**Teachers’ Strategies To Motivate Students In Learning English At A Vocational High School In Rimbo Bujang**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Purpose of the study:** The purpose of this research were to investigate, to report and to discuss about teachers’ strategies and how the teachers apply the strategies to motivate students in teaching and learning English at a vocational high school.

**Methodology:** Data in this thesis were collected through interview with English teachers and observation in the classrooms. Data from interview section were analyzed by transcribing the data, becoming familiar with the data, coding, theming and reporting.

**Main Findings:** There were four major themes about strategies to motivate vocational students in learning English in this case study which included create relax atmosphere in the class, having awareness to the students’ characteristics, connecting the teaching process to the real life and more creative in the teaching process. The significant of this research are as a source of information for teachers and teacher to be about strategies to motivate vocational students in learning English.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The novelty in this research is the strategy for student motivation in learning is carried out at Rimbo Bujang

**Keywords:** Motivation, Teachers’ Strategies, Vocational High School Students

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching is an effort to create conditions or surrounding system that contributes and enable to continue on learning process[1]. Then, in the education context, strategy is defined as a planning process which include some activities that has been designed well to reach the goal of education [2]. In learning process every students has own way to reach the goals that she/he sets. Therefore, the teacher has to be able to create a comfortable and conducive class environment to make the students enjoy the class. Because the students have different characteristics and background knowledge, the teachers must be selective in choosing a good strategy to motivate the students so they could achieve the learning goal. Motivation is an important aspect of teaching and learning process

Teaching of vocational high school at every level requires some strategies to motivate students for learning the subject with interest and concentration. Teacher is probably the major factor in a process of motivation [3]. The teachers’ acts a primary role in the continuance of students’ motivation. Motivational strategies are always helpful for the teachers in the classroom to achieve their goals. Teacher motivation is related to teachers’ use of motivating strategies, which in turn are related to student motivation. Students are definitely influenced by the way of teacher’s in speaking, explaining and teachers attitude to them so the strategies of teaching another important factor in motivation.

So, teachers and the teacher’s attitude in teaching the students can be important factor in motivating the students. In relation with that matters, identifies a set of classroom tips that can enhance students’ motivation, such as give positive feedback that supports students’ beliefs that they can do well, ensure opportunities for students success by assigning tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult, help students find personal meaning and value in the material, create an atmosphere that is open and positive. Based on Gross’s tips it seems that a teacher has responsibility to encourage the students in learning so they become motivated. So, the teaching and learning goal can be achieve. So, being a teacher, especially vocational’s teacher she/he does not solely mean teaching the students about how to write, read and speak but also must encourage students to become interested in the subject. She/he must have strategies to motivate the students so it makes them interest with the subject matter.

Ziyuan is stated that one of a teacher’s responsibilities is increasing and directing students’ motivation. Motivation is the process through which individuals are driven to increase their activity or performance either by internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) factors. Regarding to these matters, the researcher interest to investigate teachers’ strategies to motivate vocational students in learning English at SMKN 2 Tebo, where it is one of the vocational high school in Rimbo Bujang. The reason of the researcher chooses this school because this school is one of the oldest vocational high school in Rimbo Bujang. So the researcher want to know and investigate how the teachers strategies to motivate students to learn English well in this school.

1. **RESEARCH METHOD**

This is a qualitative research, qualitative research is a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants, asks broads, general questions, collect data consisting largely of words or text from participants, describes and analyzes these words for themes, and conduct the inquiry in a subjective biased manner [4]. Furthermore, “qualitative research is kind of research that emphasis on holistic description that is on describing in detail all of what goes in particular activity or situation” . Qualitative research is the appropriate methodology for learning about the experience of individuals and groups from their point of view and in their own words [5]. Therefore, there is great value in choosing qualitative approach to learn about strategies to motivate the students in learning English [6]

That the goal of descriptive qualitative is “not thick description (ethnography), theory development (grounded theory) or interpretative meaning of an experience (phenomenology) but a rich description of the experience depicted in easily understood language”. As a result, a qualitative method was used for this research to investigate, describe and report the experience of the teachers in a case of motivating vocational students in learning English [7]. A descriptive qualitative approach offers the opportunity to gather rich descriptions about the teachers’ strategies to motivate vocational students in learning English at one vocational high school in Rimbo Bujang. The focus is placed on direct communication with the research participants, eliciting rich description about the phenomenon [8]. Gathering this data and using descriptions from those experiencing it themselves offers a valuable opportunity to acquire “inside” knowledge and learn about how they see their world.

