

Exploring English Teacher Strategies to Promote Motivation in Senior High School Learners

Riska Amalia

riska.amalia@gmail.com

Universitas Negeri Makassar

La Sunra*

la.sunra@unm.ac.id

Universitas Negeri Makassar

*corresponding author

Fitri Radhiyani

fitri.radhiyani@unm.ac.id

Universitas Negeri Makassar

Abstract

This study examines the strategies used by English teachers at SMAN 1 Barru to promote students' motivation in learning English. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through classroom observations and interviews with teachers. The findings identify two main strategies: Active Learning and Reward Strategies. Active Learning includes group discussions, gamified quizzes, and brainstorming, which encourage student engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. Reward Strategies involve social rewards such as verbal praise and public recognition, as well as material rewards like certificates and bonus points, all aimed at reinforcing positive learning behaviors. These strategies have significantly increased student motivation, resulting in higher levels of participation, confidence, and enthusiasm in English classes. The study offers useful insights for educators and suggests further research on the long-term impact of these strategies and additional methods to sustain motivation in diverse educational settings.

Keywords: Motivation, teaching strategies, active learning, reward system, English language learning.

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the demand for English proficiency has grown due to globalization, prompting both formal and informal learning among students. However, beyond necessity, cultivating a genuine interest in English is crucial, particularly among young learners. Making learning enjoyable such as through games can increase engagement and motivation (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). McCloskey (2014) emphasizes eight principles for teaching English to young learners, including active roles, collaboration, comprehensible input, and validation of home culture. Teachers must therefore be creative in their teaching strategies and material selection to enhance student understanding (Pungki, 2019).

Motivation plays a vital role in language acquisition, often cited as the most critical factor in student success (Seven, 2020; Ahmed, 2015). It includes intrinsic motivation, influenced by classroom experiences, and extrinsic motivation, influenced by external factors. Teachers should understand student motivations and employ engaging strategies to maintain interest and make learning habitual. While high motivation facilitates teaching, various internal and external factors can hinder it (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Thongsri, 2019).

Several studies have examined how teaching strategies influence motivation. Purmama et al. (2019) found that students at MTS Mathla'ul Anwar Sukaguna were motivated by creative methods like games. Hussain & Farid (2020) revealed contextual differences between Saudi and Pakistani learners, highlighting the need for environment-specific strategies.

Despite these insights, limited research has explored motivational strategies in the context of SMAN 1 Barru. While existing literature discusses teaching methods and cognitive strategies, the specific ways teachers at SMAN 1 Barru foster motivation remain underexplored. Preliminary observations suggest teachers use varied approaches, but challenges like student disinterest and limited technology persist.

This research aims to investigate the specific strategies English teachers use to develop student motivation at SMAN 1 Barru. It seeks to provide valuable insights for future researchers, educators, and institutions in enhancing English language motivation among students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategy can be defined as a plan, method or series activities to achieve particular educational goal (Richards, Jack & Rodgres, 1986). This plan encompasses the lesson's structure, instructional objectives, and an outline of the tactics required to execute the strategy.

According to David (1976) strategies are implemented to achieve success in reaching objectives. While strategy and method are distinct concepts, they are interconnected.

A strategy is a comprehensive plan designed to accomplish a goal, whereas a method is the practical means of executing the strategy. In other words, a strategy constitutes an operational plan aimed at achieving a specific goal, and the method involves the techniques employed to reach that end.

Based on the definitions, teaching strategies can be understood as carefully designed plans by educators to achieve specific educational objectives. Learning strategies involve a comprehensive approach to organizing activities by integrating the sequence of actions, resources, materials, and time utilized in the learning process. This integration is aimed at actively and efficiently achieving the predetermined learning goals.

English Teachers' Strategies

Effective teaching strategies are essential in enhancing students' motivation to learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL). These strategies begin with a thoughtful analysis of learners' needs, learning goals, and teaching preferences (Hayati et. al, 2021). EFL teachers must also consider students' social and intellectual backgrounds and classroom conditions to carry out their roles effectively (Pungki, 2019). In the EFL context, motivation plays a crucial role, and teacher strategies greatly influence learning success.

