



## THE INVESTIGATION OF PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LEARNING AT PRIVATE ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN MAKASSAR

Ary Putra Sanusi<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of English Education, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author Email: aryputra157@gmail.com

### Abstract

The current school curriculum is seen to have far too many disciplines to cover. In general, there are three types of courses taught in middle and high school: general subjects, science subjects, and social subjects. This subject group really grows in Islamic schools when religious subject groups are present. The concentration of learning that students must follow is a phenomenon as a result of so numerous disciplines. According to prior research, this attention is kept by parents of children who have particular expectations of them. This paper is the result of an investigation into Parents' Perspective towards the Importance of English Learning at Private Islamic Schools in Makassar. The research reveals that some parents who think that learning English is not too important, tends to be unimportant or even not important at all compared to religious learning where they give the doctrine directly to their children (students) or indirectly by not showing the appreciation for the results of learning English the children get

**Keywords:** : parents' perspective; English learning; Islamic school

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a wide range of educational institutions, including Islamic residential schools, madrasas, and schools. Schools, as official educational institutions initially recognized by the government and formed by the Dutch in the twenty-first century, have undergone changes in terms of style and nature. While the main difficulty now facing national education is how to deliver services in the form of quality education that is accessible to all levels of society, quality education will also produce quality Indonesian people. As a result of a large number of Indonesians receiving high-quality education, the quality of the Indonesian country will considerably increase (Fatkuroji, 2012). Along with these development efforts, there are many criticisms of the Indonesian education system. One of the most frequently raised criticisms is about the curriculum content. The dissatisfaction is directed at the national education system (schools) under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education, whose curriculum content emphasizes more on cognitive aspects in some areas, yet lacking in others (Suparno, 2018).

English subjects are merely positioned as a side subject in comparison to other particular disciplines when it comes to teaching English in schools (Prasanti, 2016). When compared to topics like mathematics, physics, chemistry, or biology, the number of students interested for this subject is usually quite small. There is a main separation in high school (SMA) between science and social studies, and there is frequently a language department as well. According to Maduwu (2016), the science studies has always attracted a lot of attention because of the perception that it is a prestigious major filled smart people that will lead to a successful life because it can direct students to jobs that are regarded as prestigious and competent, such as medicine, public health, or other related majors. Meanwhile, the social studies or language studies has been designated as a gathering ground for mischievous and inept students as safe haven for those who don't know where they want to go in life. This is comprehensible given its origins, notably the beliefs of ancient parents who believed certain vocations to be more honorable and important than others that could benefit the individual.

What is sad, though, is the attitude that denigrates occupations, majors, and even specific courses. This viewpoint does not appear to be spared English. A language study is generally regarded as less significant than other forms of education, with the premise that "What do you want to be if you study a language?" (Prasanti, 2016).

In Islamic schools, there is a new learning group called "Religion Studies (Islam)" in addition to the dichotomy of Science and Social Studies. English must compete with a group of religious courses in addition to having to fight with exact disciplines, as this is a unique aspect of Islamic institutions. Actually, this is not about which subjects are the most important or finest to learn. It is natural for students who enroll in public schools and major in science or social studies to believe that the subjects in those departments are more significant or superior to those in other departments. It is the same in Islamic schools; it would be perfectly understandable if religious courses are given more weight and were regarded as more significant and superior to other subjects (Suyatno, 2015).

This paper departs from the agitation of English language teachers in Islamic schools where the subjects seem to be considered unimportant. Suyatno (2015) made several indicators related to this matter, of which in this case, there are 3 indicators that are met, namely: 1) the students' lack of interest in learning English in class or outside the classroom; 2) parents tend to limit students' interaction with English; 3) the school does not support the development of English language education in schools

These indicators will be discussed one by one in the next section. But before entering that section, it will be first explained about the success of learning a subject in school. Zulkarnindra (2021) stated, there are many factors that can realize successful learning, some of which are 1) Students' interest and motivation, 2) Teacher competence, 3) Perspective and support from parents, 4) School curriculum, and 5) School facilities. This paper focuses more on the 3rd factor deals with the perspective and support from parents with the assumption that the other four factors are in a "good enough" level, even 2 of them are at a "good" level.