The site for this research was at one vocational high school in Rimbo Bujang Jambi Province. The researcher chooses this school because she has an access to do the research in this school and then this school is the oldest vocational high school in Rimbo Bujang. Automatically the teachers have experiences about strategies to motivate the students. And then, the participants in this research were three English teachers in that school. There are two male and a female teacher.

Data collection is a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research question [9]. To get the data for this research, there were some steps have done by the researcher; the first step to collect the data, the researcher came to school to get permission and observation. Then the researcher asked about the data of English teacher in that school. After that the researcher made a deal with the teachers when the researcher can observe in their class and interview them. After finishing the interview then the researcher observed in the class. It means there were two types of data collecting procedure, the first interview and the second observation.

1. **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**The Way Teachers Apply the Strategies**

Create Relax Atmosphere in the Class A. More Friendly to the Students Teacher A, teacher B and teacher C preferred to be a friendly teacher rather than a serious teacher in teaching the students. Teacher A said that by being a friendly teacher so the students was not worried to ask something or say something in the teaching and learning process. In the teaching and learning process sometimes the students just keep silent in the classroom this was because the teacher made a gap between the teacher himself and the students. “I want to be a friend for my students. I make the condition inside and outside the classroom as a friend for my students. So, I can do everything, I can help them, I can share about my English science.” (TA) “Sometimes I ask them to playing a game or just making a joke like that. And sometimes when teaching English we should not be too uptight, so just enjoy and friendly in learning and teaching so the students will welcome ask in their class.”(TB) “I prefer to be a friendly teacher rather than serious teacher, there is a place where I must be serious teacher. When they do not bring a dictionary, I will give punishment to make the students memorize the vocabulary.”(TC) Besides that teacher A also said that he want to be a teacher for the students everywhere, whenever as long as the context still about the subject matter.

So, the students not only learn or ask the topic in the class but everywhere when they meet the teacher. And the teacher welcomes them to ask anything. “I ask them to be my students in the class okay, formal, informal. They can ask me the topic about the lesson out of the class, everywhere. I mean I can be a friend, their teacher friend in the class and out of the class. I want to be close teacher everywhere especially out of the class. Because the situation more free rather in the class. It also reduce the risk of make them feel embarrassed in the class because when in the class there were his/her friend. Never mind if they will ask me everywhere but the context still about the subject. But personal problems always related to the process in teaching and learning in the class.”(TA) By becoming a friendly teacher so the students easier to ask or speak. Then they were also enjoying in learning and they felt not worry to say or ask anything about the topic.

Besides that the students also like with the teacher, automatically they also like the subject matter that taught by the teacher. “So I want to be his friend for my students and every time I say to my students, I’m your teacher and I want became your friend, so the students will enjoy with the situation in learning process.”(TA) “Firstly I must make them like to me so they will like my subject. Friendly teacher makes them enjoy in learning and also not worry to ask anything and like the teacher.”(TB) “I want to his friend for my student so the students like and enjoy with my subject that I will teach.”(TC) This strategy also was used by the teacher in the classroom observation. In the classroom observation, the researcher saw that the teachers was becoming a friendly teacher in the process of teaching and learning. So, the students seem enjoy because they were close. The teachers did not make a gap between them and the students. It means there were friendly atmosphere in the class. The teacher and the students talked each other as a friend. So, the situation in the process of teaching and learning was not clumsy.

