

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR MOTIVATION IN
LEARNING ENGLISH:
A STUDY AT SMP N 11 MATARAM**



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By:

**SUCIATY RAMDHANI
NIM. E1D 014 048**

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Jl. Majapahit No. 62 Telp. (0376) 623873 Fax. 634928 Mataram 83125

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By

**Suciaty Ramdhani
E1D014048**

Has been approved in Mataram on July 10th, 2018 by:

First Advisor,

**Dr. Muhammad Amin, M. Tesol
NIP. 19700829200604 1 002**

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**SUCIATY RAMDHANI
NIM. E1D 014 048**

ABSTRACT

Classroom environment and motivation to learn English are the most crucial elements to be considered for students' better progress in learning English. This research attempts to examine the relationship between students' perceptions of classroom environment and their motivation in learning English language. Besides, it intends to look for the most important dimension in classroom environment perceived by the students and the level of students' motivation in learning English. The sample of this research was 53 students of 8th grade of SMP N 11 Mataram. This research was a correlation research with descriptive statistical design. The data were collected through two types of questionnaires. The findings indicated that the majority of the students perceived their classroom as having Rule Clarity and they were highly motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically. The findings also revealed that teacher's support and task orientation in the classrooms were positive and significantly correlated with their motivation.

Keywords: Classroom environment, motivation in learning, correlation.

**HUBUNGAN ANTARA PERSEPSI SISWA TENTANG LINGKUNGAN
PEMBELAJARAN DI KELAS DAN MOTIVASI MEREKA DALAM
MEMPELAJARI BAHASA INGGRIS:
SEBUAH STUDI DI SMP N 11 MATARAM**

SUCIATY RAMDHANI
NIM. E1D 014 048

ABSTRAK

Lingkungan pembelajaran di kelas dan motivasi belajar Bahasa Inggris adalah elemen terpenting yang harus di pertimbangkan demi kemajuan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menginvestigasi hubungan antara persepsi siswa tentang lingkungan pembelajaran di kelas mereka dan motivasi mereka dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggris. Disamping itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dimensi dalam lingkungan pembelajaran di kelas yang paling penting menurut siswa serta tingkat motivasi belajar Bahasa Inggris mereka. Sampel dari penelitian ini adalah 53 siswa di kelas 8 SMP N 11 Mataram. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian korelasi dengan design statistikal deskriptif. Data dalam penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan dua tipe kuisioner. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas siswa menilai Kejelasan dalam Peraturan (*Rule Clarity*) adalah dimensi yang paling penting di kelas mereka dan mereka mempunyai motivasi yang tinggi baik secara internal maupun secara eksternal. Penemuan lainnya menyatakan bahwa Dukungan Guru (*Teacher Support*) dan Orientasi Tugas (*Task Orientation*) di dalam kelas memiliki hubungan yang positif dan signifikan dengan motivasi belajar mereka.

Keywords: *Lingkungan pembelajaran di kelas, motivasi belajar, korelasi*

INTRODUCTION

Learning environment stands at a position of essential importance in the process of teaching and learning at school. As stated in Sağlam and Sali (2013:1121), many researchers in their studies also support educational stakeholders' sensitivity in the sense that students and teachers' perceptions toward the learning environment influence the way they actually learn and teach. Furthermore, learners' and teachers' perceptions of learning environment (LE) have become the concern of policy makers and practitioners.

In another way, in the reality, learning environment in the classroom comes as a dominant factor affecting the teaching and learning quality that has not shown significant improvement yet. Nur in Weda (2016:137) reports that the result of the teaching of English in Indonesia has long been considered unsatisfactory. Although students have learned English for approximately ten years, they have low English proficiency. Bellen in Weda (ibid: 137) states that English proficiency of secondary school graduates is very low. According to Sujana in Takyudin (2010), he states that classroom environment i.e. the teaching mode and classroom management affect 76.6% of students' learning output.

