

Teachers' Strategies to Encourage Students' Participation in English Classroom

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Abstract

Teachers have an important role in creating a supportive environment in English lessons and should encourage students to participate actively. Appropriate teaching strategies can be employed to encourage student participation in the English classroom. This study was conducted to investigate strategies used by the teachers to encourage students' participation in the English classroom at SMPN 01 Sungai Raya. The researcher employed a case study methodology, utilizing observation, interview, and document analysis as data collection methods to identify the strategy used by English teachers to encourage student participation. Based on the findings from observation, interview, and document analysis, it can be concluded that English teachers employed various strategies to encourage student participation in the classroom, such as questioning strategy, collaborative learning, motivational learning, and differentiation learning.

Keywords: *Case Study; Students' Participation; Teachers' Strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers, as educators, play an essential role in ensuring that the classroom operates smoothly. A teacher's responsibilities include more than imparting information to students. A variety of factors must be addressed while creating an enjoyable classroom environment. Among these, student motivation stands out as a key element that keeps the learning process engaging and the students committed. The appropriate teaching strategy and class management are also crucial. A competent teacher should be able to carry out their responsibilities under various conditions with effectiveness (Rindu & Ariyanti, 2016). One of the conditions that teachers must address in the classroom is student participation. Student participation is the process of students actively and consistently engaging in learning (Indriani et al., 2016). Students' participation in class is more than asking and answering questions. Students can discuss and work in groups to solve problems. However, low student participation in English class implies a lack of engagement and interest, which can lead to ineffective learning outcomes. This indicates that the instructional methods may not effectively capture students' attention and generate active participation in the class.

To solve the problem, teachers must implement an effective technique that actively encourages student participation in the classroom during the teaching and learning process. According to Irikawati (2017), a teaching strategy is a plan that includes a variety of activities aimed at achieving specific educational objectives. The activities may involve group work, discussion with peers, and practical exercises. The researchers intends to investigate the instructional strategies teachers at SMPN 1 Sungai Raya use to enhance student participation in the classroom. These strategies are critical to creating an engaging and exciting learning environment. In addition to improving the educational

experience, successful strategies have a significant positive impact on students' overall development. Moreover, the application of suitable and effective learning strategies not only promotes student initiative but also enhances learning outcomes (Fatkhurrohman et al., 2018).

Many researchers have conducted related research. The first previous study was conducted by Ginting (2021) which investigated student engagement, factors, and the method in the teaching-learning process. The focus of this study was to determine the student's condition, factors, and the appropriate strategy to increase students' participation in the English classroom. The participants of this research were students. Furthermore, the result of this study showed that some strategies were appropriate for the condition of students. Those strategies were problem-based learning case-based learning, flipped learning, and active learning. The second previous research was conducted by Alfino et al. (2019) which examined a strategy to increase students' participation. The focus of this study was to find out how the total physical response technique can increase student participation. The research finding indicated that the total physical response technique could improve students' participation in asking- answer questions, interaction, attention, discussion, and speaking in front of the class. Another previous study by Frykedal & Chiriak (2018) investigated the enhancement of students' participation in group work. The study indicated students collaborating in group work could enhance both, their instructional, and social engagement. It explored the students' collaboration in group work emphasizing their participation in class discussion.

Previous studies showed that many strategies affect the changes of students in the classroom. However, those previous studies focused on specific strategies, and there are differences in the number of participants in the previous studies. Moreover, there is also a difference in the criteria of the school being targeted and the participation. The school that was targeted was selected as *Sekolah Penggerak* in Sungai Raya. A *Sekolah Penggerak* is a school designated as a model for other schools, focusing on developing teachers and the entire school to create a compelling and innovative learning environment. The program of *Sekolah Penggerak* aims to increase the quality of education by improving teaching methods and collaborating with other schools. This type of school served as *Sekolah Penggerak* and a model for other schools, which became the focus of this article. Therefore, to fill the gap, the researcher wanted to conduct the research by investigating strategies teachers use to encourage student participation in English. Moreover, the teachers and researcher participants selected a school that meets the criteria, such as *Sekolah Penggerak*.