It made the students be brave to ask anything about the topic to the teacher. Something unique was found in the teacher C’s classes; the teacher used Java language in teaching the students. Because most of the students were Javanese so it made the students easier to understand what he means. When using Java language the students felt that they just learn with their friend. And the situation becomes close each other. Then they teacher always sits around the students, he did not want to sit in front of students. It was because he is friendly teacher. He always stayed near from the students. When the students need him, directly he come the students. This strategy made the students being open with the teacher. They could ask anything to the teacher if they did not understand about the topic being discussed. It made them become motivated because they can ask to the teacher easily. So, becoming a friendly teacher in the process of teaching and learning can give positive effect for the students.

It seems that more friendly to the students was a dominant strategy used by the teachers. Because by using this strategies the students become enjoy and was not worried to ask for the teacher about the topic. By this strategies it means that the teacher has created a relax atmosphere in the class. Teacher B said that to make the students’ interest in the subject matter they should like with the teacher first. So, teacher B preferred to be friendly to the students in the classroom. Because by becoming a friendly teacher it made the students interest with English and motivated to learn. Then, when the students learn a foreign language it means that they learn a new language. So, the way of the teachers teach could influence of the students’ motivation in learning the language. Because they learn a new language so it is better that the teacher create relax atmosphere in the class. So, the students did not stress in the process of teaching and learning. It was when students are given a chance to participate in their learning in learning-friendly environments, they are likely to be more motivated and to feel positive towards their schoolwork, also working more cooperatively in teams. B.

Using Humor Teacher C preferred to use humor in the class. It seems that humor was one of effective strategies to motivate the students in learning. It was to make the students pay attention to the teacher. Because in the teaching and learning process the students become bored if they just accepted topic from the teacher. So, one of strategies to anticipate them become bored with the subject matter was using humor. Different from teacher A and teacher B, teacher C often used humor to motivate his students. In the classroom observation the researcher found that the teacher often used humor. But the humor that he used still related to English. For example, the students keep silent because they did not want to find the meaning of the word in the dictionary. Suddenly the teacher asked to the students “apa bahasa indonesianya what? And the students directly answered “apa”, but the teacher still asked “ ya apa?”.

Then he also asked to the students “cow memang sapi”, the pronunciation of “cow” in Indonesia like “kau” so it made the students laugh and the class situation become relax in learning. After that to make sure that their answer was true so the teacher lets the students open the dictionary. Immediately the students open the dictionary to find the meaning of the words asked by the teacher. So, by using humor in teaching the students it made them enjoy in learning and also easier to memorize some words in English. By using humor in the class the students become enjoy in the learning process. Because the activity not only study and study but also made them become relaxed in the class. So, their mind keeps fresh again and the process of teaching and learning run well. Humor is also one of effective strategies to motivate the students in the learning process. Both of the teachers preferred to use humor to motivate the students. Because the characteristics of students did not like if the teachers teaches seriously.

It means that sometimes the teacher should make them laugh in the class. And it also was done by teacher C in the classroom observation. By using humor in teaching the students so they were not bored in learning and keeping interest in the subject matter. Because the teacher was also used humor related to English. It did not only make the students laugh and enjoy but also made them easier to understand the topic. It also was found in the previous research the context of the study also about EFL. While in learning an EFL sometimes the students worry to speak because they did not master it well. So, it is better if the teacher create relax atmosphere in the class by using humor. So, the students did not worry and also enjoy in the process of teaching and learning.

**Having Awareness to the Students’ Characteristic**

A. Using Personal Approach Using personal approach to motivate the students was also only used by teacher C. Based on teacher C experiences, he said that he was often used personal approach to motivate the students. The reason was everybody is different, so the way to motivate must be different. Personal approach is used to understand the students’ problem. “Everybody is different, so in this condition if the students who do not want to motivated they will call the students one by one. For example, when the students lazy to learn we founding. We call the students and asked what is the problem? And then we try to solve the problem.”(TC) Regarding to use personal approach, the teacher did not use this strategy for all of the students. He just gave personal approach for the students who did not understand or for the students who cannot master the subject matter well. It was also found in the interview section, the teacher asks to the students one by one about their problem. It means that by using personal approach can motivate the students in learning English. Especially for the students who less of motivation in learning in the class.

