

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is focusing on of the background of the study, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

A. Background of the Study

Motivation is a crucial factor in language learning, especially for Generation Z who are digital natives. For Generation Z, motivation can spur students to start learning, maintain focus, and persist in the face of challenges, which directly impacts the effort they invest and the results they achieve. A lack of sustained motivation can lead to disinterest, which hinders the learning process and reduces overall student performance. Motivation, particularly in the context of language learning, can be driven by intrinsic factors, such as personal interest in the subject, and extrinsic factors, such as praise, rewards, or the perceived relevance of the material.

In Indonesian education, particularly in regions like Tasikmalaya, a concerning phenomenon has emerged based on pre-observation conducted in several English classrooms: Generation Z students exhibit fluctuating motivation levels that rise and fall dramatically depending on the teaching strategies employed. This phenomenon aligns with Prensky's (2001) assertion that digital natives think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors, requiring educators to adapt their approaches accordingly. The pre-observation revealed that students show high enthusiasm when teachers incorporate digital tools or interactive activities, but their motivation drops significantly when traditional teaching methods are used. As Tapscott (2009) notes, Net Generation students expect to be engaged and have difficulty with passive forms of learning, which explains the dramatic motivational shifts observed in classrooms. English proficiency is essential for students' future prospects, yet many struggle to maintain engagement in traditional classroom settings due to these motivational fluctuations (Widiati & Hayati, 2015). Teachers face specific difficulties

including determining which strategies effectively maintain student interest, managing the unpredictable nature of Gen Z attention spans, and adapting their teaching methods when they observe declining student participation mid-lesson. Seemiller and Grace (2016) emphasize that "Generation Z requires constant stimulation and immediate feedback," making it challenging for educators to sustain motivation using conventional approaches. The case study location, a high school in Tasikmalaya, exemplifies this broader Indonesian educational challenge where teachers face unique constraints in resources and context compared to Western educational settings, while simultaneously navigating these motivational fluctuations that directly impact student performance and learning outcomes.

Traditional teaching methods, which tend to rely on passive learning, often fail to engage Generation Z, who prefer more interactive and innovative approaches (Hussain, 2020; Sugita & Takeuchi, 2019). As most education approaches Gen Z learning, teachers serve as vital forces motivating students, so imparting knowledge is important as engaging the students through methods that connect with their digital habits, including multimedia experience. According to Dörnyei (2001), motivating language learners is a difficult task, teachers need to figure out how to fire up self-motivation and how to make the process meaningful. To do so, teachers have to transition to facilitators that orient students, give them things to work toward and create engaging lessons. Strategies like using technology and incentives help boost motivation, but teachers also need to ensure these methods effectively support language learning (Sari & Fadhilah, 2021; Palfrey & Gasser, 2010; Mahmud, 2021).

Generation Z students, who have grown up with instant access to information, pose unique challenges in the classroom, necessitating a dynamic and innovative approach to their education. As digital natives, their familiarity with digital literacy allows them to quickly disengage when strategies do not suit their interests or learning styles (Hussain, 2020). For instance, a student might be highly motivated when working on a project

involving social media or digital storytelling, but lose interest during a lengthy lecture or traditional grammar exercise. The specific context of this school, including the unique challenges faced by teachers and students, makes it an ideal setting to investigate how teacher strategies can impact student motivation. The teachers in this study have incorporated a mix of traditional and modern teaching methods, providing an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of different motivational strategies (Prensky, 2012; Rahman, 2020).

There is a number of studies have been conducted on motivation and how certain teaching strategies impact Generation Z learners (Brown & Lee, 2015; Kormos and Csizér, 2014; Rahman, 2020; Sugita and Takeuchi, 2019; Susanti & Ayu, 2021; Wulandari, 2021). Rahman (2020) in his study examines the role of motivation in learning, specifically how teachers can foster a positive learning environment. This study examines the effectiveness of various motivational strategies but this research gap is that most studies have been conducted in Western contexts. While research Susanti and Ayu (2021) shows a lack of focus on how motivational strategies are adapted in local contexts, where resources may differ significantly from Western schools, this finding suggests that more research is needed to explore the unique challenges teachers face in these regions. Although, some other researchers have found that interactive technology and techniques are successful in motivating Gen Z students such as Brown and Lee, (2015) ; Wulandari, (2021) but this research on how these manipulations are used in local schools where resources differ significantly is much less than the previous type. In addition, other studies tend to explore the student side such as research Sugita and Takeuchi, (2019); Kormos and Csizér, (2014) which leaves a gap in how teachers view and implement this strategy.

This study aims to fill these gaps by examining the strategies used by two English teachers in Tasikmalaya to motivate their Generation Z students. By focusing on teacher strategies, this research will provide insights into the practical challenges and successes in adapting teaching methods to suit the

needs of Gen Z learners. The study seeks to contribute valuable knowledge to the field by identifying strategies that work within this specific context, thereby offering practical applications for teachers and policymakers who are looking to improve student motivation in English language learning.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the research background, the problem formulation is "What are the teachers' strategies in motivating Gen Z students in learning English?"

C. Operational Definitions

1. Motivation

The internal and external factors that drive Generation Z students to engage in learning English, encompassing both intrinsic interest and extrinsic encouragement from their teachers.

2. Teachers' Strategies

The particular actions, techniques, and methodologies of teachers aimed at heightening the motivation of the members of generation Z. These can be directed towards the use of interactive teaching methods, personalized feedback, use of technology, or even engaging activities.

3. Generation Z Students

The group of students who are currently studying English in Senior High School (SMA) grades 10, 11, and 12 and were born between 1997 and 2012. Those who are currently experiencing fluctuations in motivation and were born as "digital natives" because they were born where technology can obtain all the information needed quickly, and those who like to learn in innovative or freer ways or according to their interests.

D. Aims of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem, the aim of this study is to “analyze the strategies used by teachers to motivate Gen Z students in learning English”.

E. Significances of the Study**1. Theoretical use**

This study adds to the understanding of how teachers can motivate Generation Z students to learn English. It can serve as a foundation for future research on student motivation in language learning.

2. Practical use

The study provides insights for teachers on effective strategies to engage Gen Z students in English learning. By identifying what motivates these students, teachers can create more engaging lessons that better meet their needs.

3. Empirical use

This research provides data for future studies on motivating Generation Z in English learning, helping other researchers build on these findings to explore effective motivational strategies in language education.