

STUDENTS' INTEREST IN LEARNING ENGLISH DURING NEW NORMAL ERA OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

This research aims to find out how students' interest in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic at the State University of Makassar was conducted on August 2022. This research is a quantitative descriptive study. The method used in this research is a survey method. The collecting data using a questionnaire in the form of a Google form. The sample in this research was 40 students using a random sampling technique from the fifth semester of the English Department. The questionnaire distributed consisted of 25 statements with four indicators namely feeling happy, student involvement, interest and student attention. Based on the results of the research showed that the indicators of the highest indicator are the 3rd indicator, namely an interest in the good category and the lowest is the 1st indicator, namely feeling happy with the good category. Students' interest in learning of the interest indicator was included in the good category. Because of the students' interest in the fifth semester in learning English is still relatively high for learning even though the new normal period of learning at that time through the application that the lecturer used was WhatsApp or Zoom, so whatever happens, they have to keep going & studied with friends or looking for references on the internet to understand the English lessons given because it is also their obligation & can support the score of their learning outcomes later. It can be inferred from the research's findings that the interest of fifth-semester students majoring in English at the State University of Makassar in learning English during the new normal era for the Academic Year 2021/2022 is in a good category.

Keywords — *New Normal, COVID-19 pandemic, Interest, Learning English.*

INTRODUCTION

In a learning environment where teachers and students are exchanging knowledge, learning is a process of interaction between teachers and students as well as learning materials. According to Wardana (2017: 12-13), learning is a process of teaching and learning activities that occur between students and teachers. Students are the main actors while the teacher is a facilitator who assists students in achieving the desired learning objectives. However, making

students more active, cannot only require creativity from a teacher in designing and managing a lesson. The learning process will be going well if students have an interest in a particular learning process.

Everyone has an interest in something. According to Firmani (2009), A sensation or emotion called interest directs attention to a certain object, event, or activity. Without anybody else knowing, interest is a feeling of preference and attachment toward an item or activity. Interest is essentially accepting a connection between oneself and something external to oneself. Interest is not brought from birth, but acquired later, interest in something can affect learning outcomes and acceptance of new interests.

Therefore, students' interest in learning English is very influential on student learning outcomes. Especially in pandemic conditions like now, namely the new normal era caused by a dangerous virus, namely Covid-19 which requires students to study remotely online through several platforms such as the Zoom application, Google Meet, and WhatsApp.

The new normal is a change in behavior to continue to carry out normal activities by adding health protocols to prevent transmission of Covid-19. In simple terms, this new normal only continue the habits that have been carried out during the implementation of regional quarantine or Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). The People must maintain productivity in a pandemic with a new order called the new normal (Videlia, 2020). New normal or new order of life during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the enactment of the new normal, we are starting to carry out activities outside the home while still complying with the health protocols that have been regulated by the government, namely wearing masks when leaving the house, frequently washing hands with soap, and maintaining distance and avoiding crowds of people to prevent transmission of the coronavirus. Since the Covid-19 outbreak, to avoid transmission, most activities have been carried out online, such as meetings that have been held together in a room, now using the Zoom application, as well as teaching and learning activities. With the implementation of the new normal, like it or not, students will return to school, of course with health and safety protocols that guarantee them from transmitting the virus.

The pandemic of the coronavirus disease (Covid -19) that hit several countries in the world, has provided challenges for educational institutions. The learning process is carried out at home through online or distance learning to provide new experiences for students.

Some research has been conducted regarding students' interest in learning English. The

first research is from Mahyudi (2019) who researched the English Tadris Study Program of the Institute Collage for Islamic Studies, this research has been conducted using a mixed research design. Data collection techniques for this research are using questionnaires and interviews. The results show that students have a high interest in Learning English. The second research is from Saroh (2019) which used a qualitative descriptive design and data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The subjects of this study are tenth graders of SMA 7 Jambi city. The results of this research indicate that several factors influence students' interest in learning. These factors are divided into two types, the first is internal factors, namely health, talent, intelligence, attention, and students' opinions about learning English. Second, external factors are family, school, and community. And this research concludes that the majority of tenth-grade students in Jambi have a weak interest in English lessons. The third research is from Yulia (2021), who researched SMAN 1 Rengat Barat, this research was quantitative descriptive research. Data collection techniques for this research are using questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The results show that students are included in the good category in Learning English.

