



The Effectiveness of English Language Learning Among Elementary School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the effectiveness of English language learning among elementary school students at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen, Aceh, Indonesia. Effective English instruction at the elementary level is essential because it provides a strong foundation for students' future language development and communication skills. This study aims to identify students' learning experiences, teaching practices, and the factors influencing the effectiveness of English language learning. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed. Data were collected through classroom observations, questionnaires, and documentation involving 100 fifth- and sixth-grade students. The findings indicate that English language learning is generally effective, as reflected in students' positive attitudes, active participation, and satisfactory understanding of the learning materials. Approximately 75% of students expressed a high interest in learning English, while 68% reported that they understood the lessons delivered by the teacher. Interactive teaching methods, including games, group discussions, and the use of visual media, were found to enhance students' engagement and motivation. However, some students continued to experience difficulties, particularly in grammar and vocabulary, indicating the need for more individualized instructional support. In addition, teacher creativity, student motivation, and support from the home environment emerged as important factors influencing learning effectiveness. The findings suggest that implementing interactive teaching strategies and strengthening collaboration between schools and families can improve the quality of English language learning at the elementary school level.

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INTRODUCTION

English language learning at the elementary school level has become a major focus in global education, considering the importance of English proficiency as an international communication tool. In this era of globalization, mastery of English not only provides access to information but also opens wider opportunities for career development and social interaction (Saputra, 2017).

Considering that English has become a global language of communication, English learning has been integrated into the basic education curriculum in Indonesia. Therefore, English proficiency is very important for children so that they can compete in the era of globalization (Indasari & Amaliati, 2023).

Elementary school is considered a critical period for language acquisition because children at this stage have greater cognitive flexibility and are more receptive to learning a second language. Early English instruction helps children develop pronunciation, vocabulary, communication skills, and confidence that become the foundation for learning English at higher educational levels. Therefore, ensuring the effectiveness of English learning during elementary education is essential for students' long-term academic development.

However, even though the English curriculum has been implemented in many elementary schools, the effectiveness of this learning process is often questioned. Several factors influence the effectiveness of English learning among elementary school students, including teaching methods, student motivation, and support from family and the school environment. These factors interact with one another. Even when schools have implemented English instruction, ineffective teaching strategies, limited learning resources, and low student engagement may reduce the quality of learning. Consequently, students often experience difficulties in understanding English and developing communication skills. Thus, the more varied the stimulation provided in the learning environment, the more optimal the process of information processing in the brain will be (Sulastri et al., 2021).

One of the major challenges affecting English learning effectiveness is students' low learning motivation and classroom participation. According to (Bayu et al., 2019) a recent survey revealed that many students do not consider English as their favorite subject. Monotonous teaching approaches, such as lectures, tend to make students less actively involved in the learning process.

(Setiyana et al., 2023) state that the low level of student participation in the learning process results in a less optimal understanding of concepts. Therefore, teachers need to present innovative and interactive learning media to increase student engagement. Good cooperation between teachers and students is a strong foundation for creating a conducive learning environment and achieving optimal learning outcomes (Sondakh & Sya, 2022).

Varied and enjoyable teaching methods can increase students' interest and engagement in learning English. The implementation of the jigsaw learning method, as one form of student-centered learning, has shown significant results in improving the quality of classroom learning (Afandi et al., 2023). The use of technology, games, and communicative approaches is often considered more

effective than traditional methods that focus more on memorization and grammar. Student-centered learning provides more opportunities for learners to actively construct knowledge through interaction and collaboration. Such learning experiences encourage critical thinking, communication, and long-term retention compared with teacher-centered instruction. Therefore, selecting appropriate instructional methods is considered one of the key determinants of effective English language learning.

In addition, student motivation plays an important role in the learning process. Students who have intrinsic motivation tend to be more active and enthusiastic in learning. Support from families, including the use of English at home and positive attitudes toward language learning, can also contribute to student success. (Tauhid et al., 2022) state that the presence of creative teachers who are able to apply various learning approaches is an important factor in optimizing children's creative potential.

