



STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE

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Abstract.

This study aims to analyze the types of student engagement shown by students in the English Language Course. The second objective is to find out the factors that influence student engagement. This research was conducted on 8th grade students at Garut High School. To achieve these objectives, qualitative research with a case study design was used with observation and interview data collection techniques. The sample for this study consisted of 35 students. Out of all the participants, three participated in the interview. The results showed that there were three types of student engagement found, namely cognitive engagement, behavioral engagement, and affective engagement. It was found that the most dominant type was cognitive engagement. The results also show that the five factors presented by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) influence student engagement in English language courses. The five factors are: school level, teacher support, peers, classroom structure, and task characteristics.

Keywords: Student Engagement, Behavioral Engagement, Cognitive Engagement, Affective Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Learning English at school is important to improve students' language skills. One of the keys that influences students' progress in learning English is the level of student involvement in the learning process. According to Brown and Lee (2015), students' involvement in the learning process is needed so that they can be more active and involved in the learning process, leading to higher levels of achievement, motivation, and retention. Student engagement in English learning can improve student motivation and learning outcomes. When students are actively involved in learning, they are more likely to understand the material better and feel more motivated to learn Wang and Eccles (2012). Meanwhile,

according to research conducted by Johnson and Johnson (2014), students who are actively involved in learning tend to have better understanding and higher learning outcomes. This is also supported by research conducted by Hattie (2009) which shows that students' engagement in learning has a significant positive impact on their learning outcomes. Student engagement in learning has a positive impact on academic outcomes, motivation, understanding and learning outcomes. This emphasizes the importance of creating a learning environment that encourages active student engagement in the learning process.

The study of student engagement is needed because students' level of engagement is one of the important factors for students' learning. Students' low engagement is considered the main reason for dissatisfaction; negative experiences and dropping out of courses in some previous research studies (Kuh, 2009). Trowler and Trowler (2010), point out that many students drop out of school not because they are weak, but because they are uninterested and dissatisfied with their learning process. It is identified that the effort to increase student engagement with learning material and improve student satisfaction with the course has been an important goal for schools and teachers in delivering material. According to Christianty and Cendana (2021), Student engagement is proportional to student interest in learning. When students have an interest in learning, this is reflected in their active involvement in learning. By being involved in learning, students can experience the learning through cognitive, affective, and psychomotor types so that they are able to find the relevance of the lesson to their own lives.

In this regard, many researchers have examined student engagement. Some of them focus on efforts to increase student engagement (Appleton, J. J.; Christenson, S. L.; Furlong, M. J., 2008; Lemke, C. 2006). Furthermore, other researchers focus on exploring student engagement (Barus, I. S.; Fadlia, F.; Devira, M., 2022; Andriani, F. I., 2020; Arifman, 2021). Afterward, researchers who focus on Improving student engagement (Taylor, L.; Parsons, J., 2011; (Zepke & Leach, 2010), Mathew, C., 2022). In addition, there are those who focus on methods to determine student engagement (Firdaus, F.; Fatimah, S., 2021; Ginting, D., 2021). In addition, there are studies that focus on factors that affect student engagement (DeVito, 2016); (Ali & Hassan, 2018)). Another studies, investigating the types of student engagement that exist in schools (Torto, G. A., 2020; Nurhayati, 2021)

Based on the research results above, it shows that research on student engagement has been conducted by several researchers. This research is an extension of previous research studies on student engagement. This study examines what types of student engagement are found in the learning interactions between teachers and students during learning. Furthermore, the latest contribution in this study is to find factors that influence student engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Student engagement in the learning process refers to the level of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion shown by students when they are learning or being taught, which can develop into the level of motivation that they must learn and progress in learning (Anita and Susilawati, 2018). Furthermore, another study said student engagement refers to the degree to which students are actively involved in their learning and the extent to which they are motivated to learn (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, dan Paris, 2004). Students who are engaged in class are more likely to participate, finish their assignments, and succeed academically. Disengaged students, on the other hand, are more likely to miss class, submit incomplete assignments, and exhibit low academic performance. According to Trowler (2010), student

engagement as the willingness and efforts of students to be effectively involved in school activities that contribute to successful outcomes. Meanwhile, Reeve (2012) provides a definition of student engagement as the behavioral intensity, emotional quality, and personal effort of students' psychological involvement during academic activities at school. The active involvement of students can be seen in students responding to teacher questions and instructions, paying attention to and listening to teacher explanations, expressing opinions, and actively working on assignments or questions from the teacher.

