

# The Correlation Between Students' Interest and Students' Achievement in Learning English

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## Abstract

*The article aims to investigate whether there is significant correlation between students' interest and students' achievement in learning English at SMA Swasta Pertiwi Medan. The techniques used to collect the data are observation and questionnaire. The researcher selected 30 students as a sampling from Grade X IA2. The Finding of the study is the students' interest could influence the in achievement. Students who have high interest try to pursue knowledge more than who have the low one. They tend to be more attentive in learning the lesson and motivation to enrich their vocabulary, to practice their English and do a lot of exercises to make them more skillful in using English. Based on the research finding, the conclusion is that there is a correlation between students' interest and their achievement. It is suggested to (1) to teacher who teaches English in the classroom need to ensure that student realize that both high and low interest gets attention, (2) the teacher has to manage the classroom to help the students think creatively.*  
**Keywords:** *Achievement in Learning English, Students' Interest*

## Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah ada hubungan yang signifikan antara minat siswa dengan prestasi belajar bahasa Inggris di SMA Swasta Pertiwi Medan. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah observasi dan angket. Peneliti memilih 30 siswa sebagai sampel dari kelas X IA2. Temuan penelitian adalah minat siswa dapat mempengaruhi dalam prestasi. Siswa yang memiliki minat tinggi berusaha untuk menuntut ilmu lebih banyak daripada yang memiliki minat rendah. Mereka cenderung lebih perhatian dalam mempelajari pelajaran dan motivasi untuk memperkaya kosa kata mereka, melatih bahasa Inggris mereka dan melakukan banyak latihan untuk membuat mereka lebih terampil dalam menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian dapat disimpulkan bahwa ada hubungan antara minat siswa dengan prestasi belajarnya. Disarankan kepada (1) kepada guru yang mengajar bahasa Inggris di kelas perlu memastikan bahwa siswa menyadari bahwa minat tinggi dan rendah mendapat perhatian, (2) guru harus mengelola kelas untuk membantu siswa berpikir kreatif.  
**Kata Kunci :** *Pencapaian dalam Belajar Bahasa Inggris, Minat Siswa*

## 1. Introduction

English is an important language. From this fact, it can be understood that English is a vital means of communication for million so people around the world. During the twentieth century, numerous technological inventions and development, such as telephone, electronic mail, etc. have facilitated communication between people from all of life and the language that issued most is English, most of the scientific, technological and academic information in the world is expressed in English and over 80% of all the information stored in electronics retrieval systems is in English. Almost all countries have adapted English used as a compulsory subject at school. In Indonesia, English is the subject learned by the students in the formal or nonformal education. It started form primary school and up to university. Therefore, the mastery of English is imperative for Indonesian students.

However, most students do not master English yet. They could not absorb the knowledge from the book or other media without mastering English. This is proven by the low level of students' scores. As the following quotes proves, "Understanding English, or any language, is not easy. Language problems are very complicated and unlike any other problems we meet. They are also, for everybody, unavoidable problem. The writer argued most people think those factors which effect in the achievement of the objective in learning are not only limited to intelligence, age and environment, but it also depends on many factors, one of them is interest. As Muhibbin stated "interest affects the quality of students' learning achievement in many field of certain study." (*minat dapat mempengaruhi kualitas pencapaian hasil belajar siswa dalam bidang studi tertentu*). Moreover, students' achievement is also affected through interactive media used by teachers (Amin&Zulfitri, 2021; Hasibuan&Prawiyata, 2021; Lubis et al, 2021). Because the writer agrees that interest is a feeling or emotion that causes attention to focus on an object or an event or a process. The interest in English is very important to increase in English learning. Some of students who are lazy in educational activities, it can be caused by one of factors that is low interest. They look bored while studying, like to make noise, disturb their friends, make a joke on their teacher performance, sleepy, day dreaming, go to toilet many times, and leave the subject. On the other hand, we have seldom heard that the success or failure of teaching is possibly by the students' interest. Based on the background above, it is necessary to do evaluation of students on SMA Swasta Pertiwi Medan. The general question of this study is "is there any correlation between students' interest and their achievement in learning English? And to specify this problem the specific research is formulated as follows: How well is the correlation between students' interest and their achievement in learning English?"