Although previous studies have examined teaching methods, learning motivation, and classroom interaction in English language learning, limited studies have comprehensively evaluated the overall effectiveness of English language learning among elementary school students. Most previous research focuses on individual instructional strategies rather than evaluating whether English learning has effectively achieved its intended learning objectives. Therefore, further investigation is needed to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of English language learning at the elementary school level.

This study is important because its findings are expected to provide practical recommendations for teachers in selecting appropriate instructional strategies, support schools in improving English learning quality, and contribute to educational policymakers in strengthening English education at the elementary level. Based on the issues described above, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of English language learning among elementary school students by identifying the learning experiences, teaching practices, and factors that influence the learning process. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for teachers, schools, and policymakers in improving the quality of English language learning at the elementary school level. Drawing upon the theoretical foundations and previous studies discussed above, the conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1.

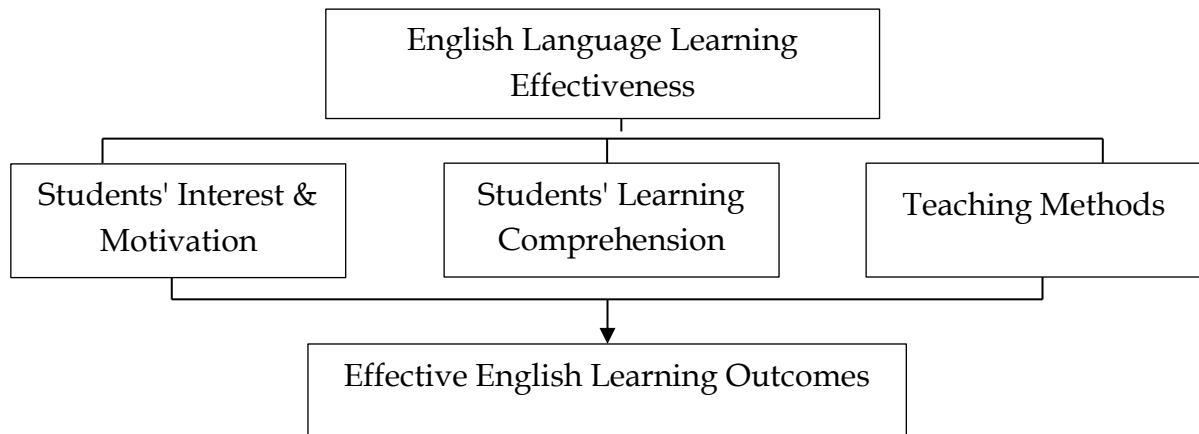


Figure 1.
Research Framework

Figure 1 illustrates that the effectiveness of English language learning is influenced by three interconnected aspects: students' interest and motivation, understanding of learning materials, and teaching methods. These components serve as the conceptual foundation of the present study and guide the analysis of the research findings.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design to explore the effectiveness of English language learning among elementary school students at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen. The research was conducted at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen, located in Bireuen, Aceh, Indonesia, on October 15, 2024. The school was selected because it provides an active English learning program and represents a suitable setting for examining students' learning experiences, teaching practices, and factors influencing English language learning effectiveness.

The population of this study consisted of approximately 200 fifth- and sixth-grade students enrolled at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen. From this population, 100 students were selected using purposive sampling. The participants were chosen because they actively participated in English language learning activities and were able to provide relevant information regarding their learning experiences. The participants represented different levels of English proficiency and learning backgrounds, enabling the researcher to obtain comprehensive information related to students' interest, motivation, understanding of learning materials, and classroom learning experiences.

By using this sample, it is expected that the research will provide a clear picture of students' interest, motivation, and understanding of the material in English language learning.

Three research instruments were employed in this study: questionnaires, classroom observation sheets, and documentation. The questionnaire was designed to collect information regarding students' interest, motivation, understanding of learning materials, and perceptions of teaching methods. Classroom observation sheets were used to record classroom interaction, students' participation, teacher instructional practices, and the use of learning media during English lessons. Documentation, including students' English examination results, was used as supporting evidence to strengthen the research findings.