In local area, especially in West Nusa Tenggara, students' learning output seen in their national examination result as one of output quality indicators still should be improved. In 2009, national examination result of English subject for lower secondary school in Mataram City classified as C (Sujana in Takyudin, 2010). Although in the next seven years, 2016, it already passed the national standard score (60.01) for English subject that is 79.68% (Sudarwati, 2016:49), the result might not reflect in all school in Mataram whose classroom environment should support best learning. The classroom environment many teachers approach is still as a machine rather than as a living one. That teaching is superficially done successfully, but that may not

lead to much learning that is useful for every individual in the class. The learning outcome achieved can be largely illusory.

Another important factor affecting students' learning English is their motivation to learn the language. The role of motivation in learning a foreign language is not a question. The studies on motivation have shown that motivation has direct effect on English proficiency, such as Wen and Johnson (1997) and Olshtain et.al (1990) and language achievement for example Lukmani (1972) and Olshtain et.al (1990) as cited in Setiyadi, (2006:28-29). In relation with classroom environment, students' motivation is powerfully affected by the physical and emotional atmosphere in the class (Harmer, 2006:53). Supportive and cooperative environment that suits the various students' types keeps their motivation during learning process. It is critical to create the right environments for motivated learning.

Therefore, the teachers' responsibility to learn learners' perceptions of the learning environment is invaluable. Since learning environment reflects the whole learning situation mostly contributed from student's side, their perspectives of the learning situation in their classroom are crucial to be considered. This is important to keep them motivated so they can meet the English learning objectives. It rarely exist research investigating students' perception on English language learning environment in Indonesian secondary school context and its relation with their motivation to learn the language.

Based on the research background, this research aimed at a) determining the dimension(s) of classroom environment that students perceived to have taken place most often in their English language classroom, a) examining the level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among the students in learning English language, c) investigating the relationship between the students' perceptions of classroom environment and students' intrinsic motivation in learning English language, and d) investigating the relationship between the students' perceptions of classroom environment and students' extrinsic motivation in learning English language.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Classroom Environment

According to Ghanatabadi (1991:17), one of studies of classroom environment that forms the basis for research in classroom environment is Moos Model of Determinants of Classroom Climate (1976, 1979).

Moos' model expanded upon the work of Lewin's (1935) Field Theory that an individual's behavior is strongly influenced by his/her environment and both the environment and its interaction with personal characteristics of the individual are strong determinants of human behavior and Murray's (1938) Needs-Press model. He believed that the classroom is a "*dynamic social system that includes not only teacher behavior and teacher-student interaction, but also student-student interaction* (Moos, 1979:138)." Moos' work added to the theoretical framework by including the influence environmental factors have on individuals to make effective and ineffective behavior responses in particular social settings.

Moos (1976, 1979, 1980) defines classroom environment as the ways in which interpersonal relationships help to shape human behavior, or simply stated as the personality of the classroom (Ghanatabadi, 1991:16).

Within a classroom setting, Moos (1979) has identified three discrete domains which influence the classroom social climate. 1) The relationship domain, which includes the degree of involvement, cohesion, and support in the setting. 2) The personal growth and goal orientation domain consisting of the basic goals of the environment. 3) The systems maintenance and change domain comprising the amount of orderliness, clarity of expectations, regulation or control, and innovation present in the classroom.

These three major patterns are further broken down into nine subsets. The relationship domain includes involvement, affiliation and teacher support. The personal growth domain contains task orientation and

competition. System maintenance and change consists of order and organization, rule clarity, teacher control, and innovation (Moos, 1979).

This research used Moos' theory of classroom environment since the research focus on psychological element of classroom environment and match with the research purposes. The Classroom Environment Scale developed by Moos and Trickett (1974) was used to measure the classroom environment (Moos, 1979, pp. 160-161).

Characteristics of Effective English Classroom Environment

According to Moos in Ghanatabadi (1991:22), there are three domains of social environment dimensions which can be used to characterize varied settings. They are relationship, personal growth/ goal orientation and system maintenance domain. In every characteristic of these dimensions can exert an influence on the congruence of the individual with the environment.

The importance of personality factors, individual differences, and preferred learning styles are also considered by Moos in his theory. Individuals try to create a balance between themselves and their environments. Individual differences cause people to react in ways which Moos terms "differential change". They may result from incongruence between individual characteristics and the learning environment as explained in Ghanatabadi (1991:22).

