

# THE STUDENTS' INTEREST IN LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH TEACHERS' RAPPORT-BUILDING STRATEGIES

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## Abstract

*This study aims to determine students' interest in learning English. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. The data from this study were collected from the results of observation sheets and interviews. The subjects of this study were two English teachers and the interviews were given to 10 second-grade students of MAN 1 Makassar City selected using purposive sampling with the help of the teachers. The results of this study found that most of the students had an interest in learning English, this was evidenced by their positive responses. In conclusion, through the observation checklist, English teachers at MAN 1 Makassar City implemented the teacher relationship-building strategy for students' interests and the results of observations for students also found that most students were interested in learning English when the teacher implemented the strategy and most of the students interviewed also had a positive response about their interest in learning English. Therefore, the strategy of building teacher relationships for the benefit of students is very important and useful in the teaching-learning process, especially in English.*

**Keywords** — Students, Interest, Rapport Building Strategies.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the important things for humans. Therefore, education is necessary for filling job vacancies. It is possible to improve the quality of human resources through education. With a good education, the nation will be able to produce a quality generation that will significantly impact the nation's progress (Ainia, 2020). According to Bruneu (2012), people must have a good education not just for academics, but also for the positive development of social relations in the teaching-learning. Therefore, Barmaki (2014) states that “building good communication between teachers and students is a step toward successful teaching and learning.” So, through education, teachers and students can maintain the relationship to having positive interactions in the classroom and learning skills that change their personal lives as

individuals and social beings.

The government pays enough attention to education in Indonesia, but many people still do not realize the importance of education. Today, people must realize that education is extremely important to support their welfare (Nasrah & Elihami, 2021). In that regard, we also need to know that language has an important position in education.

According to Hutajulu & Herman (2019), language is a necessary part of our daily activities. A language is a tool used to communicate between individuals and communities, allowing them to express their opinions, thoughts, and feelings. Due to the significance of language in education, a specific study on language has been conducted. Language is also meaning of expressing self-identity. Without language, humans cannot communicate each other. As a result, human cannot be separated from language, because language serves as a means of communication between humans. Besides the Indonesian language as our mother tongue, we also need to learn foreign languages to easily communicate with people from other countries. One of the most important foreign languages is English (Gunantar, 2016).

Since English is used often in daily communications, it has become necessary for people to know it, at least be able to greetings like "good morning," "good afternoon," "good evening," and "good night." English is a language that is used to communicate as a foreign language and some countries use English as a second language. (Siregar, 2020). In addition, Silalahi (2019) argues that "English also as a global communication tool, so English becomes one of the languages that must be mastered". English is not only used as a communication in the economic field, but it has been used in various other fields of work such as politics, technology, and even education, thus demanding that the workforce be able to have English skills.

In learning English, some factors can affect students. Besides family, environment, and talents, interests also are crucial factors in the success of student learning. Interest plays a very important role in learning because it does not work if people are not interested in learning something and if people have interest in subject, good results can be expected, students will participate more actively in the learning process, pay attention, and feel enjoy doing something and getting satisfaction from that. It can be seen if a teacher wants to succeed in teaching, they should be able to provide stimulus to the students so that the students are interested in participating in learning process.

Nevertheless, students' English knowledge is still very low. This is influenced by several factors in learning, one of that is low interest in learning English. Thus, interest is an important

factor in the success of student learning and interests can support and influence the learning process in schools, especially in learning English. Indeed, we all know that learning is a process of interaction between students and teachers in a classroom. Based on the problem statement above, the researcher formulates the research question as follows: How are the students' interests in learning English through teachers' rapport building strategies?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. The Nature of Interest

Interest is an important part for students to achieve their learning goals, and before students learn about the interest itself, the interest contains a brief historical description of the interest. For centuries, the term "interest" has been considered a generally understood term that needs no definition. Teacher Comenius discussed the potential for interest to motivate learning in the 17th century. He suggested that parents assist their children in whatever piqued their interest.

In addition, Comenius theorized that the experience of early interest created the dynamics that carried students to the university level and supported the process of lifelong learning. To confirm Comenius' observations about interest, teachers and psychologists have continued to study the subject over the following decades. German philosopher and early psychology pioneer, Herbart recognized the connection between interest and learning as far back as the 19th century. Schiele (1991: 300) summarized Herbart's passionate view that "true and complete recognition of an object is possible, which leads to meaningful learning, promotes long-term retention of knowledge and encourages further learning". Interest is one of the essential things to make students focus on their goals and achievement in learning. Mangal (2007) stated that the central force that drives the entire machinery of the teaching-learning process is interest. It means that when a student is interested, he or she will pay more attention and focus when the teacher provides some material. On the other hand, interest is essential for students to do something that interests them, particularly when it comes to learning. Based on the explanation above, the writer can conclude that interest is the desire and achievement that drives people to do anything and act in order to achieve a goal. In other words, interest is closely related to attention, which means that if students want to succeed in the learning process, they must be interested.