Data Collection Technique

In the study on the effectiveness of English language learning at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen, several data collection techniques were used to obtain comprehensive and accurate information. The techniques are as follows:

- a. Questionnaires were designed to measure students' interest, motivation, and understanding of English language learning. Questionnaires were administered to 100 participants to obtain information regarding students' interest, motivation, understanding of learning materials, and perceptions of teaching methods. The questionnaire consisted of Likert-scale statements that allowed students to evaluate their English learning experiences.
- b. Classroom observations were conducted to examine teacher-student interaction, classroom participation, teaching methods, learning media, and students' responses during English learning activities. Observation data were recorded systematically using observation sheets to provide detailed information about the implementation of English language learning.
- c. Documentation was collected in the form of students' English examination results and other relevant school documents. These documents served as supporting data to complement the findings obtained from questionnaires and classroom observations.

By using this combination of techniques, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of English language learning at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data obtained from questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation were organized, categorized, and interpreted to identify recurring themes related to students' interest and motivation, understanding of learning materials, teaching methods, and the overall effectiveness of English language learning.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, data triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation. The use of multiple data sources helped improve the validity and consistency of the research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students' Interest and Motivation in Learning English

Questionnaire results indicated that students generally showed positive attitudes toward English language learning. Of the 100 participants, 75% reported having a high interest in learning English. Classroom observations also revealed that students actively participated in classroom activities, particularly during interactive games and group discussions. Students who demonstrated higher interest were generally more enthusiastic in responding to teachers' questions and participating in collaborative learning activities.

- a. The importance of students' interest in learning English directly contributes to their involvement in learning activities. Students who have high interest tend to be more active in attending lessons, participating in discussions, and trying to understand the material. This is important because active engagement can improve comprehension and information retention. In the study conducted at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen, about 75% of students reported having a high interest in English, which indicates good potential for effective learning. Classroom observations further showed that students were more willing to participate when teachers used interactive activities rather than conventional lectures. During these activities, students interacted confidently with both their peers and teachers, indicating that enjoyable classroom experiences contributed positively to their learning motivation.
- b. Motivation can be divided into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the students themselves, such as curiosity and a love for the language. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors, such as rewards or recognition from parents and teachers. In the context of English learning, students who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to actively engage in the learning process, while students with extrinsic motivation may focus more on outcomes, such as achieving high grades.
- c. The influence of a positive learning environment can also increase students' interest and motivation. Support from teachers, peers, and family is very important in creating a conducive atmosphere for learning. When students feel supported and appreciated, they tend to be more motivated to learn and achieve their academic goals.

- d. The use of varied and engaging teaching methods, such as games, group activities, and technology, can increase students' interest and motivation. Interactive methods make students feel more involved and enthusiastic about learning. In this study, students who participated in enjoyable activities showed improvement in both motivation and learning outcomes.

Understanding of Learning Materials in English Language Learning

Understanding the learning material is one of the important indicators of the effectiveness of English language learning, especially at the elementary school level. A good understanding of the material taught will influence students' ability to communicate and use English effectively. The following are several aspects related to students' understanding of the material in the context of English language learning in elementary schools.

- a. Students' level of understanding. In the study conducted at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen, the results showed that 68% of students felt that they understood the material being taught. Classroom observations supported these findings. Students who participated in activities involving pictures, videos, and simple language games appeared to understand learning materials more easily than those learning through teacher explanations alone. Teachers also reported that students required repeated explanations when learning grammar-related topics, whereas vocabulary activities supported by visual media were generally understood more quickly. However, about 32% of students admitted experiencing difficulties, particularly in grammar concepts and vocabulary. This indicates variations in students' comprehension abilities, which need to be considered by teachers when designing learning activities.
- b. Teaching methods greatly influence students' understanding. Interactive and enjoyable methods, such as games and group activities, help students understand the material more practically. When students are actively involved in the learning process, they tend to absorb information more easily and connect new concepts with their existing knowledge.
- c. The use of learning media, such as pictures, videos, and teaching aids, can improve students' understanding of the material. Visual media help students grasp concepts that may be difficult to explain using words alone. In classroom observations, students who learned using visual media demonstrated better understanding compared to those who learned through traditional methods that rely mainly on lectures.
- d. Observation findings also indicated that teachers regularly provided corrective feedback during classroom activities. Students responded

positively to this feedback and gradually became more confident in answering questions and completing classroom tasks.

