

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTEREST AMONG STUDENTS AT MA NURUL ULUM MERTAK TOMBOK

¹Galih Purbaya Sakti, ²Muhamad Suhaili

¹ Student, FBMB, Mandalika University of Education, Indonesia

²Lecturer, FBMB, Mandalika University of Education, Indonesia

Corresponding Author Email: muhammadgalihpurbayasakti@gmail.com

ABSTRACTS	ARTICLE INFO
<p>This study aimed to analyze students' interest in learning English at MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok. The research used a quantitative descriptive method. The participants were students of MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok selected through purposive sampling. Tehnique data were collected using a questionnaire based on a Likert scale and were supported by classroom observation. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. The findings of this study show that the students' interest in learning English at MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok is at a moderate level. Several internal factors, such as motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence, influence students' interest in learning English. In addition, external factors, including teaching methods, learning environment, and teacher support, also contribute to shaping students' interest. These results indicate that improving instructional strategies and creating a supportive learning environment can help increase students' interest in learning English.</p>	<p>Article History: <i>Received: 3rd April 2026</i> <i>Revised: 21st April 2026</i> <i>Published: April 2026</i></p> <hr/> <p>Keywords: <i>Interest in Learning English, Internal Factors, External Factors, EFL students</i></p>

INTRODUCTION

English has a significant influence on students' academic and personal development. In the era of globalization, the ability to communicate in English plays a crucial role, not only for communication with foreign speakers but also as a means to access knowledge in various academic fields. As stated by the Indonesian Ministry of National Education (Depdiknas, 2004), the current curriculum aims to prepare students to engage globally by reflecting on their own experiences and understanding the experiences, ideas, and cultures of others. Therefore, The approavl of student center lerning among with its inovative teaching methods,stregeries tehniques,and ectivites are messivcly sounded.

However, students' success in learning English is closely related to their learning interest. Learning interest can be defined as a student's positive attitude, curiosity, and enthusiasm toward a subject. When students are genuinely interested in what they learn, they tend to be more motivated, attentive, and persistent in overcoming learning challenges. Conversely, a lack of interest may lead to boredom, low participation, and poor academic achievement. Interest plays a vital role as an internal factor that stimulates active engagement and long-term retention of knowledge.

In the context of English language learning at MA Nurul Ulum, some students still face difficulties in maintaining their motivation and enthusiasm in English class. Factors such as teaching methods, learning

Environment, and students' previous experiences with the language may influence their level of interest. Students who lack interest often find English difficult or irrelevant to

their daily lives, which negatively affects their performance. On the other hand, students who are interested in English tend to participate actively, show curiosity, and achieve better results.

Considering the importance of students' interest in supporting successful English learning, it is essential to analyze the factors of students' English learning interest. Understanding these aspects can help teachers design more engaging learning strategies and create a classroom atmosphere that stimulates curiosity and motivation.

Based on observations made by research during the English language learning process, it can be concluded that students' low proficiency in English learning materials is due to their low interest in learning English. This is evident in students' lack of enthusiasm in receiving lessons. On the other hand, many students do not pay attention and joke around during English lessons. The students' response to learning is also mediocre, with only a few students daring to ask questions and express their opinions. One learning strategy that can be implemented is to use innovative and interesting learning media.

Interest is an expression of an individual's attraction to an object or concept, as well as an intrinsic drive that motivates individuals to explore and engage in that activity. Interest is a driving force in the learning.

Process, providing motivation that encourages individuals to learn with full awareness and brings feelings of pleasure, joy, and excitement to the learning experience. It is part of intellectual maturity, in which the learning process and experience shape deeper understanding.

The modern theory of motivation places interest as part of a motivational system that influences attention, use of learning strategies, and student persistence in learning English (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). A review of the literature over the past decade shows that teaching interventions that focus on developing interest (e.g., contextual activities, language clubs, and interest-based projects) often succeed in increasing student participation and positive perceptions of English (Alizadeh, 2016 in review summary). However, there are also research results that show mixed results—some studies find a strong correlation between interest and achievement, while other studies report weak or insignificant relationships in certain contexts, thus requiring more specific contextual empirical research (Lena, 2022). In practice in large classrooms and resourceconstrained institutions, needs analysis shows that understanding student interest profiles is an important first step in designing effective teaching interventions (learning needs studies in Indonesia and other universities). Collectively, these findings confirm that motivation theory must be applied adaptively in the field and that research on student interest—including its measurement and causal factors—is beneficial for improving English teaching practices (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021).

Therefore, it is necessary accordingly in stimulating the students learning interest. One of the methods that might be used is the project- based learning (PjBL) model. The PjBL framework originates from the constructivist learning theory proposed by Jean Piaget. It states that learning is a process of learning by doing, or in other words, learning can be gained.