The difference between this research and previous research is this research selected Fifth Semester Students of the English Department at the university where previously no one had researched interest in learning at the University level in the new Normal era of COVID-19 as research participants. The researchers also choose Fifth Semester Students because they were in the middle of their study period. According to the researchers, this is quite neutral to research their interest in learning, because they are not the first semester, nor are they the final semester. And another difference of the new normal era of Covid-19 influences student interest in learning English. Therefore, the researchers take the research title "Students' Interest in Learning English During the New Normal Era of Covid-19 Pandemic" which aims to find out students' interest in learning English at the time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interest is a feeling of liking and a sense of attachment to something or something activity, without anyone telling (Yulia, 2021). Interest is just accepting that there is a connection between you and something outside of yourself. The student is more interested as the relationship gets stronger or closer. A claim that pupils like one thing over another can be used to convey an interesting idea. Since students who are interested in an activity are more likely

to pay attention, it might occur through involvement in that activity. Interest that was later acquired rather than brought with birth. Interest in something learned influence subsequent learning and affect the acceptance of interests new. Firmani (2009) a feeling or emotion that encourages attention to focus on an item, an event, or a process is described as interest.

English learning is encouraged and enhances students' English learning. Learning is a process of teaching and learning activities that occur between students with teachers. In the learning process, there is an intense interaction between students and teachers. Students are the main actors (subjects) of learning while teachers are facilitators who assist students in achieving the desired learning objectives.

A change in behavior to continue engaging in routine activities while including health precautions to stop the spread of Covid-19 is known as the "new normal era". The People must maintain productivity in a pandemic with the "new normal" as its new order (Videlia, 2020). New normal or new order of life during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Circular outlined how online/distance learning was used to conduct the learning process at home. According to each student's unique circumstances, including the lack of access to learning resources at home, learning from home and assigned chores may differ.

METHODS

In this study, the researchers used descriptive quantitative research. To collect this quantitative data, the research used questionnaire data. The population is students in the fifth semester of the English Education study program of the State University of Makassar and the sample was chosen by random sampling technique. According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009: 133), at least 10% of the population is needed for descriptive method research, 20% for a small population, and 40 respondents are needed for correlation method research. So, the researchers took 40 students as the sample of the research.

The items of the questionnaire are supposed to measure one of four different aspects of interest: feeling happy, student involvement, interest, and student attention. The questionnaire in this research was adopted from Study Interest Questionnaire (SIQ) by Schiefele. The SIQ uses 25 items referring to different feelings happy, student involvement, interest, and student attention to measuring interest. The instruments used to measure interest is a questionnaire using a scale Likert which consists of 4 alternative answers to the questionnaire, namely: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The value for each statement was multiplied by the value of the degree of agreement (Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1).

The first step for the analysis of the data was scoring. The second step where the researchers accounted for the score of the total frequency was divided by the total questions. After each students' score was calculated, then it was categorized into the range score to get the description of interest in each student. The next step is counting the percentage of each item of the questionnaire based on the students' answers to the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this part, the researchers presented the finding from the questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to find out the level of students' interest. In the first part, it presents the result obtained from a survey that aims to find out the students' interest in learning English during the new normal era. The result of the survey was taken from the questionnaire which was distributed via the Google form link (<https://forms.gle/yt59KVAJb7PbyjMV9>) which contained four indicators and consisted of 25 statements to 40 respondents from the fifth semester of the English Education Study Program at the State University of Makassar and it was taken on 18th to 25th August 2022.

In conducting the survey, a questionnaire consisting of 25 statements about students' interests was distributed to 40 students. The responses to the questionnaire were calculated through statistical computation. Each response of the statements in the questionnaire was given a scale value based on Likert-scale values were "Strongly Agree", which value was 4, "Agree", which value was 3, "Disagree", which value was 2, and "Strongly Disagree", which value was 1. And every negative statement was counted in reverse.

Respondents should choose one of four alternative options for each item, they are: strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. In the table, the researchers used frequency (F) as some students' frequency in choosing one option. Percentage (%) is the result of data collected from the students' response. To find out the percentage, the researchers used the percentage formula. Frequency is divided by the total number of students and then multiplied by 100%. The formula for positive statements is $X = ((f SAx4) + (f Ax3) + (f Dx2) + (f SDx1))$, and formula for negative statement is $X = ((f SAx1) + (f Ax2) + (f Dx3) + (f SDx4))$. Thus, the maximum score of the questionnaire is $40 \times 4 = 160$. The percentage of each statement was calculated by using the formula $P = x \ 100\%$.

