-Vasluianu (2021) argue that attention should be given to the possible impacts when relationships function well, as well as the negative effects when those relationships are poor. They state that the relationship between teachers and students can influence students' desire to grow and learn more. Meanwhile, Ibrahim & El Zaatari (2020) point out that an important factor determining the quality of the relationship between students and teachers is that students are able to trust and respect their teachers, and that effective communication is established.

Teachers must support learners in discovering their motivation and exploring their own motivational processes. Motivation in this study refers to the reasons that capture students' interest. These reasons may stem from either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Hassan et al. (2019) state that intrinsic motivation in language learning refers to the drive to engage in an activity because it is enjoyable and interesting. A person may be motivated by the pleasure derived from the learning activity or by the desire to make themselves feel better. Here, students are driven by their intrinsic motivation—they learn English because of their internal drive.

Meanwhile, Khan et al. (2024) define extrinsic motivation as the performance of an activity in order to obtain rewards such as good grades, higher salaries, or, alternatively, to avoid punishment. In this context, students learning English are driven by their strong external desires, such as finding employment, passing exams, and other similar goals.

In the spirit of learning, motivation is essential because a person who lacks learning motivation will not be able to engage effectively in learning activities. Motivation is needed to determine the intensity of students' learning efforts. Ismail et al. (2022) state that one of the factors influencing students' motivation is reward. The function of rewards can either encourage or reduce motivation, depending on the type of reward and the situation in which it is given. Teachers should strive to provide students with greater autonomy or control over their own learning. In addition, teachers should create a classroom environment that supports objective context, connection, and external evaluation.

Based on the previous explanation, it can be understood that motivation plays a crucial role as a determining factor in successfully learning a foreign language within the classroom environment. By understanding students' level of motivation, teachers can identify their interests and learning drives. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study entitled "Students' Motivation in Learning English at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu."

This study aims to determine the level of learning motivation among seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu. The focus of this research is to describe how students' motivation manifests in the process of learning English. The scope of this study is limited to the learning motivation of seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu, with particular emphasis on the factors that influence their motivation in learning English.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method. Referring to the purpose of this research, this design is considered appropriate since it aims to describe or analyze the research findings rather than to draw broader generalizations (Furidha, 2024). In other words, a descriptive qualitative approach involves techniques of identifying, classifying, and analyzing natural phenomena.

The researcher used a questionnaire and interviews as the primary instruments for data collection. The questionnaire was adapted from Clément et al. (1994). The respondents of this study were 24 seventh-grade students of MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu. The questionnaire consisted of ten items written in English and orally translated into Indonesian to help students understand and respond accurately. Students were asked to answer the questions by choosing from four categories: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree,* and *Strongly Disagree*. Each student responded based on their own opinions and feelings. The questionnaire was distributed during regular class sessions, and students were given 15–20 minutes to complete it before it was collected by the researcher.

Meanwhile, for the interview, four students from the same class were selected as representatives. The interview contained five questions in English, which were also orally translated into Indonesian to ensure comprehension. These interviews were conducted to obtain more detailed information and to support the data gathered from the questionnaire.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire was distributed to 24 seventh-grade students, who completed it during their regular class sessions after being given clear instructions and explanations by the researcher. The purpose of the questionnaire was to measure students' motivation in learning English. The results are presented in the following table.

Tabel 1 Percentage (%) Results of Students' Motivation Questionnaire in Learning English

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I really like learning English	13.6%	86.4%	0%	0%
2	Learning English is important for me because it allows me to meet new people from different parts of the world.	22.7%	68.2%	9.1%	0%
3	Learning English is important to me because I want to learn as many foreign languages as possible	0%	36.4%	63.6%	0%
4	Learning English is important to me because educated people should be able to speak English	68.2%	27.3%	4.5%	0%
5	Learning English is important to me so that I can become a more knowledgeable person	0%	18.2%	77.3%	4.5%
6	Learning English is important to me because it can broaden my knowledge	40.9%	40.9%	18.2%	0%
7	Learning English is a necessity for me because I might need it in the future (for work or study)	36.4%	59.1%	4.5%	0%
8	Learning English is very important to me so that I can understand English movies, videos, TV, or radio programs	40.9%	40.9%	18.2%	0%
9	Learning English is important to me so that I can read English books, newspapers, or magazines.	18.2%	22.7%	13.6%	0%
10	Learning English is important to me because I want to spend time abroad.	40.9%	54.6%	0%	4.5%

Based on the results shown in Table 1, it can be observed that the majority of students demonstrated a high level of motivation in learning English. Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the positive statements related to the importance and usefulness of learning English. In particular, statements 1, 2, 4, 7, and 10 received the highest positive responses, indicating that students view English as an essential skill for communication, future opportunities, and personal development. Only a small percentage of students showed disagreement on certain items, such as statements 3 and 5, suggesting that not all students are equally motivated by general or knowledge-based reasons for learning English.