## 2. Literature Review

Every individual had tendency deal with something in the environment. If it gives something good to them, possible, they will interest to Interesting of something is arising from the individual's interested to something because of their requirement or their feeling that something –they will be learned–will mean for them. Students who have certain needs or desires toward something, they will have high interest a more enthusiastic to achieve what they want to do as Sardiman said "interest is a condition that occurred when someone see characteristic of situation that is correlated with his/her own need and desire." (Minat diartikan sebagai suatu kondisi yang terjadi apabila seseorang melihat ciri-ciri atau arti sementara situasi yang dihubungkan dengan keinginan-keinginan atau kebutuhan- kebutuhannya sendiri). When it happened, he or she will be easily to learn something. "Thus, students' interest in and excitement about what they're learning is one of the most important factors in education. Interest motivates people to choose the best and the most interesting activity in their life. Because each activity has own characteristic, people always select activities and thing those are interesting. Furthermore, Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow stated that: "an interest is a motivating force that impels an individual toward participation in one activity rather than another. It indicates that interest provide a strong motivation to learn. Ahmad D. Marimba said that "interest is tendency to something that we feel there is an importance to something with happy feeling to something"<sup>7</sup>(*minat adalah kecenderungan jiwa pada sesuatu, karena kita merasa ada kepentingan dengan sesuatu itu, pada umumnya disertai dengan perasaan senang akan sesuatu itu*). According to some definitions above the writer conclude that interest is feeling like and attention to somebody, something or activity, that make thepeople give full attention to something which taking someone's fancy without command or compulsion from outside There are some factors that influence the interest and it affects on their communication skill (Wariyati et al, 2020). The writer includes them to the questionnaire, such as: Enjoyment, Motivation, Attention, Need and Desire. Achievement is a measure of the quality and or the quantity of the success one has in the mastery of knowledge, skills, or understandings. References to academic achievement, for example, usually involve performance in such areas as reading, mathematics, science, or social studies. And every kind of learning activity would produce a special change, namely learning outcome which is shown in an achievement given by the students, such as calling the letters in alphabets consecutively. (dan segala macam kegiatan belajar akan menghasilkan suatu perubahan khusus, dinamakan hasil belajar yang ditunjukkan dalam sebuah prestasi oleh siswa, dalam bentuk huruf secara teratur). In other words, the students' purpose in learning is the best achievement. Horn by stated that "achievement is a thing done successfully, especially with an effort and skill. In other word, it is somethings that will get after accomplish edit. Norman E. Gronlund stated that "achievement is what a pupil has learned. It means

that achievement is the result of students gain after following an instructional process. Sukmadinata said that “achievement of the lesson can be signed with number or letter. The number 0-10 at elementary until middle education and the letter A, B, C, D at the high education. (tingkat penguasaan pelajaran atau hasil belajar dalam mata pelajaran dilambangkan dengan angka-angka atau huruf, angka 0-10 pada pendidikandasar dan menengah dan huruf A, B,C, D pada pendidikan tinggi). This statement tells us the achievement is realization of students’ abilities. Learning is a matter that related with a life. Life is a lesson. By learning, people know how to live. Because of learning is a process that happens for a long time and through many steps, it will make someone change in certain aspect in his own self. For instance, get dress, use washing machine, ride the motorcycle, etc. They can be one after learning. According to Henry Smith, “learning is the acquisition of new behavior or the strengthening or weakening of old behavior as the result of experience. David in his book Educational Psychology defines. learning as the process whereby an organism changes its behavior as a result of experience. Ray Loree defines “learning as a relatively permanent change of behavior that occurs as a result of experience or practice. Changes in behavior may occur because of a change in the level of individual interest. An additional definition stated by Jane S., Halonen, she said that learning is relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs through experience. This description tells us that an alteration of learning is relatively stable. Through experiences students also learned that they need to study in order to do well on a test.

### 3. Method

The researcher used correlation between two variables. In popular usage the term correlation refers to any type of relationship between events or objects. In statistical correlation, there must be two measures for each subject (person) in a group. If this condition is satisfied, the data can be inserted into a statistical formulation which will reveal the type and strength of the relationship understudy. The writer compared two variables. Those are the students’ interest scores and the students’ achievement scores. Those variables were gained by following in teaching learning process. The observation is used to observe the teaching learning conducted by the English teacher in the classroom including his activity, the media used, and his performance in the classroom. The documentations are used to gain the data about teaching preparation made by English teacher. And the writer copied the final score of 30 students to compare with the result of the questionnaire. The questionnaires are used to gain the data about students’ interest in learning English. By giving 20 items number of question and contain 5 indicators; enjoyment, motivation, attention, need, and desire. Interview is used to ask the English teacher about managing the classroom related to increasing students’ interest. In this research, the writer gets the data which related to Teaching learning English by doing. The writer got the data about teacher’s preparation and the students’ final score. It was carried out by copying them from administration. The questionnaire is taken form interest questionnaire which consists of 20 test items and has 5 indicators; enjoyment, motivation, attention, need, and desire. It also used the Likert scale; it shows on the table:

No	Indicator	Total		Item Number
		Positive	Negative	
1	Enjoyment	4	1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6.
2	Motivation	3	2	5, 7, 8, 9, 10.
3	Attention	2	2	11, 12, 13, 14.
4	Need	2	1	15, 16, 17.
5	Desire	2	1	18, 19, 20.
Total		13	7	

In this step, the writer uses the correlation technique. The writer comparesthe score of students’ interest and their achievement in learning English. This technique is useful to prove statistically whether there is any significant correlation between two variables. To find the correlation between students’ interest and their achievement in learning English, the writer used the product-moment correlation coefficientformula. The formula is:

$$r_{XY} = \frac{\Sigma XY - \frac{(\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{N}}{\sqrt{\Sigma X^2 - \frac{(\Sigma X)^2}{N} - \frac{(\Sigma Y)^2}{N}}}$$

$r^{xy}$  : correlation coefficient between X and Y

$\Sigma^{xy}$  : sumcross products of deviation for X and Y

$\Sigma^x$  : total score for X

$\Sigma^y$  : total score for Y

N : Number of case

#### 4. Result and Discussion

##### 4.1 Result

The Correlation between the students' interest and their English learning achievement. From the calculation above, it was known that  $r_{xy} = 0,754$  and  $df = 28$ ; if we compare with the table of "r" values at the degree of significance of 5% and 1%, then the correlation between students' interest in learning English and their English learning achievement is significant ( $r_{xy} = 0,754 > 0,361$  ;  $r_{xy} = 0,754 > 0,463$ ).

"r" Value of ProductMoment	Interpretation
00,0 - 0,20	Considered as no correlation
0,20 - 0,40	Low correlation
0,40 - 0,70	Medium correlation
0,70 - 0,90	Strong correlation
0,90 - 1,00	Very strong/perfect correlation

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the correlation index ( $r_{xy} = 0,754$ ) is in the interval of 0,60 – 0,80, this means that the correlation belong to " strong correlation ". In the other words, there is a positive correlation between variable X and variable Y.

##### 4.2 Discussion

Based on the data, there is a significant correlation between students' interest and their English learning achievement. The writer interprets the strong correlation is responsibility; both of the teacher and the student have a responsibility in teaching learning process. Teacher who has a responsibility in teaching, he will give good and clear explanations about the lesson; by doing games or sing a song. Then the students will feel happy and they will get the information easily. Of course, they will have a responsibility in doing teachers' order well. In other hand, the teacher gets the students' interest by the way of his teaching. Students who have high interest try to pursue knowledge more than who have the low one. They tend to be more attentive in learning the lesson. They enjoy and ready to do any task given by teacher. They learn English in school and also out of the school. They are motivated to enrich their vocabulary, to practice their English and do a lot of exercises to make them more skillful in using English, and interactive teaching materials will lead to the more meaningful learning process (Suliana&Hasibuan, 2021; Risnawaty et al, 2021)

Beside that, high interest in learning makes students possible concentrate on learning English lesson. The more the students' concentrate on the lesson, the better the achievement they obtain, because concentration can increase their motivation. When people are internally motivated to do something because it either brings them pleasure, they think it is

important, or they feel that what they are learning is significant. High motivated students can arise a feeling and emotional connection to the lesson in which it can be achieved through several projects (Lubis et al., 2020). The students who have a feeling and emotional connection to the material, they easier activate previous experience, and then the retention can be enhanced. Therefore their English achievement is better. As mentioned before, from the result of the calculation, the value of  $r_{xy}$  is 0,754; df is 28 if it is compared with the  $r_t$  at the degree of significance 5% (0,361) and 1% (0,463), the correlation between students' interest and their English learning achievement is significant ( $r_{xy} : r_t = 0,754 > 0,361$ ;  $r_{xy} ; r_t = 0,754 > 0,463$ ). So, the null hypothesis of the research is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The meaning of this statement is the students' interest and in learning English has a significant correlation with their English learning achievement that can be done with a very interactive and joyful classroom (Arfanti, 2021; Lubis et al., 2018). It is believed that teacher plays an important role in creating enjoyable classroom (Ramadhani&Selian, 2021)

## 5. Conclusion

According to the description of the data that mentioned in the previous chapter, the writer concluded that there is a significant correlation between the students' interest and their achievement in learning English. The students' interest could influence their achievement. If the students do not have an interest of learning English they will have difficulty to absorb the lesson. Of course in answering the question they can not do it well, and then they will get bad scores. Whereas, the students with high interest tend to be more attentive in learning English, of course, with the high frequency of attendance. Finally, they will get good scores. In other words, the more they learn and the more attentive they follow the lesson, the better English they will acquire.

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