## 2. The Categories of Interest

According to Schraw and Lehman (2001), there is five core themes model in that categorization that accepted until day such as:

### a. Latent Interest

Latent interest arises when someone strengthens their emotional attitude towards the learning task they are doing and someone values that knowledge-related beliefs can be an important part of their goals in the long-term learning process.

### b. Actualized Interest

Actualized interest, as opposed to latent interest, involves specific substance that is more accurate and clearly defined, and thus refers to the degree of individual participation in a specific learning task.

### c. Text-based Interest

Inductivity, intensity, and consistency characteristic text-based interest. It also refers to an individual's enthusiasm for a text that he or she intends to learn.

### d. Task-based Interest

The interest elicited by altered teaching materials that an individual is exposed to is known as task-based interest. Individual interest in learning, for example, may be influenced by changing educational objectives/texts that vary depending on the task assigned.

### e. Knowledge-based Interest

Knowledge-based interest is an interest that arises as the influence of knowledge and experience on current individual learning tasks.

## 3. The Indicators of Student's Interest

According to Slameto (2003), there some indicators of students' interest are:

### a. Attention

The soul's concentration or activity to perceive understanding is represented by attention. Students who pay close attention to the lesson are more likely to be interested in studying. On the other hand, attention generates interest. When a person is paying attention, learning is most efficient. Poor attention can be an indication of a behavioural disorder in the learning process of children. Someone who is paying attention to something indicates that he or she is interested in it.

Student's attention can be described as follow:

- 1) Inquiring about the material with the teacher
- 2) Looking for further information on the subject or the lesson
- 3) Learning requires concentration
- 4) Focus while the teacher explains the material in classroom

b. The Willingness

Willingness is a motivational desire geared toward the goal of a life controlled by thought. For example, a person who wants to be a teacher is willing to learn how to be a good teacher.

Student's willingness can be described as follows:

- 1) Despite the fact that the teacher did not attend school, students are still learning.
- 2) Excited to learn the lesson
- 3) Read the English book diligently

c. Needs

Needs are situations in which something is essential or necessary some action. Needs may also refer to a situation in which something is required or desired. Interest in children's needs motivates them to try their best. For example, the student needs knowledge from the English book and will try to learn the language more thoroughly. There are several types of need. One goal is to do something that cannot be divorced from learning and teaching.

Furthermore, individuals have different goals in mind. Some people are intrinsically extremely driven to win competitions or work alone. Needs are a condition in a student's personality that pushes him to certain actions in order to reach a goal and become a motivating element in learning.

For example:

- 1) Learn English to succeed in a career
- 2) The ability to take notes during the learning process

d. Feelings Happy or Joyful Feelings

The joy felt after having a nice time or doing a good act of obtaining something is referred to as feeling happy. Students who like something, especially learning, will do well.

Students feeling happy can be described as follows:

- 1) Enjoy doing the task or exercise given by the teacher at school.
- 2) Always enthusiastic to learn material in classroom with friends.
- 3) Take a note from the material.

e. Teaching Materials and teachers' good attitudes

The learning process is created by the teacher. It indicates that the instructor is crucial in establishing an environment in the classroom that is fascinating enough that becomes interesting to make the student interested to learn. A teacher should use the variation method in teaching because the method used by a teacher can influence students' interest in learning. If the teacher does not apply the variety methods, students may get bored, lazy, and uninterested to learning.

Teacher materials can be described as follows:

- 1) The attention of teachers motivates student to learn English.
- 2) Students believe that learning English is enjoyable.
- 3) Teachers' explanations make students understand the lesson.

## METHODS

To achieve the objectives of the research mentioned in the previous section, this research used descriptive qualitative design because it aimed to understand how students' interests in learning English through teachers' rapport building strategies. This research involved explores, investigates and provides deeper insights into real-world issues. Descriptive qualitative research gathered participants' experiences, perceptions, and behavior.

Qualitative research was design to understand how social phenomena work in a specific context (Lyons & Doueck, 2010). This research design was appropriate when research questions aim at understanding relationships in the context of a social situation (Ebrahim, 1978). We can conclude that descriptive qualitative design was a research that produced descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior.

