

AN ANALYSIS OF THE 7th GRADE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PROBLEM IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT SMPN 2 SAWAHLUNTO

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine whether 7th grade junior high school students have a problem in learning English as a foreign language or not at SMPN 2 Sawawahlunto in the 2022/2023 academic year. The sample is 168 students and the instrument used is a questionnaire. The researcher used the Alpha formula to analyze the reliability of the questionnaire, which showed that it was highly reliable with a reliability index of 0.73. After analyzing the data, 88 students (52%) had problems in learning English, and 80 students (48%) found no problems.

Keywords: *Problem, learning, English, internal, external.*

INTRODUCTION

English is the most widely spoken language in the world and is essential for connecting with the global community. English is also the only language that is universally recognized and used to communicate with people in various parts of the world [1]. As a developing country and part of the world community, Indonesia is aware of the importance of mastering the English language; therefore, teaching English is to be applied in Indonesian education and it is taught from junior high school to university. On its application, English in the Indonesian educational system went through a few adjustments and developments. It can be seen from the transition of educational curriculum that affects English as a school subject in Indonesia.

The ability to comprehend English as a foreign language, either orally or in written form is one of the academic skills taught in Indonesian schools [2]. English as a foreign language that is taught at junior high school should aim to make students qualified to master English. However, students face a variety of problems while learning English. The children's reactions when they learn foreign language for the first time is various, primarily because it is different from their native language [3]. Factors that influence learning problems are divided into two categories: internal problem (those that originate within the student) and external problem (those that originate outside the student) [4]. Internal and external problems include physiology,

psychology from internal and social, non – social environment from external problem. These problems make students find difficulties to adjust themselves in learning English.

Based on the issue above, it is undoubtedly a challenge for junior high school students who learn this subject from the ground up. Besides, the fact that these students have lack basic skills or are still unfamiliar with English subjects makes it difficult for them to understand during the learning process. This can be proven when the researcher taught English voluntarily to elementary school students in grades 4th to 6th and junior high school students at the Adinegoro library as part of a library-based inclusion program in Sawahlunto City.

As previously stated, since junior high school students learn English as their first time learning a new foreign language, the researcher was interested in conducting research regarding the 7th-grade junior high school students' problem in learning English as a foreign language at SMPN 2 Sawahlunto.

METHOD

The design of this research is descriptive research. Descriptive research is a research which involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study [5]. The population of this research is the 7th grade junior high school students in SMP N 2 Sawahlunto and The sampling technique

used in this research was total sampling which consists of 168 students.

The instrument of this research is a questionnaire that contains 20 questions. The Likert scale was used as the measurement scale in this research to measure students' problems in learning English as a foreign language. To measure the instrument validity, the researcher asked expert judgment (Dra. Ernati M.Pd) as the advisor to validate content validity of the instrument. Alpha formulation was used to determine the instrument's reliability. the result of the reliability index was 0.73. Based on the reliability index result, the instrument was reliable.

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to collect the data, and the students were given 30 minutes to fill out the questionnaire. Next, after collecting the responses, the researcher read and graded the score of the students' answers on the questionnaire. Then, the researcher calculated the mean of the students' scores, counted the percentage of the students, and classified the students who have and have no problem in learning English.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

After analyzing the data, it was found that there are 88 students (52%) who have a problem, and 80 students (48%) have no problem in learning English at SMPN 2 Sawahlunto. In order to be clear, see table below.

Table 1. The Students' Problems in Learning English

Students' Problem	Number of Student		Percentage	
	Have Problem	Have No Problem	Have Problem	Have No Problem
Problem in Learning English	88	80	52%	48%
Internal Problem	88	80	52%	48%
External Problem	94	74	56%	44%

Based on the data from the questionnaire, students' problems were commonly from the external problem aspects, it referring to the item of the questionnaire. Students faced external problem in learning English, including social and non-social environment aspects.

Second, the result of the data analysis showed that 88 students (52%) have internal problem, while 80 students (48%) have no internal problem in learning English. Furthermore, the internal problem is categorized into physiology and psychology aspects. See table below for detailed information

Table 2. The Students' Internal Problems in Learning English

Students' Problem	Number of Student		Percentage	
	Have Problem	Have No Problem	Have Problem	Have No Problem
Internal Problem	88	80	52%	48%
Physiology	119	49	71%	29%
Psychology	93	75	55%	45%

Based on the students' scores from the questionnaire, the physiological aspect became the main problem that the students face. Students face learning problems if they feel unfit and have issues regarding their physical health.

Third, the result of this research showed that 94 students (56%) have an external problem, while 74 students (44%) have no external problem in learning English. The external problem is categorized into two: social environment and non-social environment aspects. For detailed information, see table below.

Table 3. The Students' External Problems in Learning English

Students' Problem	Number of Student		Percentage	
	Have Problem	Have No Problem	Have Problem	Have No Problem
External Problem	94	74	56%	44%
Social Environment	107	61	64%	36%
Non-social Environment	89	79	53%	47%

Based on their scores from the questionnaire, the main problem comes from the social environment aspect. They do not have a friend or society that supports them to be their partner in learning English.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The 7th grade students of SMPN 2 Sawahlunto have problems in learning English with percentage 52% in term of external problem as the main problem (56%). 52% seventh grade students of SMPN 2 Sawahlunto have an internal problem in learning English as a foreign language, especially physiological aspects (71%). 56% of seventh grade students of SMPN 2 Sawahlunto faced an external problem in learning English as a foreign language. Social environment as the main problem (64%).

Since the result of this research showed that the external problem is as the main problem, the leaders of the school, especially the Headmaster of SMPN 2 Sawahlunto suggested to provide a school environment that supports a good atmosphere for practicing English language. As for the English teacher, they ought to create a learning atmosphere that supports students in practicing English language learning in the classroom, school environment, and society. Lastly, the future researchers are suggested to implement similar research at other levels of education, different problems, and perhaps in different cities.

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