More than thinking about how students' make congruence with their classroom environment, now the task is how to create classroom environment based on the real purpose of language learning that strongly affect the students' performance in the classroom.

Littlewood in Yi (2013) has also identified a number of characteristics of an effective EFL classroom environment:

1. The learner feels strongly a communicative need using the target language in the class.
2. Adequate opportunities are provided for the learners to use the target language for personal communication.

3. There is an easy climate in the class in which the learners enjoy participating in the classroom activities.

Since the learning teaching interaction gradually moves from teacher centered to student centered (Reynolds in Setiyadi, 2006), Teachers should choose particular designs and techniques for teaching a foreign language that giving the students more chance to immerse with the language. An effective classroom environment for EFL learning must contribute to a relaxed atmosphere in which the students feel easy and eager to involve themselves into the classroom activities. Thus, it all can affect the students' personalization in the classroom to be what the language learning is actually aimed to them.

Motivation, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Motivation is a key aspect of driving someone to do things in order to achieve something. It is some kind of internal drive which pushes them to keep engaging in learning.

Motivation can be defined as "the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained" (Schunk, Pintrich, and Meece 2008:4). According to Pintrich, although many professionals feel comfortable with this cognitive perspective, considerable disagreement exists about what processes are involved in motivation, how these processes operate, how motivation relates to learning and achievement, and how motivation can be enhanced and sustained at an optimal level. Moreover, it is important to understand how these processes operate in classroom and school contexts if we are to improve education (ibid, 2008:4).

He believes that motivation is an important quality that pervades all aspects of teaching and learning. Motivated students display interest in activities, feel self-efficacious, expend effort to succeed, persist at tasks, and typically use effective task, cognitive, and self-regulatory strategies to learn (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002). However, this is a specialized definition, since motivation is not merely about interest, which can just be curiosity about a

topic, but, rather, it requires activity leading toward some goal. In the world of education, we want students not just to be interested in something, but to be actually motivated to work toward mastery or achievement.

Harmer's definition of motivation comes to explain about it. Harmer in Kitjaroonchai (2013:24) defines motivation as "*the dynamically changing cumulative arousal or internal drive in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalized and successfully or unsuccessfully acted out*".

It is accepted that motivation can come from inside and outside, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Both of them affect foreign language learners in one way or another. Harmer (2001:51) explains that intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual in form of enjoyment of learning process itself or by a desire to make them feel better for example. While extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors, for example, the need to pass the exam, the hope of financial reward, or the possibility of future travel.

This research was based on the Pintrinch and Harmer's theories of motivation in learning language. Both theories are connected strongly with students' experience in learning English.

The Relation between Classroom Environment and Motivation

The two terms, learning environment and motivation on learning, are undeniable correlated with each other. Many researches show that one or both of them effects mostly the students' English language learning and their achievement (Fraser, 1998a, 1998b, 2002a; Hanrahan, 1998; Heitzmann, 2009; Choosri & Intharaksa, 2011; Kitjaroonchai, 2013; Hannah, 2013). The learning or classroom environment also relates with the student's motivations, or exactly '*affects*' it.

As admitted by Hannah (2013:1), she says that "*the way in which a teacher organizes their class, or how they control it, will yield positive or*

negative consequences for their students.” If the environment is unmotivated or negative there will be a direct impact on the students within the classroom. Similarly, if the environment is motivated and positive they will likely have a beneficial impact on their students as well.

Kormos and Lukóczy in Heitzmann (2009:208) suggest that a negative classroom atmosphere might lead to a decrease in motivation. Weda (2016:137) asserts that teacher, lecturer, and the educational policy maker who do not design interesting and motivational teaching practices in the classroom setting causes mainly demotivating learning English language. The teachers’ unprepared and monotonous teaching method i.e. cannot explain the material clearly, not moderate, boring, and does not have sense of humor does not arouse students’ attention to take role in the teaching and learning process.