- e. Based on questionnaire responses, several students reported receiving encouragement from their parents to study English at home. However, some students admitted that they rarely practiced English outside the classroom, which affected their confidence in using the language. Parental involvement in the learning process, such as helping children practice or read together, can enhance students' understanding.

Teaching Methods in English Language Learning

Effective teaching methods are very important in improving English language learning at the elementary school level. The use of varied strategies can help students understand the material better and increase their engagement. The following are several teaching methods that can be applied in English language learning at the elementary school level.

- a. Interactive learning involves students actively in the learning process. This method includes group discussions, language games, and practical activities. In the context of English learning, activities such as role plays or word games can make students more engaged and motivated to learn. Research results at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen showed that 70% of students actively participated in interactive classroom activities. Observation data showed that students became more actively involved during English games, pair discussions, and vocabulary matching activities. Compared with teacher-centered instruction, these activities encouraged students to communicate more confidently and participate in classroom interactions.
- b. The use of visual media, such as pictures, videos, and teaching aids, can help students understand difficult concepts. These media provide clearer context and make learning more interesting. For example, using short videos to show everyday situations can help students understand vocabulary and grammar in a more realistic context.
- c. Providing constructive feedback is an integral part of the teaching process. Clear feedback helps students understand their progress and the areas that need improvement. In addition, positive feedback can increase students' motivation and confidence in learning English.

Triangulation of Findings

To enhance the credibility of the findings, the data obtained from questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation were compared through data triangulation. The results of the triangulation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Data Source Triangulation

Research Aspect	Questionnaire	Observation	Documentation	Interpretation
Students' Interest and Motivation	75% of students reported high interest in English learning.	Students actively participated in games and group discussions.	Students with active participation generally achieved satisfactory English scores.	Students demonstrated positive interest and motivation toward English learning.
Understanding of Learning Materials	68% understood the learning materials, while 32% experienced difficulties in grammar and vocabulary.	Students showed better understanding when teachers used visual media and interactive activities.	Average English examination score was 75.	Most students understood the learning materials, although grammar remained challenging.
Teaching Methods	Students preferred interactive learning activities.	Teachers frequently implemented games, discussions, and visual media.	Students who actively participated generally achieved better learning outcomes.	Interactive teaching methods positively contributed to English learning effectiveness.

The triangulation results indicate that the findings obtained from questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation consistently support one another. Across the three data sources, students demonstrated positive interest and motivation toward English learning, satisfactory understanding of learning materials, and active participation during interactive classroom activities. This consistency strengthens the credibility of the findings and confirms that English language learning at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen was generally effective.

Discussion

The results of the study on the effectiveness of English language learning at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen show that the majority of students have a high interest in this subject. Of the 100 students surveyed, about 75% stated that they enjoyed learning English. This is a positive indication that students have intrinsic motivation to learn, which is very important in the educational process. These findings were also supported by classroom observations, which showed that students actively participated in English learning activities and demonstrated enthusiasm during interactive classroom sessions. And these findings are also consistent with the study conducted by Zhao et al. (2023), which reported that elementary school students demonstrated higher motivation and participation when English learning was implemented through authentic and interactive learning activities. Their study emphasized that enjoyable learning experiences significantly enhance students' engagement and confidence in using English. However, unlike Zhao et al. (2023), the present study does not focus on a specific instructional technology but provides a broader evaluation of the overall effectiveness of English language learning, including students' motivation, learning comprehension, and teaching practices.

The average score of students' English examinations reached 75, with 60% of students successfully exceeding the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). These results indicate that the teaching methods applied are quite effective in improving students' understanding of the material taught. However, 40% of students have not yet reached the KKM, indicating a gap in academic achievement that needs attention. This finding supports the study by Sirait (2023), who found that the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share learning model significantly improved elementary students' English learning outcomes, classroom participation, and speaking confidence. While the previous study focused on the effectiveness of one cooperative learning model, the present study investigates English learning effectiveness from multiple dimensions, including learning motivation, students' understanding, and classroom teaching methods. Documentation in the form of students' English examination scores further confirmed that students who actively participated during classroom activities generally achieved higher academic performance than those who were less engaged.