Student engagement consists of positive and negative engagement. Positive engagement is characterized by involvement in the form of beliefs, emotions, and student behavior towards teachers, classes, peers, and academic and non-academic activities in a positive direction (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris, 2004). Negative engagement is characterized by indifference, a lack of attention, and disinterest in the learning process. Students who have high engagement show better achievement than students who are not engaged. Disengaged students will tend to have less satisfactory academic achievement and experience behavioral problems (Wang and Halcombe, 2010).

Student engagement consists of three types, namely affective, cognitive, and behavioral engagement (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris, 2004). According to Wang and Pekrun (2016), affective engagement is the key component of student engagement and refers to students' emotional experiences in the learning environment. It includes students' feelings of pleasure, interest, and curiosity, as well as their emotional reactions to challenges and difficulties. While cognitive engagement is the psychological investment students have in academic assignments, it can be identified by how seriously students take ideas and concepts, as well as by how invested they are in truly knowing the subject matter (Barlow et al., 2020). Behavioral engagement is the physical involvement of students in learning. This participation is shown in task-related behaviors such as finishing reading, asking questions, and paying attention to directions. It can also be observed in behaviors that are more general, such as participation in extracurricular activities, homework completion, and class attendance (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris, 2004). Student engagement is a product of these three dimensions as a whole, not as individual components. For example, a student who engages behaviorally by posing thoughtful questions about a concept is probably also cognitively engaged.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a qualitative research design approach. Qualitative research proved valuable in comprehensively understanding a complex phenomenon or experience. Through qualitative approaches, researchers were able to explore and understand the context, process, and meaning behind the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The selection of informant objects to be studied was carried out using the purposive sampling technique, which meant that sampling was deliberately done, not randomly, based on specific criteria considered capable of aiding in understanding a phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Participants were selected based on several criteria that had been determined in relation to the research focus on engagement. The criteria for the selected participants were individuals who were active in cognitive, behavioral, and affective engagement observed in the interaction between teachers and students in the classroom. Additionally, teachers were chosen from those who always paid attention to their students and provided enthusiasm and positive encouragement for the process of students' personal development, learning, and

social interactions.

This research was conducted on high school students in Garut, West Java, during the 2023/2024 school year. The researcher had chosen a class that was considered a large class to conduct the research. The school was located in Sukawening District, Garut Regency. The participant in this study was one teacher and the population data of all students studied were 35 students containing 23 females and 12 males. The participants of this study were class XII students.

Non-participant observation was used in this study. According to Yin (2009), non-participant observation was a form of observation in which the researcher observed the phenomenon being studied without being directly involved in the interaction or activity being observed. In this research, the interview method used was semi-structured interviews to gather more profound or detailed information from respondents. This approach allowed interviews to directly extract information from research participants that couldn't be obtained through observation.

This data analysis used an inductive qualitative method, namely an analysis based on the data obtained, which was then developed into a hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis formulated based on the data, the data is searched repeatedly so that conclusions can be drawn (Miles and Huberman, 1992). Analysis consists of three streams of activities that occur simultaneously, namely; data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions or verification

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

With regard to the various themes that emerged from the data collected, the types of student engagement that emerged from the data collected were Behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement, and affective engagement. While the factors that influence student engagement are School-level, teacher support, peers, class structure, and task characteristics.

The results, which correspond to the outlined factor groups, are reported based on the main categories and themes and discussed from the perspective of the research questions.

1. Types of Student Engagement Found in the English Language Course

a. Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral engagement in this study focuses on the behavior of students who are actively involved in the learning process. Behavioral engagement includes visible student activities such as participating actively, following instructions, working hard, and demonstrating behaviors that support learning in the classroom environment (Reeve and Lee, 2014). Based on the observation results in this study, it shows that students' behavioral engagement can be seen in following instructions and following rules. This is evidenced by the conversation between teachers and students in English courses.

(Student A)

Teacher : Yeah, now before discussing about this song I would like you to stand up. Come on! everybody stand up.

Student #1 : Siap, stand up Guys!

In the conversation above, students are behaviorally engaged by following the teacher's instruction to stand up. Behavioral engagement refers to observable actions and

behaviors, such as standing up when asked by the teacher.