Two key strategies discussed in the literature are active learning and the reward system. Active learning emphasizes student involvement in the learning process through interactive and engaging tasks. It shifts the focus from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered activities, enhancing understanding and retention (Freeman et al., 2014; Prince, 2004). Techniques such as group discussions, jigsaw activities, gamified quizzes, gallery walks, concept maps, brainstorming, mastery learning, and hot seat activities have been shown to foster participation and motivation (Silberman, 2019).

The reward system is another widely used motivational strategy. Based on (Deci & Ryan, 2008), rewards can increase engagement when they support students' intrinsic goals. Rewards are categorized into material (e.g., points, or gifts) and social (e.g., praise, gestures, or approval) types (Hamacheck, 1990). Material rewards can encourage short-term participation and achievement (Cahya et al., 2018) but should be used carefully to avoid over-reliance on extrinsic motivation (Ma, 2023). Social rewards, on the other hand, contribute to a supportive and encouraging environment that builds student confidence and engagement (Maulana & Budianto, 2022).

When used thoughtfully, both strategies contribute to a positive classroom atmosphere. They help reduce learning anxiety, promote active participation, and support long-term motivation and academic success in English language learning (Li & Lynch, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2021).

The Motivation for Learning a Foreign Language

The acquisition of English as a second or foreign language is a global priority, with learner motivation playing a central role in language learning outcomes. Motivation, influenced by cognitive, emotional, and behavioral factors, significantly affects a learner's commitment and success (Santrock, 2011). Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model distinguishes between integrative motivation a desire to connect with the language's cultural community and instrumental motivation, driven by utilitarian goals such as employment or academic advancement. These orientations are foundational to understanding language learning behavior.

Kember (2016) further divides motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic categories. Intrinsic motivation stems from internal interest and satisfaction in the learning process itself. Learners with this form of motivation engage voluntarily and find the activity inherently rewarding (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Key factors influencing intrinsic motivation include self-efficacy, curiosity, goal orientation, interest, and perceived value (Laeli, 2019).

Extrinsic motivation, by contrast, is driven by external factors such as rewards or fear of punishment (Kember, 2016). While it can initiate engagement, it may not lead to sustained learning or deep comprehension. Extrinsically motivated students may focus on grades, praise, or avoiding failure. According to Laeli (2019), extrinsic motivation is primarily influenced by reward and punishment, which act as external reinforcements of behavior.

Brown (2001) emphasizes that integrative/instrumental and intrinsic/extrinsic motivations are distinct yet intersecting frameworks that help explain learner engagement. Together, these theories underscore the importance of addressing both internal and external motivational factors in designing effective English language instruction.

METHOD

Research Design

This qualitative study, following Creswell's (2013) approach, explored strategies used by English teachers to motivate students at SMAN 1 Barru. Data were collected through open-ended questions, focusing on teaching practices, challenges, and solutions. The responses were coded and analyzed thematically, drawing on motivational theories by Gardner (1985), Kember (2016), and Deci and Ryan (2000). The findings offer insights into enhancing student motivation and language learning.

Research Site and Participant

This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Barru, located in South Sulawesi, chosen due to the researcher's prior experience with the school and its active implementation of programs to develop teachers' strategies. The research focused on English teachers' methods to enhance student motivation. Three English teachers and six students participated, selected for their diverse teaching styles, experiences, and engagement levels. Classroom observations and interviews were used to gain insights into the motivational strategies employed in English language learning.

Instruments of the Research

This research used two instruments: observations and interviews. Observations involved firsthand, open-ended data gathering through watching and listening to events during the teaching-learning process, aiming to identify strategies teachers used to motivate students (Creswell, 2013). Interviews, as a purposeful interaction, allowed the researcher to understand participants' attitudes, interests, and feelings (Malik & Hamied, 2014). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with English teachers and students at SMA Negeri 1 Barru. These interviews were designed to explore how teachers implemented strategies to enhance student motivation, allowing for flexible and in-depth responses, providing valuable insights into the teaching practices at the school.