Besides that by using personal approach so the students think that the teacher care and pay attention to them. So, the students that seem lazy, then after give personal approach they become active again in the class. Using personal approach was found in the interview section of teacher C. The teacher said that every students has his/her own characteristic. So, teacher C did not give the same treatment for all of the students. Because by his/her own characteristics so the students has his/her own way to learn. Sometimes one students lazy to learn but not for the others. So, the teacher said that he call the students one by one if they have a problem. The use of this strategy could be influence by teacher’s teaching experiences. Where teacher C has been teaching about 6 years so automatically he has been understanding his students characters.

He has been understand that not all of the students have some way and ability in learning. Sometimes some students are lazy to learn but not the others. This is way the teacher use personal approach to motivate the students. Because by using personal approach so the teacher could help the students who cannot master or learn English quickly. B. Being kind Teacher In the interview section of teacher A, the researcher found something different from the teacher A strategy. Actually the things were simple but it was important in the teaching and learning English process. In the interview section, teacher A said that he always brought more pens, it was to anticipate the students who did not bring it. Because sometimes the reason why they did not want to write when in the learning process was because they did not bring a pen.

The teacher also borrowed him dictionary to the students when they did not understand the meaning of some words. Because most of the students did not bring the dictionary and the reason was because they did not have it. By him kind he always brings two dictionaries for the students. I was to motivate the students so they kept learn English in him class. It always happened when he teaches in grade XII Otomotif major and Mechanical Engineering major because all of the students in that class were boys, so sometimes they seem lazy in the class. And it made them lazy to write or find the meaning of words in the dictionary. But by borrowing a pen and dictionary they become active again in the class. They want to write and also find some meaning of the word. This strategy was only used by teacher A. In the interview section teacher A said that sometimes some students did not want to learn in the class and the reason because they did not bring a pen and book. It was happened in the otomotive major and mechanical engineering major because all of the students in that class were boys. So, the teacher always brings more pens and gave to the students.

It was to show that if where is a will there is a way and to make the students think that learning is not difficult. While in the classroom observation, the teacher did not only borrowed him pens but also him dictionaries. It was to anticipate if the students did not understand some meaning of the word. By being kind teacher, it made the students keep motivated to learn, for example the students who did not want to write before finally they do it. By being kind teacher it means that the teacher was aware to some of the students who did not have high motivation in the learning English. So, teacher A often being kind teacher in otomotive major and mechanical engineering major. C. Encouraging the Students by Giving Rewards One of the strategies that was often used by teacher A is giving rewards to the students. Teacher A was often gave rewards to the students who got high scores. The teacher gave it when the students can answer all of the exercise correctly. As stated below: “I often give rewards to my students. When the students can answer all the exercise correctly I will give them a pen, especially in the beginning of the semester.

Due to the appreciation of the students who get high scores.”(TA) By giving prize the students become motivated. He said that if there were students can answer all of the exercise correctly and then he/she got prize so the others tried to get it. So, by giving prize or rewards it could motivate the students to learn English. Encouraging by giving rewards was often used by teacher A. The teacher giving rewards when the students can answer all the questions correctly. They become motivated and enthusiast to answer the questions because the teacher was gave prizes for students who could pass it. It means that the teacher understand that the characteristics of the students are they want to do something if they will get something. That is why the teacher encouraging the students by giving rewards. As stated by Gardner (1885) that to be motivated, the learner needs to have something to look forward, a purpose related to goal or objective.

Then, this strategies also was found in the previous research done by Ramona Beckman (2010). It could be similar to the previous research that has been done by Ramona Beckman because the case also about EFL. For some students, learning English as foreign language could be difficult because sometimes when someone learning a new language she/he must learn the culture of that language and it was difficult. So, giving rewards as motivating strategies was really affective because it means that the teacher appreciate the students’ effort so the students become motivated. Because everything she/he done was appreciate by the teacher. So, in this case teacher A like to express him appreciation by giving rewards to the students.