(Student D)

Student #4 : Bu maaf saya mau izin sebentar. Ada orang tua saya dateng. (a student make an excuses to ditch the class)

Student D engaged behaviorally by communicating with the teacher and giving reasons why he had to leave the class temporarily. The student's behavior involved requesting permission to leave the class due to the arrival of parents.

(Student G)

Teacher : Okay! You still have four minutes left. Empat menit lagi!
Students #14 : Yes!

Based on the conversation above, students are behaviorally engaged by providing a brief response to the information provided by the teacher. This action involves a physical response from the student in response to the instructions or information given. Judging from the data described in the findings section above, students are behaviorally involved by giving a brief response to the information given by the teacher on the English language course. This action involves physical responses from students in following instructions, responding to the information provided, and following the rules. This is also reinforced by previous research conducted by Pianta (2016); Karmila (2021); Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), Fredricks et al. (2004), which states that behavioral engagement is shown by students in the learning process, such as students who are full of effort, perseverance, intensity, and determination to participate in learning activities.

b. Cognitive engagement

Cognitive engagement in this study focuses on students' involvement in paying attention to the teacher's explanation, having the willingness to try to answer questions, and trying to understand and master the material (Gibbs and Poskitt, 2010). This finding emerged when students answered questions from the lecturer regarding the English material presented. This is evidenced by the conversation between teachers and students in English language course.

(Student A)

Teacher : Ya, as we planned before that today we will do the exercise. The topic is tell about understanding a song. Jadi, hari ini kita berlatih masih topik yang terakhir yaitu tentang memahami lagu, ya?

Students #1 : Understanding song yang verse, chours,coda gitu bu ? (asking Directly to the teacher).

From the questions asked by the students, it can be seen that the students have strong memories related to the topics that have been taught before. They can relate previously acquired information about understanding songs. This reflects students' cognitive engagement in learning. Strong memory and students' ability to relate information are indicators of active cognitive engagement in learning.

Student A

Teacher : "Coba yang lain siapa yang mau menjelaskan chours?"

Student #1 : "Saya bu! Chorus is a series of lyrics that are repeated after each verse of a song. It meant to be the most memorable part, containing the ultimate message of the piece".

Based on the conversation above, students are cognitively engaged by actively participating in explaining concepts. Students provide clear and detailed responses that involve information processing. This engagement shows students' cognitive involvement in understanding and communicating the topic.

(Student C)
Teacher : *Jadi pertama ada yang Namanya Verse, ada yang bisa jelaskan lagi apa itu verse?*
Student #3 : *Saya bu! Verse is a series of lyrics that tell the main story of the song and keep the action or thoughts moving forward. It is a repeated section of a song that typically features a new set of lyrics on each repetition. There can be more than 1 or 2 verses in one song.*

Student C is cognitively engaged by providing a clear definition and understanding of the concept of "verse" in music. Students formulate a brief explanation that describes the role of the verse in carrying the main story of the song as well as maintaining the progression of action or thought in the song. This answer involves information processing and an understanding of the musical concept. Therefore, this engagement is related to the cognitive type, where students are involved in thinking about and understanding the concepts taught.

(Student E)
Teacher : *Jadi apa verse itu artinya ada yang tau?*
Student #5 : *Verse itu kaya awalan lagi, sebagai pengantar sebelum ke bagian yang lain.*

Student E engaged cognitively by responding to the teacher's question and providing an explanation of the concept of a verse.

(Student F)
Teacher : *Ada juga coda. Kalau Coda apa? Melodi nya beda dengan verse, beda juga dengan Refrain. Apa itu coda?*
Student #8 : *Coda is a passage at the end of a piece of music that brings the music to a close.*

In the interaction above, student F engage cognitively by responding to the teacher's question and providing an explanation of the concept of coda in music. This engagement shows students' cognitive engagement in understanding the topic and communicating their understanding.

Based on the results of the study, it is found that cognitive engagement is the type that is mostly shown by students in learning English. This is in line with Fredricks and Appleton's theory which explains that cognitive engagement serves to build students' attention to the explanation given by the teacher regarding learning materials, increase students' concentration and focus, and see how students' efforts can try to understand and master English materials to achieve the expected abilities. This is also reinforced by previous research conducted by (Gibbs and Poskitt, 2010) (Connel and Werborn, 1990) (Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez, 2003) that in every learning there is cognitive engagement shown by students and there is also an influence on the learning process.

c. Affective engagement

In this study, affective engagement refers to students' emotional reactions when interacting with the teacher. These emotional reactions can be positive or negative and can affect students' overall engagement in the learning process (Fredricks, et al. 2004).