This section continues the discussion of the 3 indicators above, the first is about students' lack of interest in learning English in class or outside the classroom. To achieve successful learning, teachers will usually seek various ways, ranging from fiddling with the material, using various delivery styles and using a personal approach (Risdianto, 2016). All of this is done so that children are interested in learning English. However, the phenomenon that occurs is, no matter how the teacher's efforts in creating interesting, successful and memorable English learning are, students are still not motivated enough in their learning. More than half the numbers of students in a class who are taught just "do it anyway" the subject and then consider it a burden. The tasks that are done in order to be free from the burden and the feedback that is very lacking makes even the learning of a competent teacher feel less "biting".

Second, there is intervention from the parents of students. Learning in school, as is generally known, is not limited to the daily timetable, but can also include additional schedules dependent on the curriculum's portion (Indriastuti, 2018). Before got that far, learning in the classroom had been subjected to intervention. It is very usual for the time that has been prepared in the lesson plans to be slightly excessive when used in the classroom, resulting in a little amount of time that should be used by students for relaxation. This is clearly understood, and it is therefore unnecessary to continue with the "overloaded" learning. It is the student's choice whether or not to continue learning or to take a break or return home (Indriastuti, 2018). However, in the example presented in this article, the majority of students chose to stop learning. This could possibly be due to the first indicator listed above. What's more startling is that some students still want to stay but are unable to do so because of their parents' instructions. When English is scheduled for the last hour of the day, this frequently occurs. The initial enquiry was conducted by conducting dialogues with students, asking various questions that turned out to be the answer, and sending the majority of them home after class.

Third, the lack of support from the school. Apart from learning in the classroom, there is also learning beyond the classroom, to continue a little from the second signal that was

described previously. This type of learning is typically achieved through the implementation of extracurricular hours such as the English Club with various activities, additional hours as a form of enrichment and remedy for students, and field trips to a specific location that serve as both a learning process and a refreshing experience for students (Ilham et al, 2021). Despite the fact that it is stated in the curriculum, parents refuse to give permission to students who wish to follow it. This is understandable given that the majority of the activities listed are either elective or not required. Even if it is required to be followed, consent or an official letter of permission from the school's administrator is required.

Unfortunately, this permit is quite difficult to obtain, as English is not seen as a topic as significant as religious or social/science studies. In order to carry out these actions, a number of administrative tasks must be done. It is a different scenario than other subjects, which appear to have "made things easier" to allow for implementation. The school appears to be less supportive of this "extra movement," which is plainly expressed in the school's curriculum, where the teachers simply wish to conduct the program as a form of responsibility and passion for the profession.

It is very unfortunate when in other places there are many teachers who are considered incompetent but expect a lot from them, whereas in this case, the teachers are quite competent but under-empowered. Looking at the 5 factors mentioned in the section above, the authors choose one factor that needs to be investigated, namely the parents' view of learning English in Islamic schools.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This investigation follows a design that is similar to a qualitative research design that use descriptive analytic methodologies. The "interview" instrument was used to conduct the study with the parents of the students. The parents of the students who were called were those who met several criteria as explained in the previous section; in summary, the two main criteria were parents of 1) students who lacked interest and motivation in English lessons and 2) students who were assumed to have limited movement due to parental instructions. There were 17 parents called as participants in this enquiry from a class of 24 students.

Several open-ended questions were posed to them, and their responses were recorded and examined in order to find answers to the investigation's questions. This conference with parents was place in a school room behind closed doors (only teachers and parents were present). Meetings run 30-45 minutes per session, and two sessions are held per day, therefore a meeting session with parents of students takes about a week to complete. Following the collection of interview data, the next phase was to evaluate and write a narrative for this piece, which took about two weeks to accomplish.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The Investigation

Several names of children whose parents were ready to be called and invited to discuss were discovered based on daily observations while learning English in the last few months. Because this is an internal problem for English subjects, no specific approval from superiors is required; only verbal notification that a meeting with parents would be held to address critical matters for student development is required. Then a meeting with parents of students began. Some came in pairs (mother and father), while others came in singles (father or mother), either due to time constraints or other factors, and the majority of those that arrived were their mothers. First and foremost, getting to know each other and then making small conversation, it is narrated in such a way as to come to the essential topic by asking some questions concerning the investigation's theme. Keep in mind that the amount of questions, the phrases utilized, and

the manner in which they are presented vary from person to person and are dependent on the circumstances. However, the essential question is "How important is English subject?"