The analysis of the questionnaires distributed to students showed that 68% of students felt that they understood the material being taught. However, about 32% of students admitted experiencing difficulties in understanding certain concepts, particularly those related to grammar and vocabulary. This indicates that although the learning process is generally effective, there is still room for

improvement in the way the material is delivered, especially for students who require a more individualized approach. Similar findings were reported by Dewi et al. (2023), who concluded that the use of appropriate learning media significantly improves elementary students' understanding of English learning materials. Their study found that visual and interactive instructional media help students comprehend vocabulary and language concepts more effectively. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that students' understanding is influenced not only by learning media but also by teacher feedback, learning motivation, and family support, providing a more comprehensive perspective on English learning effectiveness. Observation findings also revealed that students experienced greater difficulty when learning grammar than vocabulary, suggesting that grammar instruction requires more varied learning strategies.

The teaching methods used by the teacher, including interactive games and group discussions, have proven successful in increasing student participation. During classroom observations, students were seen actively interacting with one another and with the teacher, creating a positive learning environment. This is in line with learning theories which state that students understand material more easily when they are actively involved in the learning process. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Zhao et al. (2023), which showed that interactive learning activities significantly increased elementary school students' participation, confidence, and English communication skills. However, while Zhao et al. focused on authentic technology-assisted English learning, the present study provides broader evidence by examining how interactive teaching practices contribute to the overall effectiveness of English language learning in regular classroom settings.

Classroom observations revealed that teachers frequently used visual media, such as pictures and videos, to explain difficult concepts. Observation data indicated that students were more attentive and demonstrated better understanding when visual media were integrated into classroom instruction. Therefore, it is important to continuously integrate technology and other learning tools into English language learning. These findings are also supported by Hori et al. (2025), who reported that integrating digital applications into English language learning improved elementary students' learning achievement, engagement, and satisfaction. Although their study specifically examined digital learning applications, the present study indicates that both digital and conventional visual media can effectively facilitate students' understanding when implemented through meaningful and interactive classroom instruction.

However, challenges still exist, particularly regarding support from the home environment. Some students reported that they do not have opportunities

to practice English outside of school. This can hinder their language mastery. Therefore, involving parents in the learning process and providing guidance on how they can support their children at home is very important.

From the perspective of data analysis, this study found that student motivation greatly contributes to the effectiveness of learning. Students with high motivation tend to be more active and achieve better learning outcomes. Therefore, it is important for teachers to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere and encourage students to participate.

Overall, the effectiveness of English language learning at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen shows positive results, but further efforts are needed to improve teaching methods and provide greater support for students. By addressing the existing challenges and strengthening the positive aspects of learning, it is expected that students will be able to achieve optimal English language proficiency.

CONCLUSION

The study on the effectiveness of English language learning at State Elementary School 20 Bireuen shows positive results, with the majority of students demonstrating a high level of interest and achieving good average scores. Interactive teaching methods, such as the use of games and visual media, have successfully increased students' active participation and their understanding of the material. Nevertheless, some students still experience difficulties, particularly in aspects of grammar and vocabulary, indicating the need for a more individualized approach in teaching.

Student motivation plays an important role in the success of the learning process, and the home environment also influences the development of their English language abilities. Therefore, it is important to involve parents in supporting the learning process. By maintaining effective teaching methods and addressing existing challenges, State Elementary School 20 Bireuen can further improve the quality of English language learning, enabling students to achieve better language proficiency in the future.

Future research is recommended to involve a larger number of participants from different elementary schools to provide a broader understanding of the effectiveness of English language learning in various educational contexts. In addition, further studies may employ mixed-methods or comparative research designs to obtain more comprehensive findings and examine the effectiveness of specific teaching strategies, learning media, or parental involvement in improving students' English language learning outcomes.

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