Overall, the findings indicate that students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu possess a strong motivation to learn English, driven mainly by practical and instrumental goals as well as personal interest.

Based on the data presented above, the researcher concludes that most students demonstrated a strong level of motivation. The percentages of Strongly Agree and Agree responses were considerably higher than those of Disagree and Strongly Disagree. From the overall questionnaire results, it can be inferred that the majority of students are motivated to learn English. This indicates that the seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu possess a high level of motivation in learning English.

Following the questionnaire, an interview session was conducted with four students who were selected as class representatives. The researcher asked several questions regarding their motivation to learn English. The interview results revealed that students are motivated because they perceive English as an important international language that enables them to communicate more broadly and is beneficial in various aspects of life.

When asked about the types of learning activities that make them feel comfortable in learning English, the students stated that they understand the subject more easily when the learning process involves engaging methods such as games. Regarding which language skills they master best, the students mentioned that they are more confident in speaking and reading.

The researcher also asked about the challenges they face during English learning. The respondents reported that they sometimes encounter difficulties when certain materials are not fully delivered by the teacher, making it hard for them to complete daily assignments. To overcome this, they usually search for learning materials independently or ask the teacher for clarification. Another challenge mentioned was the noisy classroom environment, which often makes it difficult for them to hear the teacher's explanations clearly. To address this issue, the students suggested that their classmates should remain quiet so that the learning atmosphere can become more conducive.

From the interview findings, it can be concluded that the respondents are motivated because they view English as an essential language that helps them communicate globally and supports their personal development. They also show greater interest in learning English when engaging and interactive teaching methods, such as games, are applied. Although they sometimes face difficulties, such as incomplete material delivery or classroom distractions, the students demonstrate problem-solving strategies by seeking additional resources and consulting with their teacher.

From the data presented above, it can be seen that most students expressed agreement with the statements provided in the questionnaire. This indicates that the majority of seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu possess a high level of motivation in learning English. Their positive responses show that they view English as both enjoyable and beneficial for developing their communication skills and expanding their knowledge.

Motivation plays a significant role in the success of language learning. According to Gardner (1985), motivation is the combination of effort, desire to achieve the goal of learning, and positive attitudes toward the learning process. The findings of this study are consistent with Gardner's view, as the students' responses revealed that they not only recognize the importance of English as an international language but also show enthusiasm and willingness to learn it.

Furthermore, the results align with Deci & Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The students' motivation appears to be both intrinsic—because they enjoy learning English and feel it enhances their competence—and extrinsic—because they believe English is useful for their future studies or careers. This dual motivation contributes to their persistence in learning despite the challenges they face.

For teachers, these findings highlight the importance of maintaining and enhancing student motivation through engaging and interactive teaching methods. The interview results showed that students enjoy learning through activities such as games, which suggests that creative and student-centered learning approaches can strengthen motivation and improve classroom engagement. Teachers should therefore integrate enjoyable methods with structured language practice to sustain students' enthusiasm and help them achieve better outcomes.

In conclusion, the discussion reinforces that motivation is a crucial factor influencing students' learning behavior and achievement in English. The students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu demonstrated strong motivation, which can serve as a foundation for teachers to design more effective teaching strategies that foster both enjoyment and success in language learning.

CONCLUSIONS

Motivation is a significant factor influencing the learning process. Without motivation, learning objectives are difficult to achieve because students' effort and desire play a crucial role in reaching their learning goals. When students are motivated, they become more enthusiastic in the learning process, which encourages them to better understand the English language. Based on the findings, the author concludes that the seventh-grade students at MTs Cendekia Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu possess motivation in learning English, as indicated by the results of both the questionnaire and the interview. From the questionnaire results, most students agreed with the given statements, suggesting that they have a strong desire to learn English. Furthermore, the interview findings also showed that students are motivated to learn English. However, teachers should be more creative in using media, strategies, or instructional materials to further enhance students' motivation.

This study provides several recommendations for future research. First, further studies are suggested to develop interactive learning modules or media based on the findings of this research to improve student motivation. Second, training programs for English teachers should focus on implementing motivational teaching strategies such as project-based learning, game-based learning, or

communicative approaches. Third, a longitudinal study is recommended to observe changes in students' motivation over time. Lastly, comparative studies between public and private madrasahs, both in Kotamobagu and across Indonesia, are important to explore differences in students' motivation to learn English.

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