Overall, organizing classroom to create a better learning environment affects mostly the students’ motivation. The classroom environment plays a crucial role in keeping students engaged and allowing them to be successful within the classroom.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted the descriptive statistical approach. This was a correlation research. This study attempts to investigate the relationship between students’ perceptions of classroom environment and students’ motivation in learning English language that carried out to 53 students of eighth grade in SMP N 11 Mataram or 37.85% of the population.

Two instruments were used in this study: the Actual Classroom Environment Scale (ACES) developed by Moos and Trickett (1974), and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) developed by Pintrich (1986) and added with Harmer’s theory of motivation in learning.

Data obtained were analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2010 and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 23. The first research question about the dimension(s) of classroom environment the students

perceived that have taken place most often in their English language classroom and the second research question about the level of students' motivation in learning English was answered by looking for the means score. For the third and fourth research questions, SPSS was used to look for the correlation result.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

After calculating the students' perceptions shown in their responses on the two questionnaires, the data were further analyzed. The result of overall means score in each dimension shows that Rule Clarity dimension was the dimension of classroom environment the students perceived that have taken place most often in their English language classroom. It was followed by Affiliation dimension. While the rest dimension of classroom environment that are Teacher Support, Task Orientation, Order and Organization, and Involvement dimension were sometimes occurred based on the students' perceptions. Involvement dimension was the lowest overall mean score.

The result also shows that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has high level of motivation. The extrinsic motivation is higher than the intrinsic motivation.

It is shown that in general, the students' perception of their English classroom environment and their motivation in learning English was positive and significantly correlated ($r = 0.323$, $n = 53$, $p < 0.05$). TO (Task Orientation) and TS (Teacher Support) were significantly correlated with students' motivation to learn English. Based on Sarwoto's (2009) interpretation of correlation strength, their correlation was categorized moderate. It means that the correlation is found significant and positive at the moderate level of strength.

Discussion

The Dimension of Classroom Environment that the Students Perceived the Most in Their English Language Classroom

The result shows that most of the students perceived **Rule Clarity** as the dimension that often took place in their English language classrooms ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 2.44$). Rule Clarity measured the level of establishment a clear set of rules and the consequences if the students do not follow them. This means that there is clear set of rules that the English teacher nurture in the class and the students notice them.

However, there were other findings which contradict the findings obtained in this research on perceptions of classroom environment. One of them is according to Wei and Elias (2011). They found that the students rated highest in Affiliation dimension. This inconsistency might be due to the differences that every class has; even we can find it in the same school area.

The dimension which has the lowest mean score having sometimes took place in the classroom was involvement ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.97$). This means that the students rarely pay attention and participate in any classroom activities. This can be seen as one of problems affecting the students' learning achievement. Involvement here means the extent to which students have attentive interest in class activities and participate in discussions. Therefore, effective EFL classroom environment requires the students-centered and easy climate in which students are enjoy participating in the classroom activities and using the language as argued by Littlewood in Yi (2013).

In addition, 'students' high interest to know each other (Affiliation)' is the most perceived classroom environment practice. The least perceived classroom environment practice is 'students' are not clockwatching during learning in the classroom (Involvement)'. Although these two practices are belongs to the same dimension, Relationship, but Affiliation is seen to be the most helpful factor when studying English. Moos (1979) believes that interpersonal relationship in the class helps to shape students' behavior, not

only dealing with teacher behavior and student-teacher interaction, but also student-student interaction.

The Level of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation in English Language Learning

It shows that students rated their level of extrinsic motivation in their English language classroom highly, that is $M = 4.03$, $SD = 5.36$. The intrinsic motivation is rated with $M = 3.44$, $SD = 4.67$ which shows high level. This means that the students in 8th in SMP N 11 Mataram have high motivation in learning English.

Another result shows that the level of intrinsic motivation in the English language classroom was lower than the level of extrinsic motivation. This means that the students focused more on getting good grades, approval from others and future goals. This is in line with Wei and Elias (2011) research carried out to 140 students in a Malaysia secondary school.

Relationship between Students' Perception of Classroom Environment and Students' Intrinsic Motivation in Learning English Language.