Table 1. The Classification of Students' Interest in Learning English during the New Normal Era during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Classification	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	76-100	22	55 %
High	51-75	18	45 %
Low	26-50	0	-
Very low	0-25	0	-
Total		40 Students	100%

Table 1 shows that students' interest in learning English at the State University of Makassar during the new normal of the Covid-19 pandemic is a very high category with a percentage of 55%, while the other obtained percentage of 45% with a high category and so that obtained the average value of 40 students was 75.83%, it belongs to the very high category.

Furthermore, the researchers classified the result of the data based on each aspect of individual interest, that were feeling happy, Student involvement, interest, and Student attention. The Recapitulation of all indicators of students' interest can see in the table below:

Table 2. Recapitulation of all indicators of students' interest in learning

Indicator	Percentage (%)	Category
Feeling Happy	63,75	Good
Student involvement	75,23	Good
Interest	79,21	Good
Student attention	77,60	Good
Mean	73,95	Good

Table 2 shows that students' interest in learning English at the State University of Makassar during the new normal of the Covid-19 pandemic is 73.95%, in the Good category. If observed more clearly, the indicator of interest in learning which occupies the highest score is the indicator of interest, which is 79.21%, while the lowest is the indicator of feeling happy, which is 63.75%, still in a good category. The indicator of student attention is in the good category as well with a percentage of 77.60%. The indicator of student involvement has a percentage of 75.23% in a good category. For more clarity, it can be seen in Diagram 1 below:

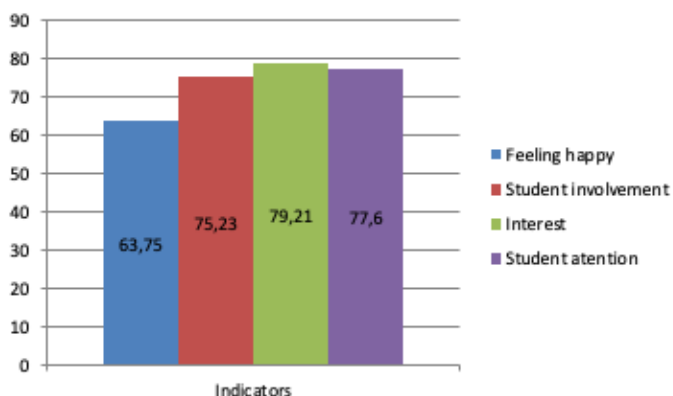


Diagram 1. Graph of the percentage of all indicators of student interest in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic

1. Students' Interest in Learning English of the Feeling Happy Indicator

The following are the student's learning interests during the new normal era of the COVID-19 pandemic in English subjects at the State University of Makassar, the first indicator, namely feeling happy, can be seen below:

Table 3. Recapitulation of feeling happy indicators of students' interest in learning English during the new normal era during the COVID-19 pandemic

The Feeling Happy Indicator	Percentage	Category
1). Online learning makes me more enthusiastic to study	70%	Good
2). In this new normal condition makes me spend time lying down	61,87 %	Pretty Good
3). I don't like online learning of English subjects only through the Zoom application	59,37 %	Pretty Good
Mean	63,75 %	Good

Table 3 shows that in the first indicator, there are 3 statements. The highest statement is found in the first statement item with a percentage of 70% category (good) and the lowest statement is in the 3rd item with a percentage of 59.37% category (Pretty good). The overall average indicator of feeling happy in students' interest in learning is 63.75% category (good). More details can be seen in Diagram 2 below:

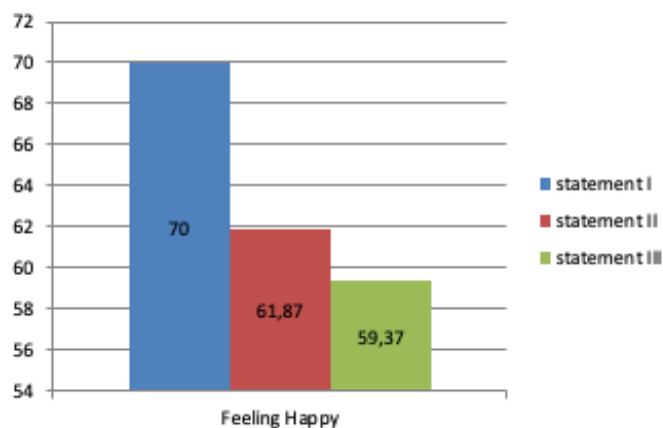


Diagram 2. Graph of the percentage of feeling happy indicators in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic

