

TEACHER'S STRATEGIES IN MOTIVATING STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN GENDERED ENVIRONMENT HIGH SCHOOL AT SMPIT UKHUWAH BANJARMASIN

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Abstract. This study examined how an English teacher motivated students in a gender-segregated high school at SMPIT Ukhuwah Banjarmasin. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The findings revealed that the teacher employed similar strategies to motivate male and female students, but the implementation differed based on the students' gender. The teacher demonstrated appropriate behavior through loud speech, body gestures, and humor, fostering a pleasant classroom atmosphere with praise, compliments, and a mix of indoor activities for female students and outdoor activities for male students. Interactive methods such as discussions and multimedia were tailored to the interests of both male and female students. The teacher tailored discussions and multimedia to students' interests, focusing on hobbies for males and social topics for females. A reward system with superhero stickers for males and pastel stickers for females encouraged participation. By adjusting teaching methods to meet different needs, the teacher fostered an engaging and supportive learning environment.

Keywords: Teaching Strategy, motivation, motivational strategy, gender environment.

INTRODUCTION

The motivational strategies employed by teachers play a crucial role in enhancing students' motivation in learning the English language. As highlighted by Mcown and Takeuchi (2010), motivation is essential for efficient foreign language learning. Teachers aim to foster enthusiasm for students to study in the classroom. Teachers have the power to make dull subjects engaging, which is vital for inspiring, guiding, and providing the ideal learning environment for students. Teachers need to be aware of the most effective motivational strategies for maintaining and boosting student motivation, particularly when it comes to teaching and studying English.

According to Dornyei (2001), motivational strategies are techniques that promote the individual's goal-related behavior. Furthermore, motivational strategies also refer to all teaching strategies that was proposed to encourage the students to learn (Hornstra et al., 2015). Therefore, it can be known that motivational strategy in English learning is the action or technique for enhancing students' motivation to learn based on the learning goal.

Effective teacher strategies can motivate students to learn English. According to Gagne (2008), a student would feel interested in and like studying English to have high motivation and a practical learning approach. The success of students learning English will rise as a result. On the other hand, students who lack enthusiasm and a solid learning approach will be lazy and find it difficult to pick up the language. One strategy is incorporating fun and interactive activities that engage students and make learning enjoyable. Another method is personalizing lessons and catering to students' learning styles and interests. Teachers can also use positive reinforcement and praise to build students' confidence and motivation. Lastly, creating a supportive and encouraging classroom environment can foster community and motivate students to participate and learn.

However, every teacher has various and different ways of motivating his or her students because every student's motivation can vary. According to Anderman and Anderman (2014), it should be noted that some instructional practices from the teacher may have different effects among the

students, some students can be positively motivated by certain types of instructional practices, but sometimes others cannot be motivated by the same type. For example, certain students may excel and feel more motivated when presented with creative writing assignments that allow them to express themselves openly. This can enhance their engagement significantly. Conversely, the other student might feel overwhelmed by such tasks and instead find structured grammar exercises or interactive language games more motivating. Therefore, in designing the ways or the strategy to motivate the students, the teacher has to take several considerations that relate to the students' condition, students' learning style and preferences.

Some relevant research that had been done by another researcher. A research study about motivational strategies have been taken to examine types of motivational strategies used to encourage student's motivation in learning English (Firdausi, 2020). Khooirotuliula (2020), described the types of teacher motivation strategies and how students respond to these strategies. Then, the other research by Amiroh (2022), discussed how teacher implemented motivational strategies in language classroom.

Meanwhile, many studies have revealed that male and female students exhibit different motivations when it comes to learning English. It has been observed that females are more motivated in learning foreign languages than boys (e.g. Dornyei, Csizer, & Nemeth, 2006; Mori & Gobel, 2006). Sung & Padilla (1998) examined motivation among elementary and secondary school students learning Chinese or Korean as a second language, revealing that females exhibited significantly higher motivation than males.