The data resource in this research gathered from second year students in MAN 1 Kota Makassar who given further information about the students' interests in learning English.

This research used interview guides as the instrument. The type of interview used is semi-structural interview. First, the researcher introduce herself and tell her intent. Secondly, the

researcher asked permission from the students to take the time to be interviewed. Next, the researcher provided interview guides and explanations. The interview guide consists of a list of questions. After that, the researcher selected students to interviewed to get a strong argument about their interests towards teachers' rapport building in learning English. The researcher used audio recorder to record participants' voice in answering the questions and also write additional information using notebook and pen as well.

Technique of data analysis did by processing results of interview transcripts and observation notes. The data was analysed using interactive model of analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994). This model was classified into three types: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

## RESULTS

The researcher found that students A have interests in learning English, it can be seen from the indicator of students' interest they are:

### a. Attention

After the researcher observed the teacher A in the classroom, she found that there are some students' interest indicators that occurs in learning English, they are: asking the teacher about the material, looking for other sources about the material or the lesson, concentration while learning, and focus while the teacher explains the material.

Meanwhile, when teacher explained the material, it can be seen that student B feel interest when learning English, they asking the teacher about the material, looking for other sources about the material, concentration while learning, and focus while the teacher explains the material.

### b. The Willingness

Students A when learning English try to do the task even difficult, still learning although the teacher did not go to school, enthusiastic to follow the lesson, and diligent to read the English book. Student B try to do the task even difficult, still learning although the teacher did not go to school, enthusiastic to follow the lesson, diligent to read the English book.

### c. Need

Another point of the indicator of students' interest is need. Student A and student B felt interest by prove it the awareness to make notes while the learning process.

### d. Feelings happy or Joyful Feelings

Based on the observation that the researcher has done, she found that students A and students B felt enjoy doing the task or exercise given by the teacher at school.

e. Teaching Materials and Teachers' Good Attitudes

Based on the result of video recording, the researcher found that students' interest from teachers' attention can makes the students motivated in learning English and teachers' explanations make students understand the lesson.

Apart from used observation checklist, the researcher also conducted interview with students to find out more about students' interest in learning English through the teachers' rapport building strategies. Below are the results of the researcher's interview with the students:

1. Verbal Communication

a. Questions

Based on the result of interview below, there are 5 of 10 the same statements and represented by two statements that students agree when English teacher gave question about the material. The students said that if they are given question from their teacher, they could more understand about the material after that, they would increase their interest in learning and would make the class more active. The students' perspective stated that is a good thing to do for students when learning.

Extract 1

*Saya sukaji kak karena kalau dikasiki pertanyaan begitu, nantinya bisa lebih paham dengan materi tersebut (I like it, because if the teacher give me questions like that, I can understand more about the material). (S1, 10/01/2023, IQ1)*

b. Directions/ Instruction

There are 7 of 10 students and represented by two statements in question number 2 have positive responses about their interest in learning English when the teacher applied one of the rapps building strategies, namely direction/instruction. They said that through the direction/instruction that has been given to them, it makes them get attention from the teacher, would feel compelled to study, try to focus when the teacher explains the lesson, and becomes an encouragement to learn.

Extract 2

*Sama dengan jawaban saya sebelumnya kak, karena memang tugas seorang siswa adalah mematuhi perintah dari gurunya jadi saya setuju jika ada guru seperti itu, apalagi hal ini menjadi suatu dorongan juga untuk belajar (same as my previous answer, because it is a*



*student's job to obey the orders of the teacher so I agree if there is a teacher like that, moreover it becomes an encouragement to learn).* (S10, 10/01/2023, IQ2).

In question number 3, there are 5 of 10 students have positive responses about their interest in learning English and represented by two statements. When teacher gave the students clear directions to discuss the material with friends and then present it, the students said that strategies can made them confident to speaking in front of their friends, increase self-confidence, and also made students more active during learning process.

Extract 1

*Saya setuju kak karena ini kan arahan dan perintah maka sebagai seorang siswa saya harus melakukan arahan tersebut, apalagi hal ini bisa buatki percaya diri ngomong depan teman-teman (I agree, because these are directions and orders, as a student, I have to carry out these directions, moreover, it can make me confident speaking in front of my friends).* (S4, 10/01/2023, IQ3).

c. Suggestion

Based on the result of interview, in question number 4, there are 9 of 10 students and represented by two students have good responses about their teachers' rapport building strategies, when the teachers inform and help their students to realize the mistakes, most students agree and said that it could change and be more active in learning, it would help them to better than before.

