

# Students' Perception on English as An Obligated Course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu

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## Abstract

This study aims to find out about students' perceptions on English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu. This research will use a quantitative method. The population in this study was class VIII SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu, and it took 30 students as samples using simple random sampling. This study uses a questionnaire as the research instrument to determine students' perceptions of English subjects. The results of this study indicate that there are six students (20%) strongly positive, twenty students (67%) chose positive, four students (13%) chose moderate, and none had a negative perception and strongly negative. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students' perception of English as a compulsory subject at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu is positive.

Keywords: *Perception, students' perception, English course.*

## 1. Introduction

English is one of the required subjects in secondary schools, especially at the junior secondary level. Being one of the subjects in which students learn a foreign language, of course, creates a different perception for each student. Perceptions are formed by students as a result of their observations during the learning process, so the results of these observations are called student perceptions.

Perception is a process that begins with the use of the five senses to receive a stimulus, then organizes and interprets the information so that it can comprehend what has been sensed (Nugroho, 2012). The students' perceptions of the learning process are really important and deserves to be investigated. Teachers can use the perception to evaluate the systems, methods, or learning materials that they use with their students. Whether it is positive or negative from the observations made by students, their perception is used as material

for teacher evaluation in teaching students. The perception given by the students is important because it determines the results of their English learning process.

Therefore, during the observation period when the researcher did the PPL KKN at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu for almost three months, starting from 13 October to 24 December 2022, where the school is a favorite and one of the top schools in Pasangkayu, the researcher taught in class VIII, which consisted of six classes. During the implementation of the PPL KKN program, the researchers found that most of the students in every class experienced difficulty when participating in the learning process. Based on these problems and also the experience of researchers during the PPL KKN program, researchers are interested in knowing the students' perceptions of English as an obligated course in school.

There are some previous studies related to the study. The first study is a thesis entitled "An

Analysis of Students' Perception on English Course Toward the Students' Speaking Ability" by Zhuni Winayasari (2020). This research is concerned with students' perceptions of the impact of the English course on their speaking ability. The researcher will investigate students' perceptions of the impact of the English club on their ability to speak fluently (self-confidence) after enrolling in the Buckingham English Course Makassar. The next study is a thesis entitled "Students' Perception on The Use of English as Medium of Interaction in The Class at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Makassar" by Wiwi Nor Wijayanti (2019). This study aims to find students' perceptions of the use of English as a medium of interaction in the classroom at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Makassar. The next study is a thesis entitled "Exploring Students' Perceptions About English Learning in a Public University" by Patricia Kim Jiménez (2017). This study aims to discover how a group of students at the Instituto Internacional e Idiomas of the Universidad Pedagógica Tecnológica de Colombia (UPTC) perceive their English learning process in terms of learning styles, learning skills, motivation, and commitment.

This research will be different from the previous studies, as mentioned above. The aim of this research is to discover students' perception on English as an obligated course in junior high school, and it will involve four aspects of the teaching and learning process, namely: teachers, learners, materials, time and place, whereas previous research did not involve these four aspects.

The researcher is interested in conducting research on "Students' Perception on English as an Obligated Course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu." This research is important to be discussed. Because even though all students face the same difficulties in English subjects, they naturally have different perceptions. Therefore, the researcher wants to discuss this research in order to find out students' perceptions on English subjects. The researcher hopes that this research can be used to increase teacher knowledge about students' perceptions on English subjects so that it can

help increase teacher knowledge and can be used as an evaluation tool in teaching students. Also, this research might be able to provide an opportunity and a forum for students to voice their perception or views regarding English subjects.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Definition of Perception**

According to the experts have been conducted by researchers, the nation of readiness is as follows.

Sarwono (2010: 89), Perception is the ability of a person to organize and focus their observations. These abilities include the ability to discriminate, group, and focus. As a result, even though the existing items are identical, people's perceptions are not always the same. Their perspectives may different . Because of variances in the individual's value system and personality features, this is feasible.

Zamroni (2013) argues that perception is the process by which individuals recognise objective objects or facts using their own tools. A person's perception of an object is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors.

Kotler (2000) in the journal of psychology, perception is the process through which a person chooses, organises, and interprets information inputs to produce a meaningful overall image.