Data Analysis

This research used descriptive qualitative data analysis, following Miles and Huberman's (2014) framework, involving three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data condensation phase, raw data from observations and interviews were transcribed, organized, and categorized into key themes. The data display stage involved presenting the reduced data in structured forms. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and connections within the data, leading to the research's findings.

FINDINGS

EFL Teacher Strategies Used to Develop Students' Motivation in Learning the English Language at SMAN 01 Barru

In the process of English language learning within the classroom, EFL teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring the effectiveness and success of the learning process. It is imperative for

educators to possess a comprehensive understanding of how to design and implement engaging instructional strategies that capture students' attention, thereby fostering their motivation to learn, particularly in the context of English language learning. EFL teachers should be equipped with the ability to create a conducive and stimulating classroom environment, encourage active student participation, and employ pedagogical methods that enhance students' motivation throughout the learning process.

This research focuses on the strategies employed by teachers (T1, T2, T3) to develop students' motivation in learning English. Based on the theories proposed by (Silberman, 2013) and Deci & Ryan (2008), this research examines several strategies that developing students' motivation, namely the Active Learning Strategy; 1) Group Discussion, 2) Gamified Quiz, 3) Brainstorming and the Reward Strategy; 1) Material Reward, 2) Social Reward.

Implementing Active Learning Strategies

a. Group Discussion

T1 use active learning strategies to engage students. This approach enhances student participation, motivation, and meaningful learning. By dividing students into mixed-ability and gender groups, teachers encourage collaboration, helping students develop social skills and a sense of responsibility, as supported by interview results:

Extract 1 (T1, 17/10/2024)

"I usually divide students into several groups consisting of 5-6 people with different abilities and genders. The purpose of this cooperative learning strategy is to foster a sense of responsibility in students, provide equal opportunities for each student to succeed in learning, and develop students' social skills."

In classroom T1, the teacher applied active learning strategies to engage students. She used Group Discussion, dividing students into diverse groups of 5–6 members, promoting peer learning and participation. Observation Note: "*Guru menggunakan metode Focus Group Discussion dalam proses pembelajaran materi grammar.*" She also incorporated interactive learning with student-led presentations and discussions. Observation Note: "*Guru menggunakan interaktif learning dengan melakukan metode presentasi dua arah antara kelompok presentasi dan siswa lain.*" These strategies ensured full student involvement, fostering collaboration and deeper understanding. Observation Note: "*Guru menggunakan active learning melalui group work dan presentasi sehingga seluruh siswa terlibat dalam proses pembelajaran.*"

Based on observations, T2 employs group discussion as a key teaching strategy. Active learning is evident in tasks like drafting and reviewing CVs, peer revisions, and analyzing cover letters. Observation Notes: "*Siswa bekerja dalam kelompok untuk membuat dan membahas CV mereka*" and "*Siswa bekerja dalam kelompok untuk menilai dan merevisi CV teman mereka*" Group discussion is integral to T2's approach, fostering collaboration and student engagement in analyzing work.

This finding is further supported by the interview results, where Miss T2 explicitly stated that she uses cooperative learning strategies, including interactive methods like group discussions. Initially, she employed a teacher-centered approach, but over time, she realized that

students were more engaged when she incorporated interactive and student-centered techniques. She explained that her teaching strategies are adapted to the students' characteristics, choosing group discussions based on the specific needs of the class. As she mentioned in the interview:

Extract 2 (T2, 16/10/2024)

T2: "When I first started my career as a teacher, I used group discussion teaching strategy. However, over time, I realized that my students were more engaged when I incorporated different teaching methods."

In addition, based on observation results, T3 implements the group discussion method in his teaching. The observation checklist indicates that he uses group discussions during lessons, as noted: "*Guru menggunakan metode FGD pada saat pembelajaran. Setiap kelompok naik mempresentasikan materi Descriptive text dan kelompok lain akan memberi pertanyaan*" T3 also integrates interactive discussions to enhance student engagement, as described: "*Guru menggunakan interaktif aktivitas seperti kegiatan diskusi interaktif antara siswa yang melakukan presentasi dan audiens*" These activities ensure that every student actively participates in the learning process, as noted: "*Guru melibatkan seluruh siswa dengan berdiskusi saat presentasi dan tugas kelompok*".