(Student B)

Teacher : *Iya nyari pikiran utama/ pokok pikirannya*

Student #8 : *Iya bu makasih.*

Saying "thank you" usually falls under affective engagement. It is an expression of gratitude and appreciation that shows an emotional connection and a positive attitude towards others. Affective engagement refers to an individual's emotional involvement, attitudes, and values.

Based on the results obtained, it is found that affective engagement is a type that is less shown by students in learning. This is also corroborated by previous research conducted by (Reeve and Tseng (2011) which states that affective engagement is also shown by students in the learning process. In addition, the research results found on affective engagement are in accordance with Fredricks and Appleton's theory which states that emotional engagement refers to students' interaction when participating in English learning. The results of observations made by researchers found three types of engagement shown by students in learning English. Among them are behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement, and affective engagement. And the most dominant engagement shown by students is cognitive engagement. This is proven by the many occurrences of cognitive engagement in learning meetings. This finding is the same as previous findings conducted by Lam et al. (2014) on student engagement variables, which obtained the highest score on reliability with the most dominant cognitive engagement component. Further findings conducted by Gunuc and Kuzu (2015) and Nurhayati (2021) show that the cognitive engagement score is the most dominant factor in the classroom. The reason cognitive engagement is considered dominant by researchers is because learning methods often require deep understanding and analytical thinking in students. As found in this study, the teacher often asked questions to students, thus forcing students to answer and explain the teacher's questions. This is what causes cognitive engagement more dominant.

2. Factors influence student engagement in English Language Course

This section outlines the research findings from the interviews that focus on the factors that influence student engagement as demonstrated by the most engaged students in the classroom in the previous observations. The focus of this research was obtained from the interviews. In this case, the factors are divided into five factors based on Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004), including; School-level, teacher support, peers, class structure, and task characteristics.

a. School-Level

In the interview regarding school-level factors, Participant 1 said that the physical environment of the school greatly affects engagement in the classroom. A comfortable school environment and adequate facilities make informants more eager to attend school. In addition, school policies and regulations, Participant I was able to follow policies from the school, such as school hours. One of the most important factors affecting school engagement is the physical area of the school (Gunuc and Kuzu, 2014). Similarly, Participant II said that the physical environment of the school, including the size of the school, class size, and available facilities, greatly influenced her engagement in class. A comfortable environment with adequate facilities makes her feel more comfortable and enjoy the learning process more. The interviewed participants stated that she complied with the policies or regulations at school. Participant II stated that the policies in her school are quite strict, which shows that she respects the school rules and tries to maintain order and regularity in the school

environment. Similarly, Fredricks et al (2004) stated that some of the characteristics that can improve schools are the size of the school, consistent and understandable educational goals, management procedures and policies, student interactions with teaching staff, and academic procedures that can enhance student talent.

b. Teacher support

In terms of teacher support, Participant II described the relationship with her English teacher as very close, which indicated that they had a positive relationship with her teacher. The participant stated that the support from the teacher greatly influenced her engagement in class. The teacher always gives appreciation in the form of praise and encouragement to students, which makes participants more enthusiastic about the learning process. According to Hughes (2018), teachers who provide recognition and praise for students' efforts and achievements can increase their motivation and engagement. Students feel valued and motivated to keep trying.

Furthermore, Participant I explained that she had a good relationship with her English teacher. The participant described her relationship with the teacher as like that with her own mother. In addition, the participant said that the material taught was very easy to understand. In addition, the teacher often used English in explaining the material, then translated it into Indonesian. This helped participants understand English little by little. Similarly, as stated by Furlong et al. (2009), feedback from teachers helps students understand the extent to which they have achieved learning objectives. It gives them an understanding of their achievements and can motivate them to keep trying.

