

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS AT SMPI DARUDDA'WAH PUNGGUR KECIL, WEST KALIMANTAN, IN LEARNING ENGLISH

Reneldy al ghazali¹ Nizarrahmadi²

FKIP, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Kalimantan Barat ,English Education Jalan Ahmad Yani II, Parit Derabak, Sungai Raya District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan Province, postal code 78391
e-mail: Reneldy al Ghazali@gmail.com¹ e-mail: nizar.rahmadi27@gmail.com²

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi dan mengkaji tantangan yang dihadapi oleh siswa kelas IX SMPI Darudda'wah dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris selama tahun ajaran 2023. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk merumuskan strategi pembelajaran yang efektif guna meningkatkan motivasi dan minat siswa terhadap mata pelajaran tersebut. Pendekatan penelitian kualitatif digunakan dalam studi ini, dengan melibatkan observasi kelas, wawancara dengan siswa, dan analisis dokumen yang relevan. Lima siswa kelas IX berpartisipasi dalam wawancara yang berfokus pada pemahaman mereka terhadap materi, serta motivasi dan minat mereka dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris. Temuan menunjukkan adanya perbedaan tingkat pemahaman, motivasi, dan antusiasme di antara siswa. Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi termasuk rasa cemas, kurangnya rasa percaya diri, dan tekanan dari kegiatan ekstrakurikuler. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi kegiatan pembelajaran yang praktis, peningkatan peran guru, dan penyesuaian kurikulum sebagai strategi yang menjanjikan untuk mendukung dan meningkatkan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMPI Darudda'wah Punggur Kecil.

Kata kunci: Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Kesulitan Siswa, Hambatan dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa

Abstract

This study aims to explore and examine the challenges experienced by ninth-grade students at SMPI Darudda'wah in learning English during the 2023 academic year. It also seeks to develop effective learning strategies to boost students' motivation and interest in the subject. A qualitative research approach was employed, involving classroom observations, student interviews, and analysis of relevant documents. Five ninth-grade students participated in interviews, which focused on their understanding of the material, as well as their motivation and interest in learning English. The findings reveal differing levels of comprehension, motivation, and enthusiasm among students. Contributing factors include feelings of anxiety, low self-confidence, and the burden of extracurricular commitments. The study identifies practical learning activities, enhanced teacher involvement, and curriculum adjustments as promising strategies to support and improve English language learning at SMPI Darudda'wah Punggur Kecil.

Keywords: English Learning, Student Difficulties, Language Learning Barriers

1. BACKGROUND

In today's era of globalization, English has become a vital tool for communication, education, and professional development. The increasing importance of English proficiency is evident in various aspects of life, including access to global information, academic advancement, and international collaboration. For students, mastering English is no longer a supplementary skill but a fundamental necessity to compete in a globally connected world.

Despite its importance, many students still struggle to learn English effectively. At SMPI Darudda'wah Punggur Kecil, students in class IX face several obstacles in understanding English material, including low motivation, limited exposure, and difficulties with grammar and

vocabulary. Environmental factors such as teaching methods, classroom interaction, and lack of confidence also contribute to their learning challenges.

Given these conditions, this study aims to identify and analyze the specific difficulties students face in learning English. By understanding these barriers, educators can develop more targeted strategies to improve students' motivation, engagement, and overall performance in English. This research is expected to contribute valuable insights toward enhancing the quality of English language instruction at SMPI Darudda'wah and similar educational institutions.

2. METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach, emphasizing observation and interviews as the primary methods of data collection. The process begins with formulating specific research questions and defining clear objectives to guide the overall direction of the study. The research design includes selecting the appropriate setting, target population, and research scope that align with the phenomenon being explored in detail. Data is gathered through direct field observation. Using structured observation tools, the researcher systematically records behaviors, interactions, and situations relevant to the study. These observational findings serve as a crucial foundation for gaining insights into the context and underlying dynamics of the observed phenomenon.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that most class IX students at SMPI Darudda'wah Punggur Kecil understand the importance of learning English. Out of 15 students, 7 disagreed with the statement that English is not important, while only 1 agreed. This suggests that the majority recognize English as a valuable subject in their education. Despite this awareness, many students still face obstacles in reading English fluently. As shown in the data, 6 students disagreed with the idea that reading English is easy, while only a few students felt confident in their ability to read English texts. This highlights a gap between students' positive attitudes toward English and their actual reading skills.

Confidence levels vary, but most students reported feeling somewhat confident when reading English. Ten students agreed they were confident, and 11 students expressed a willingness to try reading English texts despite pronunciation difficulties. However, problems remain—many students struggle with reading poetry, completing English homework, and understanding text content, especially when it is long or complex. Environmental factors also play a role in reading comprehension. Ten students said they could understand English better in a quiet classroom, and most disagreed that poor lighting made reading easier. This implies that both classroom conditions and physical comfort influence how well students read.

In terms of vocabulary, 9 students believed that having a strong vocabulary helps them understand simple texts. Even so, confusion still arises during reading and homework tasks, showing that vocabulary alone is not sufficient without the right teaching support. Some students considered English their favorite subject, yet others admitted they were often confused, especially when working on English tasks. This shows the need for better teaching strategies, more structured reading practice, and supportive learning environments that can build both reading skills and student confidence.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the reading difficulties faced by class IX students of SMPI Darudda'wah Sungai Kakap Kubu Raya are influenced by both internal and external factors. Internally, students struggle with memorization, poor study habits, low motivation, and issues related to vision or unclear text. Externally, the lack of reading support at home, limited teaching methods, and insufficient school facilities contribute to these challenges, although the community environment and access to reading materials are not seen as significant obstacles. To address these issues, teachers have implemented remedial teaching as a corrective

strategy aimed at improving students' English reading skills through more focused and individualized learning.

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