The interview findings support the observation, with T3 stating that he uses project-based learning and contextual teaching strategies to make lessons more meaningful. He emphasized that interaction and discussion are crucial for fostering comprehension and motivation, noting that group discussions play a key role in developing students' critical thinking and communication skills. As he mentioned in the interview:

Extract 3 (T3, 18/10/2024)

T3: "I use a project-based method, where students work in groups, engage in discussions, present their findings, and allowing students to practice their skills in real-life situations rather than just learning abstract concepts."

b. Gamified Quiz

Based on observations, T2 incorporates gamified quizzes, such as Quizizz, into her teaching strategy to enhance student engagement and motivation in learning English. Observation Notes: "*Guru menggunakan media TV smart dan Quizizz dalam metode pembelajaran*". She integrates interactive tools to create an engaging classroom environment, where students actively participate in quizzes. Checklist Notes: "*Guru membuat pelajaran semakin menarik dengan menggunakan Quizizz*" and "*pada saat kuis, guru merayakan dan memberikan apresiasi berupa hadiah bintang*".

This finding is further supported by the interview results, where T2 explicitly mentioned her use of digital platforms to make her lessons more interactive and engaging. She also emphasized that using gamified quizzes helps students stay motivated and actively participate in learning. She stated:

Extract 4 (T2, 16/10/2024)

T2: "I explore interactive tools like Quizzes to make learning more fun and engaging. Right now, I'm still studying and experimenting with various digital media tools to find the most interesting and effective ways to support my students' learning. My goal is to create a more dynamic and enjoyable classroom experience that keeps students motivated and involved."

In addition, based on the results of observations, T3 incorporates gamified quizzes as part of his teaching methodology. The observation checklist indicates that "*Guru menggunakan aplikasi kuis interaktif untuk menguji pemahaman siswa.*" This approach serves to engage students actively in the learning process while simultaneously evaluating their comprehension. By integrating gamification elements, T3 creates a more dynamic and enjoyable classroom environment, encouraging students to participate and stay motivated.

The findings from the interview further support this observation. T3 explained that he employs various interactive teaching methods, including the use of gamified quizzes, to maintain student engagement. He highlighted that these quizzes not only serve as an assessment tool but also as a motivational strategy to make learning more appealing. He believes that gamification helps students focus and enhances their enthusiasm for learning English.

Extract 5 (T3, 18/10/2024)

T3: (... "I use interactive quiz applications to test students' understanding of the lesson. These gamified quizzes help create a fun and engaging atmosphere, making students more eager to participate. It is an effective way to assess their knowledge while keeping them motivated throughout the lesson.

c. Brainstorming

Based on the observations, T2 utilizes brainstorming as one of her teaching strategies to enhance student engagement and critical thinking. Observation Notes: "*Guru memberikan beberapa pertanyaan stimulasi kepada siswa.*" She applies inquiry-based learning and critical questions at the beginning of lessons to activate prior knowledge and encourage participation. Checklist Notes: "*Guru memberikan pertanyaan kritis untuk merangsang pemikiran siswa.*" This is evident in her introduction of new topics, such as providing an interesting CV example and asking students for their opinions on its strengths, as well as discussing key elements of a compelling cover letter. The interview results further support this, where T2 mentioned using brainstorming to help students develop ideas before engaging in deeper discussions or assignments. As she stated:

Extract 6 (T2, 16/10/2024)

T2: "Before starting a lesson, I usually ask my students some stimulating questions to make them think critically and connect the topic to their experiences."

In addition, based on the results of observations, it can be confirmed that T3 implements brainstorming as part of his teaching methodology. The observation checklist indicates that "*Guru memberikan brainstorming saat mengecek kehadiran siswa dengan memberi pertanyaan tentang Bahasa Inggris dari angka.*" It is also noted that "*Guru memberikan pertanyaan dasar kepada siswa sebelum memulai pembelajaran.*", demonstrating that he uses brainstorming

techniques at the beginning of lessons to stimulate students' curiosity and activate prior knowledge. This approach encourages students to think critically and actively participate in discussions, allowing them to generate ideas and make connections between prior and new knowledge.