2. Students' Interest in Learning English the student involvement Indicator

The following was the student's interest in learning English during the new normal era of the second indicator, namely Student involvement, which can be seen in Table 4 The details of a recapitulation of student involvement indicators can be seen below:

Table 4. Recapitulation of Student involvement of indicators involvement in majors' students' English at the State University of Makassar

No.	Student involvement	Percentage	Category
4.	If I have free time, I always take the time to study	75 %	Good
5.	I always collect English assignments on time even though in the middle of the New Normal of the Covid-19 pandemic	86,25 %	Very Good
6.	I always take note of the material given by the teacher through the group WhatsApp	78,12 %	Good
7.	When the teacher gives the material of English through Youtube video, I also look for other references with the same material	80 %	Good
8.	When the teacher gives questions via Whatsapp group, I never answered	76,87 %	Good
9.	When learning online ongoing, I choose to don't take English lessons	80,62 %	Good
10.	I'm having trouble understanding of materials provided by the English Lecturer	59,37 %	Pretty Good
11.	I don't believe in myself to explain the material to friends via WhatsApp group	65,62 %	Good
	Mean	75.23	Good

Table 4 shows that there were 8 statements of the students' interest in involvement indicator. In the statement, the highest points were found in the 5th statement item with a

percentage of 86.25% with the category very good and the lowest statement is in the 10th statement item with a percentage of 59.37% pretty good category. Then, other statements were in a good category. So, the average total indicator of students' interest in student indicators is 75.23%, a good category. More details can be seen in Diagram 3 below:

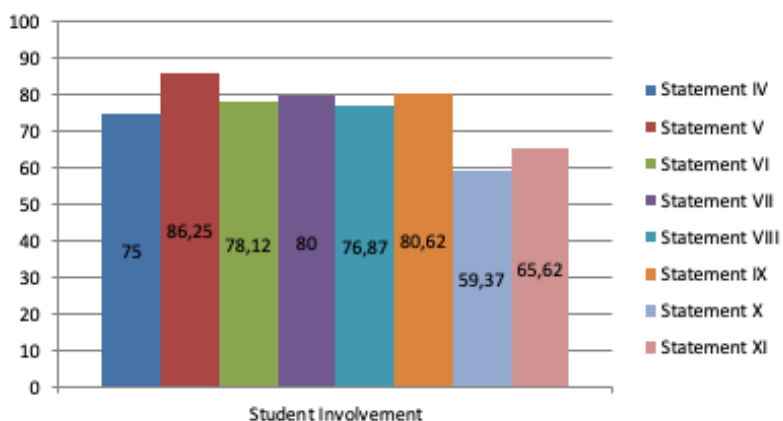


Diagram 3. Graph of the percentage of Student Involvement indicators in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic

3. Students' Interest in Learning English the interest Indicator

The following is the student's interest in learning English during the new normal era of the third indicator, namely interest, which can be seen in Table 5 the details of a recapitulation of student involvement indicators can be seen below:

Table 5. Recapitulation of Interest Indicators in Majors' Students' English at State University of Makassar

No.	Interest	Percentage	Category
12.	When having difficulty in understand English material, I will ask friends or English via chat	84,37 %	Very Good
13.	When having trouble doing the English task, I will search for answers from books or the internet	90 %	Very good
14.	I read some books or information from the internet to increase my knowledge	85,62	Very good
15.	I feel interested if the lecturer provides English material through youtube videos in the WhatsApp group	75,62	Good
16.	If there is an English exam, I'm more like to cheat and have friends instead of doing it yourself	81,87	Good
17.	English assignments given by Lecturers are always difficult to understand so I am bored and desperate to do it	75 %	Good
18.	I do my English assignment by cheating on my friends and have	83,12 %	Very good

19.	I am not enthusiastic about taking English lessons online because there is no practice like face-to-face campus	58,12	Pretty Good
Mean		79.21	Good

Table 5 shows that the interest indicator contains 8 statements. The highest statement item is in the 13th statement item with a percentage of 90% in the Very Good category and the lowest statement is in the 19th statement item with a percentage of 58.12% in the Good category. The average overall statement on the indicators of student interest in learning is 79.21% in the Good category. More details can be seen in the following diagram 4 below:

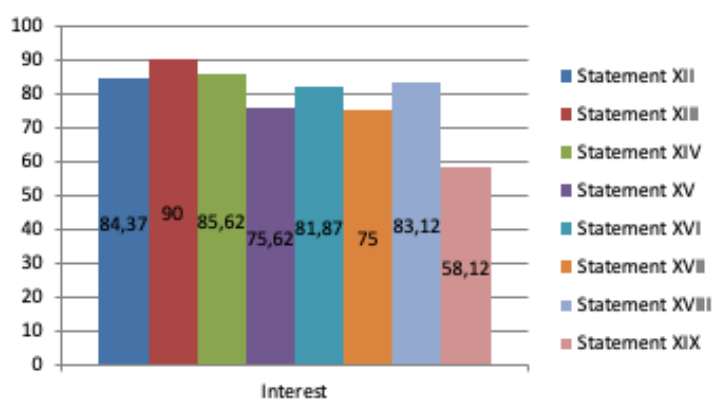


Diagram 4. Graph of the percentage of Student Involvement indicators in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic

4. Students' Interest in Learning English of the student attention Indicator

The following is the student's interest in learning English during the new normal era of the fourth indicator, namely student attention, which can be seen in Table 6 The details of a recapitulation of student attention indicators can be seen below:

Table 6. Recapitulation of student attention indicators in majors' students' English at State University of Makassar

No.	Student Attention	Percentage	Category
20.	I always do the English assignments given by the teacher earnestly though don't learn face to face	81,25 %	Good
21.	I always ask when there is English material that I don't understand via WhatsApp group	76,87 %	Good
22.	When the teacher gives English material through the WhatsApp group, I always pay attention seriously	80,62 %	Good
23.	I always study English before online learning starts	70,75 %	Good
24.	I just shut up when I do not understand English material	68,75 %	Good

25.	I'm always late submitting English assignments online	87,5 %	Very Good
	Mean	77,60 %	Good

Table 6 shows that the Attention indicator contains 6 statements. The highest statement item is in the 25th statement item with a percentage of 87.5% in the very good category and the lowest statement is in the 24th statement item with a percentage of 68.75% in the good category. The other statements also belong to the good category. The average overall indicator of students' attention to students' interest in learning English during the new normal era was 77.60% in the Good category. More details can be seen in the following diagram 5 below:

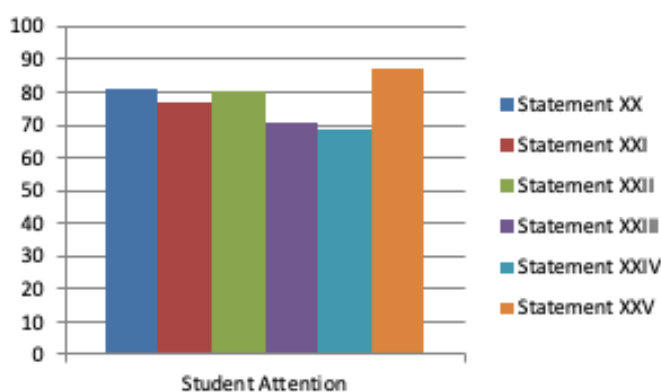


Diagram 5. Graph of the percentage of Student Interest indicators in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of data processing and data analysis from research that has been described, it can be concluded that students' interest in learning English during the new normal era of the covid 19 pandemic in semester 5 of the English department at the State University of Makassar in the 2021/2022 academic year was in a good category with mean percentage 79,21. The highest indicator is the 3rd indicator, namely the interest category with a percentage of 78.77% and the lowest is the 1st indicator, namely feeling happy with a percentage of 63.75% good category.

It can be concluded that students' interest in learning English during the new normal era of the Covid-19 pandemic was still very high with good category. Because of the students' interest in the fifth semester in learning English is still relatively high for learning even though in the new normal era of the covid-19 pandemic where learning that time through the application that the lecturer used was WhatsApp or Zoom, so whatever happens, they have to

keep going & study with friends or looking for references to understand the English lessons given because it was also their majors which are compulsory subject & could support the score of their learning outcomes later to finish their study. Most of them studied online learning still enthusiastic & collected assignments on time that had been given by the lecturer.

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