Extract 1

*Nah, ini adalah contoh guru yang baik karena dia tidak hanya menilai kesalahan kita tapi membantu kita menemukan letak kesalahan kita dimana sehingga kedepannya kita tidak jatuh pada lubang yang sama (this is an example of a good teacher because he was not only judged our mistakes but helps us find where our mistakes are so that in the future we don't fall into the same hole).* (S5, 10/01/2023, IQ4)

In question number 7, also most students agree with that teachers' rapport building strategies when learning English. It can be inferred that 9 of 10 students and represented by 4 students would focus and motivated more on studying, and for them, criticism is important for self-awareness.

Extract 4

*Saya merasa ada semangat yang muncul jika guru mengkritik saya karena ada pemicu untuk lebih maju dan cara mengkritiknya tidak melebihi batas (I feel that there is enthusiasm that arises when the teacher criticizes me because there is a trigger to be more advanced and the way to criticize is not beyond the limit).* (S3, 10/01/2023, IQ7)

d. Clarification

In question number 5 about clarifications, it was found that 4 of 10 students and represented by 2 students have positive responses, it means those who disagree still dominate. 4 of 10 students stated that we can introspect ourselves to find out more knowledge and that way we can be responsible for what we just said.

Extract 1

*Saya menganggap hal ini sebagai hal positif, kalau ada guru seperti itu, supaya kita tahu bahwa oh ini jawaban yang benar dan alasannya apa sehingga dengan begitu kita bisa introspeksi diri kita untuk lebih mencari tahu lagi (I consider it as a positive thing, if there is a teacher like that, so that we know that oh this is the right answer and what the reason is so that then we can introspect ourselves to find out more).* (S1, 10/01/2023, IQ5)

e. Encouragement

Based on the result of interview below, it was found that there are 9 of 10 students and represented by 3 students agree with that teachers' rapport building strategies. In question number 6 about encouragement (encourage students with hope and confidence to tell what is their opinion about the lesson without fear of being wrong), most students feel they like that verbal communication, they stated that it would be change themselves to be braver to do something and also have interest in learning English. In addition, also gives students hope, so they don't feel afraid to try, even if it's wrong.

Extract 1

*Saya merasa dekat dengan guru jika di melakukan hal ini karena dia memberikan kita harapan agar tidak merasa takut untuk mencoba, meskipun itu salah yah gapapa (I feel close to the teacher when he does that because he gives us hope so we don't feel afraid to try, even if it's wrong, that's okay).* (S5, 10/01/2023, IQ6)

In question number 8, there are 7 of 10 students and represented by 2 students have interests when students asked to answer the questions from the teacher. This is a way to know students' understanding about the material, so the students would increase their interest and motivation to learn English.

Extract 4

*Ketika guru bertanya kepada saya, awalnya saya memang kaget dan merasa tidak siap tapi dengan mencoba untuk menjawabnya itu membuat saya merasa bahwa saya harus lebih banyak membaca dan memperhatikan guru ketika menjelaskan (When the teacher asked me, at first, I was surprised and felt unprepared but by trying to answer it, made me feel that I had to read more and pay attention to the teacher when explain the material).* (S7, 10/01/2023, IQ8)

f. Feedback

In question number 9, it was found that all of students, 10 of 10 students and represented by 2 students agree with that strategies which is about feedback that has been given from English teacher to students. The students gave comment of some kinds, like very good, good, not bad and so on, and they said that it means the teacher appreciates students' answer, make them excited to learn the next material and more interested and enthusiasm to learn English.

Extract 2

*Jika guru seperti itu, yah tentunya saya merasa bangga kak karena jawaban saya diapresiasi oleh guru dan membuat saya bersemangat mempelajari materi selanjutnya (of course I feel happy because my answer is appreciated by the teacher and makes me excited to learn the next material).* (S5, 10/01/2023, IQ9)

2. Non-Verbal Communication

a. Hand Gestures

In question number 10, there are 9 of 10 students and represented by 3 students agree and have interest when teacher applied that teachers' rapport building strategies when teaching and learning process in classroom, especially in second year at MAN 1 Kota Makassar. They feel happy and they would more excited to learn, more interested and make them want to study hard.

Extract 1

*Wahh saya sangat suka kak, dan hal itu membuat saya berkeinginan untuk belajar lebih giat lagi dan menjawab pertanyaan dari guru (Wahhh, I really like, and that makes me want to study harder and answer questions from the teacher).* (S4, 10/01/2023, IQ10)

In question number 11, it was found that 7 of 10 students and represented by 2 students have positive responses about non-verbal communication as one of the teachers' rapport building strategies. They agree when teacher moves her/his hands while explain the material, the students would more active when explaining the material and also seems to imagine what is being explained like giving an illustration, and it's easier to remember.