The findings from the interview further support this observation. T3 stated that he employs brainstorming techniques to make lessons more interactive and engaging. He emphasized that brainstorming helps activate students' background knowledge and prepares them for the main lesson content. As he stated:

Extract 7 (T3, 18/10/2024)

T3: "At the beginning of the lesson, I usually ask students basic questions related to the topic. This helps them recall their previous knowledge and prepares them for the new material. Brainstorming encourages students to think critically and engage more actively in discussions."

Giving Reward Strategies

a. Social Reward

Based on the observations, it was found that T2 incorporates social rewards as part of her teaching strategy to enhance student motivation and engagement. Observations indicate that she frequently uses verbal praise, recognition, and positive reinforcement to encourage students. For example, the observer noted that "*guru memberikan pujian dan motivasi kepada dengan cara menunjukkan pencapaian alumni sukses sehingga dapat menjadi contoh yang baik dan membuat lebih termotivasi.*"

Additionally, she recognizes and celebrates student accomplishments by giving "*hadiah Bintang kepada siswa yang mendapat poin tertinggi*" during quizzes, and rewards positive behavior with "*poin plus kepada siswa yang membawa kamus Bahasa Inggris.*" This approach aligns with intrinsic motivation strategies, where students feel valued and motivated through teacher recognition and encouragement, while also incorporating extrinsic elements to reinforce engagement.

This finding is further supported by the interview results, where T2 explicitly mentioned her use of social rewards to boost student motivation. She stated:

Extract 8 (T2, 16/10/2024)

T2: "When students achieve something, I make sure to highlight their success. For example, during quizzes, I praise students who perform well, and I even share their achievements with the class to inspire others."

In addition, based on the results of observations, it can be confirmed that T3 implements social rewards as part of his teaching strategy to motivate students. The observation checklist indicates that he frequently provides verbal praise and public recognition to acknowledge students' efforts and achievements. As stated in the checklist: "*Guru memberikan pujian dan apresiasi kepada kelompok presenter sehingga siswa merasa semangat dan termotivasi*" and "*Guru merayakan dan memberi apresiasi saat kelompok presenter berhasil menjawab dan*

menyelesaikan presentasinya.” By integrating social rewards, T3 fosters a supportive classroom environment where students feel appreciated and motivated to participate actively.

The findings from the interview further support this observation. T3 stated that he uses social rewards to boost students' confidence and motivation. He explained that he gives verbal praise, public acknowledgment, and appreciation for students' participation and accomplishments. As he stated:

Extract 9 (T3, 18/10/2024)

T3: "I use verbal praise and public recognition to highlight students' hard work. For example, when a student actively participates or provides a well-thought-out answer, I acknowledge their effort in front of the class. This encourages them to stay engaged while also reinforcing the importance of learning English for real-life applications."

b. Material Reward

Based on the observations, it was found that T2 incorporates material rewards as part of her teaching strategy to enhance student motivation and engagement in the classroom. Observations indicate that she provides tangible incentives, such as bonus points and small prizes, to encourage active participation and reinforce positive behavior. As noted in the observation, "*guru memberikan hadiah berupa poin plus kepada siswa yang membawa kamus Bahasa Inggris dan memberikan poin minus kepada siswa yang tidak membawa kamus,*" and during classroom quizzes, "*guru merayakan dan memberikan apresiasi berupa hadiah Bintang kepada siswa yang mendapat poin tertinggi.*" This approach aligns with extrinsic motivation strategies, where students are rewarded for their efforts in completing tasks or demonstrating good performance.

This finding is further supported by the interview results, where T2 explicitly mentioned her use of material rewards to motivate students. She stated:

Extract 10 (T2, 16/10/2024)

T2: "Now, I provide rewards like plus points for students who bring their English dictionaries and complete their assignments well. It encourages them to be more responsible and motivated in class."