Walgito, B (2010), Perception is a process in which an individual receives a stimulus through the senses, also known as the sensory process. The process, however, does not simply stop; the stimulus is continued, and the next process is a perception process. As a result, during the perception process, the person who is perceived will be able to influence the person who perceives it.

According to the definition above, perception is perception is an interpretation process that begins when a stimulus is captured by the five senses to produce a meaning for the

environment or an object. The perception of each individual is also different, it depends on how they interpret a stimulus and is also influenced by internal and external factors of a person.

## 2. 2. Types of Perception

According to Robbins (2002: 14), the perception results can be divided as follows:

- a. Positive perception is an individual's evaluation of an object or information with a positive attitude or as expected from the perceived object or from existing rules. Individual happiness with the object that is the source of his perception, individual knowledge, and individual experience of the viewed item are the causes of a person's positive perception.
- b. Negative perceptions are individual responses to specific objects or information that are negative, contrary to what is expected from the perceived object or from existing rules. Individual dissatisfaction with the object being perceived, the presence of individual ignorance, and the absence of individual experience with the object being perceived can all lead to the emergence of a negative perception, and vice versa.

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that the emergence of positive perception or negative perception all depends on how the individual describes all their knowledge about a perceived object. In this study, the researcher wants to know what students' perception on English subjects is, whether it is a positive or negative perception.

## 2. 3. Process of Perception

The perceptual process begins when an object is captured by the five senses and a stimulus is generated, which is transmitted to the brain via sensory nerves, said Bimo Walgito (2010:102). The process of interpretation then occurs in the nerves of the brain.

Sensing is the first stage in the formation of perception. Internal and external stimuli influence perception. Feelings, background and cultural factors, as well as life experiences, are all examples of internal stimuli. This is what differs everyone's perception of something.

According to Thoha, M (2003: 145), the process of forming perceptions is based on several stages, namely:

- a. Stimulus  
The stimulus, or the stimulation that is present, is the first sub-process that is considered important. Perception begins when the individual is confronted with a stimulus or situation.
- b. Register  
The physical mechanism in the form of sensing a person's senses is a symptom that arises during the registration process. Individu can then list all the information sent after listening to and viewing the information sent.
- c. Interpretation  
Interpretation, or the process of giving meaning to the stimulus received, is a critical cognitive aspect of perception. The interpretation process is determined by a person's depth of understanding, motivation, and personality.

Based on the explanation above, it can be argued that perception requires a physical, social, and psychological mechanism. Sensing is the first step in perception, in which the receptor receives stimuli and relays them to the brain, where they are organised and perceived as a psychological mechanism.

## 2. 4. Factors Affecting of Perception

According to Thoha, M (2003: 154), the factors that influence a person's perception are as follows:

- a. Internal factors  
Internal factors that can cause perceptions in individuals are personality, feelings, physical condition, attention, expectations, mental disorders, needs, prejudices, desires

as well as interests and motivations, are examples of internal factors.

b. External factors

External factors that can cause perceptions in individuals are acquired information, knowledge, and needs; intensity; size; opposition; repetition of motion; new and familiar things; or unfamiliar objects.

Meanwhile, according to Robbins, S. P (1996) there are 3 factors that influence a person's perception, namely:

a. The individual concerned (perceiving)

If a person looks at an object and tries to give an interpretation of what he sees, then he will be influenced by individual characteristics such as actions, concepts, desires, interests, experiences, insights, and goals

b. The target of perception

Perception can be directed at a person, an object, or an event. These characteristics usually have an impact on the perception of those who see them. The target's perception is not something that can be observed theoretically in interactions with other people involved. This causes a person to separate people, objects, or things that are similar to him from other dissimilar groups.

c. Situation

The situation in which the perception arises must be considered when viewing perception in context. The situation influences the formation of one's perception.

Based on the explanation above, the perception of each person can be different depending on the situation and condition of each individual. This is due to two factors, namely internal factors and external factors. These two factors can trigger different perceptions from each person even though there is the same object.

## **2. 5. Indicators of Perception**

Perception indicators according to Robbins (2007) are as follows :

a. Acceptance

Acceptance is the occurrence of perception in which the function of the senses is to capture physiology from the outside and

then transmit it to the brain via sensory nerves, as it appears.

b. Evaluation

Outside stimulation that is collected inside the individual and then limited is highly subjective. One person perceives a stimulus as difficult and dull, while another perceives the same stimulus as pleasant and enjoyable.