RESEARCH METHOD

Creswell (2014) which states that quantitative research is approach to testing objective theory by examining the relationship between variables. This variable, in turn, can be measured using instruments, so that total data can be analyzed using statistical procedures. According to Sugiyono, quantitative data is data in the form of numbers, or extrapolated quantitative data (assessment). So quantitative data is data that has a tendency to be analyzed by statistical means or techniques. Data can be in the form of numbers or scores and is usually obtained using a data collection tool whose answers are ranges of scores or weighted questions. The quantitative method is also called positivistic

43 44 because it is based on the philosophy of positivism. besides this method is also called the scientific method or scientific method because it fulfills scientific principles such as empirical, measurable, objective, systematic and rational. Based on this explanation, quantitative research is research in the form of numbers or scores which are measured using instruments and analyzed using statistical data. In this study, researchers used a quantitative. Descriptive method, using a questionnaire as the main data. descriptive research, which only describes a number of variables and does not perform hypothesis testing (as is done in explanatory research); means not intended to build and develop a vocabulary of theory. In processing and analyzing data, usually statistical processing is used descriptive (descriptive statistics). (Mulyadi, 2011:132). Data were analyzed through data acquisition based on research and based on the category of students who have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is more dominant in learning English in the speaking class. Data are presented statistically using percentages, frequency, arithmetic mean, and standards division.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first conclusion regarding the dynamics of EFL learning has been presented in line with the findings of various previous studies in the field of teaching English as a foreign language.

The use of English songs in pre-activities has been proven to improve classroom atmosphere, emotional readiness, and student interest in learning, supporting research findings that songs are an effective medium for increasing student engagement and motivation in language learning. Research by Bokiev (2018) confirms that music and songs can create a more relaxed learning environment, reduce anxiety, and encourage active student engagement in EFL/ESL classes. This is relevant to the findings observed in the classroom, where students appeared more enthusiastic and confident when the lesson began with a song. Furthermore, the finding that student focus and participation decreased when learning shifted to one-way material explanations is consistent with previous research.

A study by Palacios & Chapetón (2014) shows that student engagement in EFL classes is greatly influenced by opportunities for active and meaningful participation. When learning is dominated by teacher explanations and the use of less interactive media, students tend to be passive, hesitant to speak, and reluctant to use English. This condition is reflected in the low response of students during discussions and question and answer activities on recount text material. Findings related to the use of PowerPoint, which is perceived as monotonous by some students, are also supported by research that emphasises the importance of interaction and context in language learning. Arevalo (2010) states that English learning materials will be more meaningful if presented contextually and involve students in activities that require direct use of the language. In this context, the use of PowerPoint without a variety of interactive activities has the potential to reduce student concentration and motivation, as seen in students who chat or fall asleep during lessons. Furthermore, low student participation in class discussions and their tendency to use Indonesian is in line with research findings on affective and psychological barriers in EFL learning. Semerik found that fear of making mistakes, anxiety about speaking, and lack of confidence were the main factors that inhibited students from participating orally in English classes.

This reinforces the conclusion that teachers need to create a safe and supportive learning environment so that students dare to use English without fear. Conversely, student enthusiasm and engagement increased when teachers Implementing practice-based activities, such as creating example sentences, is in line with the communicative language teaching approach. Research by Vallejo & Pérez-Ortega (2024) shows that practice-based activities and direct language production can increase students' motivation, confidence, and understanding in EFL learning. Thus, the conclusions from the observed learning reinforce

previous research findings that effective English language learning requires a varied, interactive, and student-centred approach.

The conclusions regarding the challenges of learning English at MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok are in line with previous studies that highlight the complexity of teaching EFL in a secondary school context. Low student interest and confidence, as found in the interview results, have long been a concern in EFL studies. Research by Semerik shows that EFL students often experience language anxiety due to differences in structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation between English and their first language. This anxiety has an impact on students' reluctance to speak and participate actively in class, as was also seen in the context of MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok.

In terms of teaching methods, findings that lecture- and memorisation-dominated learning tends to reduce student engagement are also supported by previous research. A study by Palacios & Chapetón (2014) confirms that student engagement in EFL classes increases when teachers provide space for communicative practice and meaningful interaction. Varied methods such as role play, simple dialogues, and activities based on everyday life have been proven to increase student confidence and participation. This reinforces the conclusion that the selection of communicative and student-centred learning methods is crucial in improving the quality of English language learning. In addition to methodological factors, the influence of social and family environments on EFL learning has also been widely discussed in previous studies. Arevalo (2010) states that the lack of exposure to English outside the classroom makes it difficult for students to see the relevance of English to their daily lives. This condition is in line with the findings at MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok, where the use of regional languages and Indonesian is more dominant at home and in the community. The lack of parental support for English learning also weakens students' intrinsic motivation, making it difficult for teachers to build sustained interest in learning. The characteristics of the school as a madrasah that emphasises religious subjects can also be linked to research on curriculum priorities and perceptions of subject value. Several EFL studies in religious-based school contexts show that general subjects are often seen as less of a priority than the institution's core subjects. However, research by Vallejo & Pérez-Ortega (2024) emphasises that when teachers are able to relate English language learning to students' future needs and the global context, students' attitudes towards English become more positive.