Based on the results of observations, it can be confirmed that T3 implements material rewards as part of his teaching strategy to motivate students. The observation checklist indicates that "*Guru memberikan sertifikat kecil bagi siswa yang paling aktif*" and "*Guru memberikan poin tambahan bagi kelompok yang paling kreatif,*" confirming that he provides tangible incentives such as certificates and bonus points to recognize student efforts and achievements.

The findings from the interview further support this observation. T3 stated that he uses material rewards to reinforce positive learning behaviors and increase student motivation. He explained that when students complete a project-based task with creativity and effort, they receive incentives such as bonus points, certificates, or class privileges. As he stated:

Extract 11 (T3, 18/10/2024)

T3: "I use extrinsic motivation through a reward system for student participation and effort. For example, when students complete a project-based assignment with creativity and effort, I

give small incentives like bonus points, certificates, or class privileges (e.g., choosing a game for the next lesson). These rewards encourage students to stay engaged while still reinforcing the importance of learning English for real-life applications."

DISCUSSIONS

Implementing Active Learning Strategies

a. Group Discussion

Group discussions serve as a vital strategy in fostering student engagement and motivation in learning English at SMAN 01 Barru. Teachers at SMAN 1 Barru divide students into small groups to encourage collaborative learning, where students can exchange ideas, develop critical thinking skills, and practice language use in a supportive environment. Encouraging peer collaboration helped students gain confidence in using English and facilitated knowledge retention. This aligns with Freeman et al. (2014) and Prince (2004), who found that students who engage in group activities tend to retain information better and perform at higher levels academically.

The effectiveness of group discussions in increasing student motivation and engagement has been widely supported by educational research. Silberman (2019) highlights that students who participate in structured group discussions are more likely to retain information and apply it effectively in real-world contexts. This is because discussions encourage students to process information deeply rather than passively receiving it. Additionally, collaborative learning fosters a sense of belonging, reducing anxiety and making students feel more comfortable using English in a non-threatening environment. At SMAN 01 Barru, teachers strategically use group discussions to address various topics relevant to students' experiences, making lessons more relatable and engaging. This approach not only enhances language proficiency but also builds essential teamwork and problem-solving skills, which are valuable beyond the classroom. By integrating group discussions into their teaching methods, educators create an active and student-centered learning environment that significantly contributes to students' motivation and success in mastering English.

b. Gamified Quiz

The integration of gamified quizzes in English language learning has proven to be a highly effective strategy for enhancing student motivation and engagement. By incorporating digital tools such as Quizizz, teachers transform traditional assessments into dynamic, interactive experiences that stimulate student enthusiasm. The competitive aspect of these quizzes, coupled with instant feedback and rewards, fosters intrinsic motivation by allowing students to track their progress in real time. Deci and Ryan's (2008) Self-Determination Theory emphasize the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering motivation, all of which are supported by gamification strategies. Additionally, research by Thongsri (2019) found that integrating technology into language learning significantly enhances student performance, reinforcing the effectiveness of gamified quizzes in fostering engagement.

c. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a powerful active learning strategy that activates students' prior knowledge, encourages critical thinking, and fosters engagement in discussions. At SMAN 01 Barru, teachers implement brainstorming activities to stimulate student curiosity and enhance their participation in English language learning. By posing thought-provoking questions at the beginning of lessons, teachers create an interactive and dynamic classroom environment that encourages students to express their thoughts freely. Research by Santrock (2011) supports the effectiveness of brainstorming, emphasizing that when students actively relate new concepts to their prior understanding, they become more invested in the learning process. This approach not only enhances comprehension but also builds student confidence, as they feel more prepared to engage in discussions and share their ideas without fear of making mistakes.

Additionally, the benefits of brainstorming extend beyond knowledge retention, as it also promotes creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration among students. According to Silberman (2019), brainstorming is a critical component of active learning, as it encourages students to generate multiple perspectives on a topic before delving into structured learning activities. At SMAN 01 Barru, teachers use this technique to introduce new vocabulary, facilitate discussions, and improve writing skills by allowing students to organize their thoughts before completing assignments. Observations and interviews with teachers further confirm that students demonstrate higher motivation and engagement when brainstorming activities are incorporated into lessons. This aligns with Freeman et al.'s (2014) findings that interactive teaching methods significantly improve student participation and knowledge retention. By integrating brainstorming into their teaching strategies, educators create an inclusive and student-centered learning environment that nurtures both language proficiency and critical thinking skills.