To sum up, the researcher planned to conduct a case study on Teachers' Strategies to Encourage Students' Participation in English classrooms at SMPN 01 Sungai Raya. This research study seeks to answer the following research question: What strategies do teachers use to encourage students' participation in English classrooms?

METHOD

This research study was conducted with a qualitative research design. The researcher used a qualitative study in the form of a case study. A case study is research that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life environment, particularly when the borders between phenomenon and context are unclear (Yin, 2003). This research aimed to discover the strategies teachers used to encourage the participation of students

in English classrooms. The subject of this research study was two English teachers in one of the best schools in Kubu Raya who have more than five years of experience. The researcher used observation, interview, and document analysis to obtain the data for this research. Observations were conducted twice for each teacher, with one interview done for each teacher. The document analysis focused on the lesson plans provided by each teacher. To analyze the data, the researcher obtained data from Creswell & David Creswell (2018), as follows: (1) Organizing and preparing the data, (2) Coding the data, (3) Generate a description and theme, and (4) Representing the description and theme.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

In this part, the researchers answered the questions from this research study. Based on the observation, interview and document analysis from two English teachers. The researcher discovered the two English teachers used some effective strategies to encourage the participation of students in their English classroom.

1. Questioning Strategy

The questioning strategy in language learning involves both speaking and listening skills. Suartini et al., (2020) stated that questioning strategy is a tool that helps teachers engage with their students. Students are prompted to express their ideas and respond verbally, which helps them practice speaking. At the same time, students must listen adequately to the teacher and their peers to develop their listening comprehension. Both English teachers always begin the class with prompting questions. They ask students about the previous lesson to help them recall what they have learned, setting a solid foundation for new material. The teachers also ask leading questions, encouraging students to engage in asking and answering during the class. This strategy promotes active participation and reinforces learning.

Additionally, teachers used leading questions to encourage critical thinking and active participation. These questions encourage students to participate in class by asking and responding actively. Thus, the questioning strategy engages the students' participation, as shown by students' ability to actively ask and answer questions following prompt questions from teachers in two class sessions.



Figure 1. Student asked question

2. Collaborative Learning

In this strategy, the teacher promotes peer-to-peer interactions and collaborative learning through group discussions. According to Ginting (2021),

collaborative learning is a teaching method that encourages students to contribute their knowledge and experience. Based on observations, the class actively participated in creating product labels in groups. Following this, each group presented their work in front of the class. Each group could show their work while the others offered feedback and arguments. The work required collaboration and encouraged students to communicate ideas within the group. As a result, this strategy was highly efficient in guaranteeing active engagement from every student. Students became more involved and invested in learning when they worked on collaborative projects and gave presentations.



Figure 2. Students' Presentation

3. Motivational Strategy

Students had to be motivated to learn; if they were not, they should have taken their studies and the lessons they were taught in school seriously. According to Sucuoglu (2017), motivational strategies encourage how individuals act in relation to their goals. Both English teachers have consistently encouraged their students to study English. The first teacher ensured the English class was enjoyable for students by using the motto "English is Fun." By complimenting students' efforts and achievements, the teacher established a supportive environment where children felt safe to make errors and learn from them without fear of criticism. The second teacher enjoyed complimenting the students and sometimes gave them presents as a reward. Compliments, mottos, and teacher rewards make students feel acknowledged and recognized for their efforts, motivating them to participate more actively in class. Combining motivation by complimenting, rewarding, and motto allowed both teachers to create a classroom environment that encouraged enthusiasm and active engagement. Students felt encouraged and supported, so they were more willing to engage in classes, participate in conversations, and take on difficulties. In addition, the motivation provided by teachers enhances students' language learning skills.