**Connecting the Teaching Process to the Real Life**

Explaining to the Students About How Useful of English One of the strategies was often used by teacher A to motivate the students was the teacher always said to the students that English is useful everywhere, whenever because English is important. He was also said to the students after their graduation if they want to find a job they will use English. So, English was really important in the workplace. As stated below: “Strategy that I often used is explained the important of English to find a job after their graduation.”(TA) The way to use this strategy explained by the teacher in the interview section and classroom observation. In applying this strategy the teacher always said to the students that English really important in every case, and everywhere. Teacher A said that he often explaining to the students about useful of English.

Then he also said by explaining to the students about the useful of English the students become enthusiastic in learning. Because most of the students who study in vocational school they did not want to continue to study in the university. It also was asked by the researcher in the observation. It means that after their graduation they will get a job which in the workplace and it need English. By saying that English is applicative and then English is useful everywhere it means that the teacher tried to connect the teaching and learning process to the real life. B. Giving Topic Related to Students’ Live (Personalization) Teacher A also like to personalize the topic. It means that the teacher often related the topic with the students’ life or their daily activity. So, it made the students more understand about the topic because they also included in the process or activity that they discussed. Regarding to apply this strategies the teacher allows the students to go out of the class to see everything doing by their friend and also people around the school. “He’em sometimes I give a real sample in their live.

For example in vocational school have a program that make different with every student. So, sometimes the students practice or searching the material out of the school and the students make video. Because I want the students practice, so the students understand with the material.”(TA) “Sometimes we use daily activity practice in their really live so it is easy by using that, we can give them understanding. It makes the teacher easier, makes the time faster to understand that topic. So, they did not bore and creative.”(TA) While, teacher B also gave topic that has been understand by the students because if they learn something that they have not seen or heard they difficult to understand. But if the teacher gave the example that have heard or seen by the students, they easier to understand the topic. So, the teacher always tried to relate the topic to their real life situation. “I also give the topic related to their lives or their surroundings, they will happy, if I give the other they will not understand.”(TB) It was also found in the classroom observation. When explaining the topic about “procedure text” the teacher made groups presentation. The students practice the topic about procedure text with the appropriated what they want made.

Using media to motivate the students was also used by teacher A and teacher B. Teacher A has been teaching about 14 years so it could be said that he has so many experiences in teaching the students. So, he has been understand the characteristics of the students. That is why teacher A was often used media to motivate the students because by using media they are easier to understand the topic. In the interview section he said that he often play video when he want to take the score of speaking and listening from his students. While teacher B in interview section she did not talk that she used video in teaching the students. But in classroom observation the researcher found she used video in learning the students. By using video as the media to teach the students it means that the students gave more attention to the teacher and become more active. It means that they become motivated because there were a progress on students in learning. It was also supported by Reeves (1998) that fifty years of educational research indicates that media and technology are affective in schools as phenomena to learn. B. Giving Vocabularies

1. **CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter it can be concluded that there were 10 strategies at SMKN 2 used by the teachers to motivate the students in learning English such as: more friendly to the students, giving topic related to students’ life, using humor, using personal approach, explaining to students about the useful of English, using media, giving vocabularies, using games, encouraging the students by giving rewards and being kind teacher. Where it can be classified in to four major themes in this research such us: create relax atmosphere in the class, having awareness to the students’ characteristics, connecting the teaching process to the real life and more creative in the teaching process. From all of the strategies that was used by the teachers, the dominant strategy to motivate the students used by third of the teacher were more friendly to the students and giving topic related to students life. Because third of the teacher was used this strategies in the classroom observation. Then based on the findings, it showed that teachers had their different strategies to motivate the students. It was because their students also different so the way to motivate must be different.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author would like to thank all those who have helped in this research.

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