Extract 3

*Lebih baik jika seperti ini kak karena jika guru menggerakkan tangannya saat menjelaskan materi saya merasa lebih mengerti dan lebih mudah mengingat materi tersebut (It's better if it's like this because if the teacher moves his hand when explaining the material, I feel that I understand better and it's easier to remember the material).* (S3,10/01/2023, IQ11)

b. Head Movement

Based on the extracts above, in question number 12, it was found that 6 of 10 students and represented by 2 statements or most students have interest when their English teacher nodding heads to show their agreement to students' answer. They said that if the teacher did that strategy, they would happy and feel motivated because they feel more appreciated about their answer.

Extract 2

*Berarti dia setuju dengan apa yang saya baca kak kalau begitu dan saya suka kalau ada guru begitu (It means he agrees with what I read sis then and I like it when there is a teacher like that).* (S10, 10/01/2023, IQ12)

c. Affect Displays

In question number 13, it was found that 10 of 10 students or we can say that all of students like and represented by 2 students that have positive responses when their teacher give smile to them when their answers are good. It means there is nothing students don't like it and they would feel happy, feel close to the teacher, and also theirs level of interest in learning English would increasing.

Extract 1

*Saya merasa sangat suka dan bangga, tingkat minat saya untuk belajar bahasa Inggris semakin meningkat (I feel very happy, my level of interest in learning English is increasing).* (S6, 10/01/2023, IQ13)

## DISCUSSIONS

To get deep information about students' interests, the researcher conducted two instruments, they are observation checklist and interview.

According to Slameto (2003), there some indicators of students' interest are:

1. Attention

a. Asking the teacher about the material

Students A have interests in learning English through teachers' rapport building strategies, whether verbal communication and non-verbal communication.

Based on the observation checklist, it can be seen that students A ask to their teacher about the material by saying "this is my answer mam, is it correct?", or "mam, are the sentences made up by ourselves or just copied from book?

As well as students B, they also ask the teacher about the material by saying, "what is the translation of this words, sir", or "is it okay if I am wrote the wrong answer sir?".

From the result above, the students pay attention when their English teacher explain the material in the classroom.

b. Looking for other sources about the material or the lesson

Besides, the researcher can saw that students A and B tried to search other sources apart from textbook, they looking for material from handphone to get more detail explanation and the researcher pay attention to students while studying, they seem to concentrate, listen to the teachers' explanation and also the students focus while teachers A explained the material.

c. Concentration while learning

The researcher pay attention to students A and B while studying, the researcher found that the students A seem to concentrate, listen to the teachers' explanation while most students B did not concentration while studying.

d. Focus while the teacher explains the material

When English teacher explains the material, students A focus to listening and learning while students B not focus, some of them just talk to their friends.

2. The Willingness

a. Try to do the task even difficult

Based on the result of observation, all of students in class A and B did the task even they feel that task was difficult, but they try to finished it by asking what they don't know.

b. Still learning although the teacher did not go to school

In this situation, the meaning of that indicator is the students still learning even the teacher A not stay in classroom when she has been giving the assignment to her students. So, the researcher saw that they are still try to finished their assignment or task when their teacher was outside.

c. Enthusiastic to follow the lesson

Students in class A and B enthusiastic to follow the lesson, it seems from many students have asked the teachers about their task and it because teachers' attention makes the students motivated in learning English and teachers' explanation makes students understand the lesson.

d. Diligent to read the English book

The researcher saw just few students read the English book, it happened because most of them prefer to search for material on their handphone.

3. Needs

The awareness to make notes while the learning process. Based on the observation checklist, students A and B make notes in their books while the learning process.

4. Feelings Happy or Joyful Feelings

Enjoy doing the task or exercise given by the teacher at school.

5. Teaching Materials and Teachers' Good Attitudes

- a. Teachers' attention makes the students motivated in learning English
- b. Teachers' explanations make students understand the lesson

Students A and B also enjoy doing the task or exercise given by the teacher at school because teachers' attention makes the students motivated in learning English and teachers' explanation make students understand the lesson.

The result of observation checklist above, it can be seen that most of students A and students B have interest when learning English through teachers' rapport-building strategies.

## CONCLUSIONS

Teachers' rapport-building strategies make students have interest based on the indicators of interest that the researcher has observed. Students feel more motivated, confident and excited to be better at learning English. It was proven by the result of the observation checklist for students' interest and the interview data from students as well. Most students have positive responses when they were asked to answer the interview question about their interest in teachers' rapport-building strategies.

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