In the finding, the Task Orientation and Teacher Support were positive and significantly correlated with students' intrinsic motivation in learning English. The positive significant relationship between task orientation and students' intrinsic motivation in learning English shows that when the task orientation dimension is high, the students' intrinsic will also be high. The task orientation means the extent to which it is important to complete activities planned and to stay on the subject matter. Students would be encouraged to be more on task and hence, may lead to them being motivated to learn the English Language. The finding was in line with the findings of many previous studies on motivation. For example, Nicholls (1984) in his study of 'Achievement Motivation' found that when students are intrinsically motivated, they are generally task-oriented.

The significant positive relationship between teacher support and students' intrinsic motivation in learning English shows that when the teacher support is high, the students' intrinsic will also be high. Teacher support means the amount of help, concern, and friendship the teachers direct towards the students. This was evidenced by Weda's study in 2016. The most frequently demotivating factor mentioned by the students of secondary school is demotivating English teachers (the highest mean score item: the teacher does not encourage students to participate in the classroom activity' places the highest rank with mean score). Therefore, teacher support and attention is very determining the students' engagement in learning English.

This result is contrasted with Wei and Elias's (2011) study in which affiliation is the dimension that has significant positive correlation with students' intrinsic motivation learning English language.

Overall, the students' perception of classroom environment and students' intrinsic motivation in Learning English Language has significant positive relationship. Specifically, based on Sarwoto's (2009) interpretation of correlation strength, their correlation was categorized moderate. It means that the improvement on classroom environment will affect the students' motivation in learning English in moderate level.

Relationship between Students' Perception of Classroom Environment and Students' Extrinsic Motivation in Learning English Language

In the finding, only the Task Orientation was significantly and positively correlated with students' extrinsic motivation in learning English. Task orientation emphasizes on the importance of completing activities that have been planned in their classroom. Thus, the findings shows extrinsic motivation could encourage students to take part in classroom activities and execute their responsibility as good students.

This is in line with Wei and Elias (2011), and Chua, et.al. (2009; 2011) in which task orientation is the only dimension that has significant correlation with students' extrinsic motivation learning English language.

However, the students' perception of all classroom environment dimensions and students' extrinsic motivation in learning English language has no relationship at two-tailed test as shown in Table 4.13. However, the correlation is significant at one-tailed test ($r = 0.246$, $n = 53$, $p < 0.05$). The result shows that the correlation was positive. It means that the improvement of classroom environment will not affect negatively students' extrinsic motivation in learning English.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis in the previous chapter, it can be concluded in this research that:

1. Most of 53-8th grade students perceived Rule Clarity to be the dimension of classroom environment that takes place most often in their classroom, followed by affiliation, task orientation, teacher support, order and organization and lastly, involvement.
2. Most of 53-8th grade students have high level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation but intrinsic motivation was slightly lower than the extrinsic motivation.
3. There is significant positive relationship between students' perception of English classroom learning environment and their intrinsic motivation in learning English language.
4. There is significant positive relationship between students' perception of English classroom learning environment and their extrinsic motivation in learning English language.

Suggestion

From the result of this research, the researcher recommended some suggestions to build effective classroom environment and improve the students' motivation in learning English.

1. To The School (SMPN 11 Mataram)

The researcher hopes to the institution to encourage the teachers and students to build good classroom environment, to give appreciation to the students who have good achievement, and to help students who have low achievement. By doing that, the students' motivation in learning in an ideal classroom atmosphere is intended can be improved. Thus, it can improve students' learning output.

2. For the teachers

The teacher should manage the classroom well so the environment can promote effective learning. The teacher should stimulate motivation in learning and let students find their academic activities satisfied, so they can be more active and have better progress in learning English.

3. For the students

Researcher hopes the students will keep their motivation in learning English. The students should practice English and make it as habit. The most important one is they must have a big desire to learn English. Their parents also have responsibility in giving positive encouragement to their children to learn harder and give them an understanding that English is one of important language in this era to be mastered.

4. For the future researchers

It is expected to future researcher to conduct the same research on wider aspect and population. This thesis will give some contributions and information for future researcher. So it will give good impact to the development of English education in Indonesia.

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