

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a worldwide language that must be mastered. Learning English is crucial because it will open knowledge and allow students to develop the necessary skills for their future careers. Ilyosovna (2020) stated that English is the world's most widely used second language. Boroujeni & Fard (2013) assert that English is the only language used by more than 80% of international organizations in the Asia Pacific region, making it essential for society, politics, education, and the economy. Additionally, Tan & Balasico (2018) mentioned that in some Asian nations, English is one of the key subjects influencing students' career choices. The Indonesian government has made English a required subject in the curriculum due to its importance in teaching students science and technology.

English is a subject that all Indonesian students from the primary level through the university level must learn. In the Indonesian school curriculum, a student's ability to communicate in English is one of the skills that must be developed. This is because later students can find learning that uses that language, plus it becomes an additional value for the abilities that students have. Amjah (2013) argued that every student comes from a different background, with academic needs, culture, language, interests, and learning attitudes. One of the most challenging things that some students have studied is learning English as a second language. Due to its difficult learning requirements, the English language can quickly cause students to lose interest. Willomas (2013) state that it is crucial to identify the underlying factors that could impact students' motivation and interest in learning English.

Interest in learning among students greatly influences student performance in the teaching and learning process. Cheung (2018) mentioned that interest is a crucial component of learning. Interest in learning will increase students' focus on learning, which will impact learning outcomes. As it enables students to relate to their preferred subjects, the interest has great power. Laine et al. (2017) state that someone with great

attention tends to be interested in what he is paying attention to. Besides, Nugroho & Waslam (2020) defines learning-related interest develops as a result of experiences, routines, and participation in learning, not because it occurs suddenly or on its own.

Student interest is very important as a support in the ongoing learning process. Ricardo & Meilani (2017) define interest in learning as the experience of liking or being interested in something and participating in learning activities without being asked to. Because there is no pressure to learn, students interested in what they are learning happily pay attention, listen, and participate in the learning process. Syah (2013) stated that students' learning achievement in a subject might be affected by their level of interest; this suggests that their level of interest might influence their English learning achievement.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language to learn. In practice both teachers and students still face many problems during the learning process. Various responses can be found in the classroom regarding these problems, especially in the attitude of students during the learning process, student learning outcomes, and participation in carrying out group activities. Various factors influence the success of the English teaching and learning process. The factors might arise either before or during the process of the activity. Some factors, including motivation and interest, are influenced by the students' surroundings, while the students themselves impact others.

Many internal and external factors, as well as outside influences, affect how students learn. However, Slameto (2003) stated that internal and external factors affect interest. Both internal and external factors can affect a person's interest in learning. Internal factors originate from the student and include physical and psychological aspects of the student. External factors, such as family, school, and peers, are beyond the student's control. The positive impact of these factors can increase students' interest in learning. The negative effects of these factors can lead to a decrease in student interest in learning. Therefore, the more positively these factors affect students, the more interested they are in learning. How about the factors related to the English language?

Based on the explanation above, the researchers can conclude that not all students have the same interest in learning English. To make this statement, the researchers believe several factors influence student interest in learning from one student to another. In junior

high schools, it is not only the desire of researchers but also the urgency that is obtained. Also, 8th-grade students as the subject of this study were based on the consideration that students were in an intermediate position, a stable level of adaptation; this is because 8th grade is still in the stage of adjustment, a transitional period to the environment and the learning process. From the factors students face, researchers are interested in conducting a research entitled "Factors Influencing Students' Interest towards Learning English as A Foreign Language at One of Public Junior High School in Jakarta".

1.2 Research Question

The research questions of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What factors influence students' interest in learning English?
2. What is the dominant factor that influences students' interest in learning English?

1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of the study refer to the research questions. The following aims are:

1. To explore what factors influence student interest in learning English
2. To find out what is the dominant factor that influences students' interest in learning English

1.4 Significance of the Study

This present study is expected to provide input and produce results of this study of theoretically and practically profit. Theoretically, the results of this study will enrich previous research on students' interest in learning English, specifically, the factors they face. It is expected to give a new contribution of knowledge about factors and dominant factor influence student interest in learning English. Additionally, it is expected to provide data for developing this research for future research; another researcher may revise, assess, and add a new perspective to this investigation.

Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide new insights for English teachers and students interested in learning English. English teachers are informed about

the factors that influence students' interest in learning so that teachers have new strategies in teaching to motivate students to be more enthusiastic and have a high interest in learning through classroom management.