Understanding these gender differences in motivation is crucial, especially in a gender-segregated high school environment like SMPIT Ukhuwah. In Indonesia, gender segregation in education is common, particularly in Islamic schools, which often practice this approach. This high level of gender segregation highlights the need to study how to adjust motivational strategies to better support male and female students.

Male and female students often exhibit different motivations and interests, which directly affect their engagement and academic performance. If these differences are not addressed, students may struggle with low motivation and disengagement, leading to poor learning outcomes. Teachers who assume that male and female students have the same motivational needs risk implementing ineffective strategies. For instance, female students often respond better to motivational techniques that promote collaboration and interaction, while male students may be more motivated by competitive or hands-on activities (Dornyei, 2001; Hornstra et al., 2015).

As educational institutions across Indonesia continue to adopt gender-segregated classrooms, it is essential for teachers to develop motivational strategies that align with the distinct needs of each gender. This study aims to explore the strategies employed by the teacher to motivate students in both male and female classrooms at SMPIT Ukhuwah during the 2023/2024 school year. By examining the different approaches used in these settings, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of gender-responsive teaching practices in English language learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a qualitative approach to explore how the teacher at SMPIT Ukhuwah Banjarmasin. As an Islamic school, SMPIT Ukhuwah implements a gender-segregated classroom system, with separate classes for male and female students. A descriptive study method was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The study focused on one English teacher who teaches seventh-grade students and involved observing two classes: 7C (female) and 7D (male). The research was conducted during the 2023/2024 academic year at SMPIT Ukhuwah. The data were collected through three instruments: observations, interview, and documentation. Observation focused on how the teacher motivates the students throughout the learning process. The interview was conducted face-to-face directly to gather deep information about the strategies that the teacher used in motivating students. It consists of several open-ended questions. Then, the

documentation was a collection of videos and photos of the teaching activities of the teacher during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The data were gathered at SMPIT Ukhuwah Banjarmasin from April to June 2024.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The teacher implemented motivational strategies in line with Dörnyei's four main concepts: creating basic motivational conditions, generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation

1.1 Creating Basic Motivational Conditions

The teacher fostered a lively and supportive learning environment by using a loud voice, body gestures, and humor to maintain students' attention. Praise and compliments were frequently used to boost students' confidence and motivation. Additionally, for male students, the teacher provided outdoor activities, such as running dictation and treasure hunts. For female students, the teacher focused on structured indoor activities, such as group discussions in air-conditioned classrooms, to create a calmer environment that supported focus and engagement.

1.2 Generating Initial Motivation

To capture students' interest, the teacher utilized discussion topics aligned with gender-specific preferences. Male students were more engaged with topics related to sports and hobbies, while female students showed greater interest in social issues and trending topics. spark interest, the teacher introduced topics aligned with student preferences. Multimedia tools were also employed, with action-packed visuals and upbeat songs for males, and more relatable, visually appealing resources for females.

1.3 Maintaining and Protecting Motivation

Collaborative tasks and music were integrated into lessons to sustain focus and encourage teamwork. Instrumental music helped both male and female students concentrate during activities. Male students engaged in dynamic group activities, while female students preferred quieter, structured collaboration

1.4 Encouraging Positive Retrospective Self-Evaluation

The teacher provided constructive feedback and used a gender-tailored reward system. Male students received superhero-themed stickers, reflecting their energetic interests, while female students preferred aesthetically pleasing designs. Anonymous student feedback helped the teacher refine their methods to better meet the distinct needs of both groups.