According to the explanation above, the perception indicator is made up of two processes: acceptance and evaluation. The senses detect the stimulus and transmit it to the brain, where an evaluation process takes place.

## **3. Research Methodology**

### **3. 1. Research Design**

The quantitative research method was used in this study, and the findings were processed and analyzed to obtain a conclusion. The researcher used a descriptive quantitative research method because the design is in accordance with the purpose of this study, which was to get a real picture of students' perceptions of English as an obligated course in junior high school, based on the percentage of numbers processed by using the existing formula, whether it was a positive or negative perception.

### **3. 2. Research Setting**

The researcher conducted this research in the academic year 2021/2022 of eighth grade (VIII) in SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu. This research was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu, Jl. Andi Deppu, Kec. Pasangkayu, Kab. Pasangkayu, Prov. Sulawesi Barat

### **3. 3. Research Instruments**

To collect the data, the researcher used a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items that had positive and negative statements. The questionnaire is a written collection of self-reported questions that are answered by a selected group of research participants.

Table 1. Questionnaire Aspect

Aspect	Questionnaire
Teacher Presentation	Number 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 13, 14.
Students's Feelings	Number 5, 6, 15, 16
Course Book	Number 7, 8, 17, 18
Time and Place	Number 9, 10, 19, 20

The researcher chose the scale column and the point based on the scale as an indication of strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire contains statements about students' perceptions of English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu. In this research, the researcher distributed the questionnaire via Google Form to eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu. The questionnaire was made by the researcher himself.

### 3. 4. Data Analysis

The researcher classified all of the data collected from the questionnaire based on the problem statement. In this research, the researcher used a statistical program, SPSS, to process the data. The questionnaire used the Likert Scale, which consisted of the following five-point scale:

Table 2. Likert Scale

Statement	Score	
	Positive	Negative
Strongly Agree (SA)	5	1
Agree (A)	4	2
Moderate (M)	3	3
Disagree (D)	2	4
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1	5

### 4. Findings

The findings of this research show the result of the questionnaire to answer the research question. The research question is what is students' perception on English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu? Students'

Perception on English as an Obligated Course Based on the data analysis of the questionnaire, it was found that students' perception on English as an obligated course is positive. It can be seen from the result of the mean score in the questionnaire that was calculated as below:

Table 3. Students' Score

NO	NAME	CLASS	TOTAL
1.	GMK	8E	74
2.	MJM	8D	80
3.	SR	8A	73
4.	AZ	8C	71
5.	ND	8B	87
6.	IS	8E	79
7.	LAN	8F	75
8.	VS	8A	78
9.	KSA	8D	78
10.	PAM	8F	72
11.	AF	8C	92
12.	AAD	8C	78
13.	BR	8E	63
14.	FI	8A	87
15.	FRA	8B	94
16.	NZ	8D	75
17.	CPS	8D	64
18.	RA	8B	82

19.	MM	8E	69
20.	AS	8F	85
21.	MAS	8D	64
22.	RA	8B	81
23.	SHT	8A	97
24.	RR	8F	68
25.	MRM	8E	79
26.	RNA	8A	76
27.	FMZ	8C	78
28.	FS	8F	77
29.	MAS	8C	82
30.	NI	8B	80
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2338</b>
		<b>MEAN</b>	<b>77,93</b>

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{2338}{30}$$

$$\bar{X} = 77,93$$

$\sum X$  : Total row score

$N$  : The total number of participant

$\bar{X}$  : Mean score

The total score from the questionnaire was 2338, with a total sample size of 30. It shows that the mean score of the students' perception of the English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu is 77.93%, which is

classified as positive. The result of the mean score was supported by the frequency and percentage of the questionnaire, which are showed in the table below:

Table 4. Students' Perception Results

Range of Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Students' Perception
85-10	6	20%	Strongly Positive
69-84	20	67%	Positive
53-68	4	13%	Moderate
37-52	-	-	Negative
20-36	-	-	Strongly negative
TOTAL	30	100	

From the table 4, it can be seen that the students had different perceptions of the English course as an obligated course. Most of the students had positive perceptions, some had moderate perceptions, and no one had a negative perception. Therefore, even though students are faced with a stimulus for the same difficulties in participating in the English learning process, their perceptions, of course, may not always be the same. This is evidenced by the findings based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to students as respondents or samples in this study.