The same thing was also conveyed by Participant III, who stated that the teacher's support affected his involvement in the class. According to her, interest and enjoyment in the subject can make her feel that the lesson becomes easier. According to Fredricks (2004), teacher support is crucial in creating a supportive learning environment and motivating students to learn. This shows that a positive relationship with the teacher can increase students' engagement in learning. Participant III argued that the support from the teacher greatly affected his activity in class. According to him, no matter how difficult the subject is, if the teacher explains it in an interesting and fun way, it will feel easier. According to Kustiawati (2019), if the classroom environment allows students to feel comfortable expressing opinions, sharing ideas, and taking risks to answer questions, then the classroom has a positive environment for students' feelings of equality.

c. Peers

In terms of peers, participant III revealed that socialization and communication with friends at school had a positive influence on his engagement in class. Participants felt that interactions with classmates affected their level of engagement in learning. Participant III views his friends as learning partners rather than competitors. They often share tasks and help each other understand difficult lessons. The same thing was stated by Healthy competition with friends can be a motivational factor for students. They may feel motivated to achieve higher goals (Wang and Eccles, 2012). In addition, Participant III felt supported by his classmates and stated that they supported each other.

Similarly to Participants I and II, Participant I explained that her relationship with her friends in class was as friends and not as competitors. The participant added that his relationship with friends in class had an effect on his engagement in class. In line with previous research, social engagement with friends can increase their confidence and make them feel

more enthusiastic about participating in class (Fredricks, 2004). Participant II revealed that the effect of socialization and communication with friends at school depends on the extent of comfort he feels in class. If his friends make him feel comfortable, then his enthusiasm for learning increases. Furthermore, in Participant II's view of friends in class, participants see their colleagues as competitors in terms of academic achievement, such as competing to come forward or answer questions from the teacher. However, this competitor focuses more on the academic type and is not negative.

d. Task characteristics

For task characteristics, Participants I, II, and III had the same response regarding the tasks given by the teacher. They stated that the teacher gave them English tasks that were appropriate to their abilities. When students feel that the task is relevant to their level of understanding, they are more likely to participate with enthusiasm (Fredricks, 2004). In addition, they added that the teacher had given examples of the tasks, making them easier to do. This shows that the teacher has considered the students' ability level when giving assignments. They also confirmed that teachers give feedback on the assignments. Teachers usually explain answers or give feedback at the next meeting. Positive and constructive feedback can increase students' motivation. When they see that their efforts are recognized and assessed, they tend to be more motivated to work harder and do their best in the next task (Dharmayana et al., 2012).

e. The most influential factor in student engagement

Regarding the most influential factors among school-level, teacher support, peers, class structure, and task characteristics, all three students responded that the most influential factor in the school environment is teacher support. They argue that teachers have an important role in classroom learning. Based on the results of the interviews with students, there are several types of teachers who have a major influence on student engagement during the learning process. First, teachers who build strong personal relationships: this type of teacher emphasizes the importance of close personal relationships between teachers and students outside of class hours. Building strong bonds and creating a sense of trust can help increase student engagement in the learning process. Second, engaging learning: The teacher's ability to deliver material in an interesting and fun way makes learning a more enjoyable experience for students, encouraging them to engage more actively. Third, teachers who provide feedback: teachers who provide feedback on student work can help students understand their strengths and weaknesses in learning. This allows students to continuously improve the quality of their work.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research question, this study aims to identify the types of student engagement shown by students in English language course. In conclusion, it was found that there are three types of student engagement shown by students in learning, namely cognitive engagement, behavioral engagement, and affective engagement. In addition, based on the research results, cognitive engagement is the most dominant type of engagement shown by students in learning, followed by behavioral engagement and emotional engagement. Based on the description of the findings from the interviews of the three students, it can be concluded that the five factors presented by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) have an influence on student engagement in the classroom. Furthermore, based on the interview results, the

factor that most supports the improvement of student engagement is the teacher support factor. As for the types of teachers who have a great influence on student engagement include; teachers who build strong personal relationships, deliver material in an interesting way, provide feedback on student work. Based on these results, English teachers are strongly advised to identify factors that can increase student engagement because it is very useful to overcome problems in the teaching and learning process, such as lack of participation and negative behavior. Students are advised to respect the rules imposed by teachers and schools to create a comfortable learning environment. Finally, other researchers are advised to investigate what teachers should do to increase student engagement in English classes.

Like any other research, this study also has its flaws. This research may interpret things in a biased and unvalidated way. Therefore, future research is needed to build on these findings. To improve these findings, researchers need to provide in-depth results. In addition, researchers should provide a larger sample so that the results obtained are more diverse. To gain a deeper understanding of Student Engagement theories, researchers can read more books or recent works factors that might give different results should be elaborated and studied in depth.

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