This study examined the teacher's motivational strategies at SMPIT Ukhuwah Banjarmasin through Dörnyei's framework, focusing on how strategies were adjusted for male and female classrooms. Although the core strategies were similar, their implementation was adjusted to align with the preferences and behaviors of male and female students. In creating basic motivational conditions, the teacher ensured a supportive environment through loud speech, body gestures, and humor, which aligns with Dörnyei's (2001) assertion that teacher behavior significantly impacts classroom motivation. The teacher also frequently praised and complimented students, acknowledging their contributions and hard work. This helped students feel good about themselves and confident in their abilities, aligning with Khoirotuliulla (2022), who emphasized the role of appreciation in motivating students. According to Sardiman (2014), praise acts as positive reinforcement, encouraging students to engage more in their learning. For male students, the teacher used outdoor activities like running dictation and treasure hunts, which matched their preference for active learning. For female students, the teacher provided structured indoor activities, such as group discussions in air-conditioned classrooms, creating a calmer and more focused learning environment.

To generate initial motivation, the teacher frequently used discussions to catch students' interests, with topics such as sports and hobbies engaging male students and social issues or trending topics resonating with female students, consistent with Alshebl's (2021) findings on topic relevance. Teaching materials incorporated relatable examples, such as discussing pets or connecting lessons to Islamic values, aligning with Dörnyei's (2001) principle of linking content to students' daily lives. Gender preferences were also reflected in visual aids, with brighter colors used for female students

and darker tones for male students. In presenting material, the teacher's strategy of using brighter colors in presentations for female students and darker colors for male students helps maintain their attention. Additionally, in giving assignments, the teacher sometimes gave pictures of strange images to male students to describe, while for the female class, she gave pictures of funny or cute animal images to further engage students by aligning with their preferences.

To maintain and protect motivation, the teacher used music and group activities tailored to male and female students' preferences. Instrumental music during tasks helped both groups concentrate, reducing distractions and creating a relaxed atmosphere. Collaborative activities were emphasized, as cooperative tasks can boost motivation and enhance academic performance (Dörnyei, 2001). Male students often engaged in energetic group tasks, while female students thrived in quieter, more structured collaborations. Additionally, the teacher accommodated students' conditions, such as fatigue from prior activities, by showing videos or movies with correct English pronunciation. Islamic-themed movies were also used, reflecting the school's cultural and religious context while reinforcing language skills.

Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, the teacher gave feedback to students by providing input or feedback. When necessary, the teacher addressed issues privately to avoid hurting students' feelings. The teacher provided constructive feedback and personalized rewards. Superhero-themed stickers were given to male students, while female students received aesthetically pleasing designs, reflecting their distinct preferences. The teacher also collected student feedback anonymously to refine teaching methods and better meet the needs of each classroom.

Overall, the teacher's strategies were adapted to the distinct characteristics of male and female students, emphasizing the importance of personalizing motivational approaches to foster a more engaging, supportive, and effective learning environment. This alignment with Dörnyei's framework underscores the significance of addressing gender differences in motivational strategies to optimize learning outcomes

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the teacher at SMPIT Ukhuwah Banjarmasin used various strategies to motivate students in learning English in a gendered environment school. Although most of all the strategies are similar, the way the teacher applied the strategies differed based on the gender of the students. To create basic motivational conditions, the teacher used loud speaking, body gestures, humor, and praise. For male students, the teacher emphasized praise related to their performance and accomplishments, and engaged them with dynamic activities like running dictations and treasure hunts. Female students, on the other hand, were praised for their personal qualities or appearance, and engaged more effectively in quieter, indoor activities like group discussions and academic tasks.

When generating initial motivation, the teacher incorporated discussions, often tailoring topics to student interests. For male students, the teacher focused on sports and hobbies, while for female students, the discussions revolved around social issues and trending topics. The teacher also connected lessons to real-life experiences. To maintain motivation, the teacher used music and group activities. Male students responded well to energetic, cooperative tasks, while female students were more comfortable in structured, quieter settings with more focus on individual tasks. Finally, in encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, the teacher used feedback and rewards tailored to gender preferences—offering superhero stickers to male students and aesthetic stickers to female students, reinforcing motivation and student engagement.

These strategies demonstrate how the teacher's approach, while rooted in similar methods, was personalized to align with the distinct motivational needs of male and female students

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