Figure 3. Teacher gave motivation to students

4. Differentiation Learning

Using media or visuals to support the teaching and learning process increased student interest and engagement. The media that the teacher used was the label of the product. At the beginning of the lesson, teachers introduced the concept by showing the real product label as a concrete example. By presenting the label, teachers help students understand what a label looks like and its functions, providing them with practical knowledge. Media use has a role in making students more active in the classroom. A product's label can help generate lead questions related to the material, which was about the labels. Students also could see the real object. The student interest encourages them to actively participate in the material. Furthermore, students were able to relate to real examples and connect the material with their daily lives. In conclusion, the class became more enjoyable and students actively participated.



Figure 4. Using Media in Teaching

DISCUSSIONS

The strategies identified in this research for encouraging student participation in the English classroom at SMPN 01 Sungai Raya provided valuable insight. According to the data, the first strategy that the teachers used was the questioning strategy. When the teacher applied the questioning strategy, students participated in teaching-learning. The teacher's questions encouraged students' participation and fostered a deeper understanding of the material. This is supported by a study from Dos et al. (2016) that stated that the questioning method is implemented to guarantee full class participation, encourage critical thinking among students, and ascertain the class level. Another result also presented by Shanmugavelu et al. (2020) is that teachers can use strategies for questioning to engage students in the learning process promote mastery of higher-order thinking Skills (HOTS), and allow students to understand important material and develop their thinking to a higher level.

The second strategy that the teacher used was collaborative learning. The activities that the teachers applied were group discussions and presentations in front of the classroom. These activities also played a role in refining students' ideas, providing them with opportunities to share and exchange them with their peers. This aligns with the finding by Ghavifekr, S. (2020) that students can present opinions in groups, exchange ideas, knowledge, and experience with their peers, and develop their leadership and interpersonal skills. The teachers frequently assisted in collaborative learning activities such as group projects, discussions, and presenting the results to the class. This strategy was helpful because it encouraged active student participation in the classroom. This

result was supported by Forslund Frykedal & Hammar Chiriak (2018), that students' active participation was promoted by sharing the final results for the group, analyzing all group members' investigation results, and presenting it to the rest of the class.

Furthermore, the teacher also employed motivational strategies in the classroom. Teachers often give compliments when doing a great job and are awarded extra credit if they answer correctly. The compliment helps students become more comfortable asking and responding to questions in class without worrying that they may be incorrect. This is supported by Astuti, S.P (2016) that students felt comfortable talking because the teachers corrected their errors and attitudes toward them, even though they spoke partly Indonesian and half English. Sometimes, the teachers also give prizes to encourage students to participate in group discussions. They frequently awarded extra credit to students who participated in class. In addition to increasing student participation in the classroom, rewards offer positive reinforcement for desired learning behaviors (Phungphai & Boonmoh, 2021). Sometimes, teachers also give prizes to encourage students to participate in group discussions. They frequently award extra credit to students who participate in class.

Differentiation learning is also used by the English teachers in SMPN 01 Sungai Raya. Differentiation learning strategies were also essential to meet the various needs of the students. Teachers could engage students at different skill levels by creating activities and resources designed for them, allowing all students to participate meaningfully in the lesson. Since items created are based on the student's interests, differentiated learning can assist students in achieving the best possible learning results (Mulyawati et al., 2022). Based on the observation, the teachers prepared the items for the students. Their lesson was about labels, both teachers prepared labels for products to show the students. This is supported by the result findings (Wahyuningsih & Lestari, 2023) that the differentiation process involves offering samples such as banners, brochures, and pamphlets, giving students directions as additional support for students who are struggling, and encouraging students to understand the concept. The teachers showed the actual object to students, and it was helpful to enhance their understanding and participation.

CONCLUSION

From the result, the strategies the teacher used in the classroom were effective in encouraging the participation of students in the classroom. The teacher used a questioning strategy, collaborative learning, motivational strategy, and differentiation learning. The results clearly show that well-implemented teaching strategies impact student participation. Furthermore, the research presented valuable insights into effective teaching strategies, serving as an outline for educators seeking to improve student participation in English classrooms. These findings emphasize the strategies' significance and answer the research question regarding how teachers might enhance student participation.

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