Data collected from the students' response showed that most of the students had positive perception about English course. It is showed that the mean score of the students' perception is 77.93 which is categorized into positive.

Based on the explanation above and the result table of the analysis data from 30 students taken as a sample, it is clear that the students had different perceptions on English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu.

Based on the table of data analysis, 6 (20%) students have strongly positive perceptions, and 20 (67%) students have positive perceptions. It can be concluded that 26 (87%)

students have a positive perception on English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu. Based on the result, it shows that only 4 (13%) students have a moderate perception on English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu. Based on the result that is shows on the table, it shows that there are no students who have a negative or strongly negative perception on the English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu

## 5. Discussion

This section presents a further explanation of the previous research finding that is the result of what is students' perception on English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu? The results of a questionnaire containing positive and negative statements about students' perceptions on English as an obligated course. The statement involves four aspects in the teaching and learning process, namely the teacher (teacher presentation), students (feelings), materials (course book), time and place.

Based on the calculated data in the finding research, proves that eighth grade students have positive perceptions, moderate perceptions, and no one has negative

perceptions of the English course. Sarwono (1910:89), Perception refers to a person's ability to organize and focus their observations. These abilities include the ability to discriminate, group, and focus. As a result, even though the existing items are identical, people's perceptions are not always the same.

Based on the calculated data in the finding research, by distributing questionnaires that involving four aspects of English courses (teachers, students, materials, time, and place), it is proven that eighth grade students have positive perceptions, moderate perceptions, and no one has negative perceptions of the English course. There are 6 (20%) students who have strongly positive perceptions and 20 (67%) students have positive perceptions, while there are 4 (13%) students who have moderate perceptions, and there are no students who have negative perceptions. Data collected from the students' response showed that most of the students had positive perception about English course. It is showed that the mean score of the students' perception is 77,93 which is categorized into positive.

Based on the data, it can be seen that the average student of class VIII has a positive perception of the teacher's presentation in the classroom. This is because students think the teacher can convey the material well and easily understood. In delivering the material, the teacher can focus students' attention, convey the learning objectives to be achieved, and also convey the material by providing examples in the form of pictures, videos, and others so that the material becomes more easily captured and understood by students.

According to Harris (2013), your ability and skill in communicating your message will determine your success as a teacher. We've all had teachers who were clearly experts in their field but lacked the ability to communicate their understanding and knowledge to a group of students. Presentation skills are essential components of the complex craft of teaching.

In addition, in participating in the learning process, feelings or emotions have a significant

impact on the quantity and quality of learning (Meier, 2002). Positive emotions can speed up and improve learning outcomes, whereas negative emotions can slow down or even stop learning. Based on the results of the study, it turns out that, on average, students have positive feelings towards learning English. Students do not feel anxious when learning English, but instead feel motivated to learn English.

In textbooks that are also used by students as the main learning material for English in class, the average student finds the topics in the textbooks interesting and also fun to learn. The tasks available in the coursebook are also not difficult to do. This is in accordance with the theory of Tarigan (2009:22) that an interesting book must pay attention to the following points; present interesting material and topics, make illustrations that attract readers, are relevant to the curriculum, etc., so that they can attract readers' interest.

According to the data obtained, students consider the learning time used to be effective—not too early or too late, and not too late or too long. Furthermore, the class's condition is considered good, as well as the facilities in the class. This is accordance with the theory of Muhayyang (2022), a good classroom should be completely furnished, well-ventilated, well-lit, soundproof, and spacious enough for pupils to move around for group and interpersonal interaction. In addition, time also has an impact on how a teacher manages the class. The period of time in which students' study can have an impact on them both physically and mentally. Students who study in the morning usually find it easier and fresher to understand the lesson than those who study in the afternoon or evening.

Based on the research findings and discussion above, it clearly answers the research question and shows that the students' perception on English as an obligated course is positive.



## 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion of the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that the students' perception of English as an obligated course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu is positive. This was proven by the mean number, which was 77,93. It was supported by the percentage of the questionnaire from 30 eighth-grade students taken as respondents, which showed that 6 (20%) students classified as strongly positive, 20 (67%) students classified as positive, 4 (13%) students classified as moderate, and no student classified as negative or strongly negative. It could be interpreted that the students had a positive perception of the English course as an obligatory course at SMP Negeri 1 Pasangkayu.

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