This is relevant to the finding that a conducive school environment and supportive teacher attitudes can help reduce student anxiety. Overall, the conclusions of this study reinforce the findings of previous studies that the challenges of EFL teaching are multidimensional and cannot be separated from affective, pedagogical, and environmental factors. In line with Bokiev (2018), creative, enjoyable, and student-centred approaches can increase students' interest, confidence, and engagement in English language learning. Thus, the findings at MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok are not only contextually relevant but also strengthen the empirical evidence that effective EFL learning requires a holistic approach involving teachers, students, schools, and the social environment together.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion outlined in Chapter IV, it can be concluded that students' interest in learning English at MA Nurul Ulum Mertak Tombok is influenced by a combination of pedagogical, psychological, and environmental factors. The learning process demonstrates a dynamic interaction between teacher strategies, student responses, classroom activities, and the broader school and social context. These factors collectively shape students' attitudes, motivation, and level of engagement in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

REFERENCES

- Alizadeh, M. (2016). *The impact of motivation on English language learning*. International Journal of Research in English Education, (1), 11–15.
- Amelia, R., Fathurrahman, M, & Lestari, (2021). Improving students' English learning

- interest through English club activities at MA Nurul Huda. *Journal of English Education and Development*, 5(2), 88–97.
- Bai, B., Chao, G. C. N., & Wang, C. (2022). Self-efficacy, motivation, and self-regulated learning in English learning: A structural equation modeling approach. *System*, 107, 102783.
- Dores, A. R., Carvalho, I. P., & Barbosa, F. (2019). Interest and motivation in educational contexts: Conceptual and empirical perspectives. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 6(7), 155–168.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2021). *Teaching and researching motivation* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Amirullah, A., & Setiawan, R. (2020). Pengaruh kondisi fisik kelas terhadap konsentrasi belajar siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 15(1), 45-56
- Kurniawan, D. (2020). The role of teacher and peer encouragement in developing students' English confidence. *International Journal of Language Education*, 14(3), 201-215.
- Lestari, P. (2022). Hubungan guru-siswa sebagai faktor pendukung motivasi belajar bahasa Inggris. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra*, 10(1), 78-89.
- Fajarini, R., Nurcahyo, H., & Suryadi, M. (2020). Factors influencing students' learning interest in online English learning at SMK PGRI Sukoharjo. *Journal of Language and Education Innovation*, 3(1), 45–57.
- Faradila, N., & Aimah, S. (2018). The influence of motivation and learning environment on students' English achievement. *Vision: Journal for Language and Foreign Language Learning*, 7(1), 33–47.
- Fandiño, Y. J. (2019). Motivation and interest in EFL online learning: Digitale engagement in higher education. *HOW Journal*, 26(2), 83–102.
- Hasan, M., Ningsih, S., & Prasetyo, R. (2023). Students' motivation and learning interest in English language learning at SMK level. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Studies*, 9(1), 22–33.
- Herawati, D., Purnamasari, T., & Sutrisno, A. (2021). The influence of motivation and learning interest on English achievement at MA Al- Istiqomah Tangerang. *Journal of Education Research and Evaluation*, 5(3), 256–265.
- Imsa-Ard, P. (2020). Motivation and attitudes toward English language learning: A study of Thai students. *Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Studies*, 20(1), 219–233.
- Lena, V. (2022). Revisiting the correlation between students' interest and achievement in English learning: A contextual study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and Education*, 8(2), 90–102.
- Milah, S., Kurniawati, E., & Yusuf, R. (2024). Students learning interest and its effect on academic performance in English subjects, *Journal of Educational Psychology Studies*, 12(1), 55–68.
- Moleong, L. J. (2019). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif (Edisi revisi)*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Muhria, A. (2020). The effect of students' interest on English learning outcomes. *Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 5(4), 123–130.
- Prakoso, T., Suroto, M., & Widodo, A. (2021). The role of English in Indonesian education: Policy and implementation at senior high school level. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 16(2), 65–78.
- Rusmiati, R. (2017). The relationship between students' learning interest and learning outcomes. *Journal of Educational Development*, 4(3), 212–220.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suroto, M., Prakoso, T., & Widodo, A. (2021). English as a compulsory subject in Indonesian

- senior high schools: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Language and Education Policy*, 9(1), 44–56.
- Yue, X. (2022). Changes in Chinese students' motivation and interest in learning English while studying abroad in the UK. *Journal of International Education Research*, 18(3), 101–112.
- Arikunto, S. (2019). *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Riduwan. (2015). *Skala Pengukuran Variabel-variabel Penelitian*. Bandung: Alfabeta