Giving Reward Strategies

a. Social Reward

EFL teachers at SMAN 01 Barru implement verbal praise and public recognition as key strategies to motivate students and reinforce positive learning behaviors. By acknowledging student achievements, whether through praise during classroom activities or highlighting their progress in front of their peers, teachers create a supportive learning environment where students feel valued and encouraged to participate actively. This approach aligns with Hamacheck's (1990) findings, which emphasize that social reinforcement plays a crucial role in boosting student confidence. When students receive positive feedback from their teachers, they develop a greater sense of self-efficacy and are more likely to take risks in their learning, such as speaking in English or engaging in discussions without fear of making mistakes. Verbal praise also fosters intrinsic motivation, as students feel a sense of accomplishment that drives them to continue improving.

Furthermore, the use of public recognition enhances classroom dynamics by fostering a culture of encouragement and peer support. Research by Deci and Ryan (2008) suggests that recognition satisfies students' psychological needs for competence and relatedness, making them feel more connected to their learning community. At SMAN 01 Barru, EFL teachers apply this strategy by celebrating student successes through simple gestures such as clapping for well-articulated responses, displaying exemplary student work, or verbally acknowledging

improvements in participation and effort. Observations and interviews confirm that students respond positively to these reinforcement strategies, exhibiting increased engagement and willingness to take part in English learning activities. This aligns with findings from Lumsden (1994), who noted that consistent encouragement from educators leads to greater persistence and enthusiasm in language learning. By integrating social rewards such as verbal praise and public recognition into their teaching strategies, educators can effectively enhance student motivation, build confidence, and create a more interactive and encouraging classroom environment.

b. Material Reward

EFL teachers at SMAN 01 Barru utilize material rewards such as certificates, bonus points, and small prizes to incentivize student participation and reinforce positive learning behaviors. These extrinsic rewards serve as short-term motivators that encourage students to actively engage in classroom activities, complete assignments, and strive for academic improvement. By providing tangible incentives, teachers create a sense of achievement and recognition that fosters motivation, particularly among students who may struggle with intrinsic engagement. This strategy aligns with the findings of Han and Yin (2022), who emphasize that when material rewards are strategically combined with intrinsic motivators such as interest in learning or personal growth, they can effectively boost student participation and enthusiasm. The use of small, meaningful rewards ensures that students associate their efforts with positive reinforcement, making them more likely to take initiative and remain committed to their learning process.

However, while material incentives can be effective, it is essential to balance them with strategies that cultivate intrinsic motivation to ensure long-term academic success. Deci and Ryan's (2008) Self-Determination Theory warn against over-reliance on extrinsic rewards, as excessive dependence on tangible incentives may reduce students' internal drive to learn. To mitigate this risk, teachers at SMAN 01 Barru incorporate material rewards selectively, using them alongside praise, encouragement, and engaging learning activities to foster a more sustainable motivation. Observations and interviews with teachers confirm that students respond positively to this approach, as they not only appreciate the rewards but also develop a stronger interest in English learning when these strategies are paired with interactive and student-centered teaching methods. Research by Ma (2023) further supports this balanced approach, stating that material rewards are most effective when used to complement intrinsic motivators rather than replace them. By carefully integrating both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational strategies, teachers create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that encourages sustained academic effort and long-term language acquisition.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that EFL teachers at SMAN 01 Barru effectively enhance students' motivation in learning English through Active Learning and Reward Strategies. Active Learning Strategies—such as group discussions, gamified quizzes, and brainstorming—foster interaction, critical thinking, and confidence in communication. Reward Strategies, including social and material incentives, reinforce positive behavior and sustain motivation. These combined approaches increase student engagement, participation, and language proficiency. Despite their success, challenges like large class sizes, limited digital access, and language anxiety remain.

Addressing these issues is crucial to maximizing the impact of motivational strategies and further improving English learning outcomes in the classroom.

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