### Result of Investigation

Of the 17 participants, as many as 12 participants admitted that English is important and just as important as other subjects or scientific fields. They assume that English is very necessary to be able to deal with the development of this increasingly advanced era (Nurginaya et al, 2021). There are several reasons they stated:

1. Technology makes it easier for students (their children) to interact with the outside world through social media, most of which use English
2. Many of their learning references also speak English and of course, learning is needed to be able to understand those references
3. There is an English exam to take further education which according to them is very difficult to conquer so they have to learn a lot from now on
4. Their children like learning English which is carried out by the teacher concerned, which is considered to be a breath of fresh air for teaching English so far which is usually considered monotonous, reflected in the enthusiasm of the child.

After understanding these answers, a surprise, happy, and a little perplexing result emerges, because, as previously stated, learning English is a difficult task.

It is worth noting that there were no questions in this interview session that seemed to force the participants to state that English is important, and their responses were not later contested with specific arguments, but were just recorded as a form of their response. To promote peace and good relations between teachers and parents, the surroundings were made as pleasant as possible so that the answers they gave were genuine and not made-up. At least, that is the investigation's hope. Even if there are non-verbal or verbal gestures that do not feel genuine, follow-up questions are addressed casually to ensure that all information is correctly retrieved.

In contrast to the previous 12 participants, 5 other participants immediately gave striking answers by saying that English tends to be unimportant or even not important at all (Adnan, 2017). Again, there was no objection from the investigators to the response, only which further questions were asked about the reasons for their answers. Once collected, here are the reasons for their responses.

1. English (even other subjects) is only world knowledge, it is better to study religion
2. English is difficult to learn, considering that their children's Indonesian is not good enough
3. They are directed to later study and work that has nothing to do with English
4. They are more directed to learn Arabic and Indonesian than to learn English, because Arabic is the language of religion and Indonesian is the national language.
5. English is a product of western culture, while Indonesia, which is predominantly Muslim, adheres to eastern culture
6. English is considered a side science that cannot make children successful, it is still better to study the science group subject because the field of work is prestigious (while still prioritizing the religious group subject)
7. Studying English will only interfere with the concentration of other subjects
8. In the grave, people are asked to use Arabic, not English

The answer is quite piercing considering the question was asked by a person who teaches English. While it is understandable why they would say that, investigator mostly disagreed on this response. The interesting thing is that the reality of learning differs from the findings of the investigation, which assumes that 12 participants are still not fully open to their responses due to reluctance and other factors, implying that the investigation will take longer for the 12 people than for the 5 people. They were also asked a number of additional questions that

were peppered with jokes and informal banter. It was a remarkable phenomenon that 8 of the 12 participants tended to somewhat adjust their answers by rejecting their own arguments and providing new or extra responses showing that "English is not very important" accompanied by some of the reasons stated in list of 8 reasons above. While the other four persons stick to their earlier responses. With this, it can be grouped that out of 17 participants, there are 4 participants who think learning English is important, 8 people think learning English is not too important and 5 participants think that learning English tends to be unimportant or even not important at all. A result that turns out to be in accordance with the reality that has occurred in English learning that has occurred so far.

### **Indoctrination of Interests and Respect for Learning Outcomes**

Not only that, it turns out that there are other things behind other than the assumption of parents who are mostly against learning English, namely the existence of doctrine and lack of appreciation for the achievement of the child. Of the 13 contra participants, there were 5 people who deliberately gave the doctrine that there is no need to be too serious in learning English, just study as simple as possible and stop when finished and there is no need for other additions. This indoctrination is also accompanied by giving 8 reasons (which have been stated above) or even more accompanied by a little spice of parental authority where students finally adopt that thought either unconsciously or forced.

4 other people (outside the 5 above) from the 13 contra participants also admitted that the good results that children got from learning English were considered not too important so they lacked respect for it. Children then feel demotivated about it which makes them (at first enthusiastic) become less enthusiastic after being faced with this reality. If the results they get are bad (parents also occasionally check their study results), they will be ridiculed. Indeed, there is no indoctrination from these 4 parents towards their children as described in the section above, however, the lack of appreciation (and even worse, ridicule) causes children (students) to feel that they do not need to be too serious about learning English because of whatever they get, it will only be underestimated by their parents

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of this investigation, it can be concluded that, there are some parents who think that learning English is not too important, tends to be unimportant or even not important at all compared to religious learning where they give the doctrine directly to their children (students) or indirectly by not showing the appreciation for the results of learning English the children get.

**REFERENCES**

- Adnan, M. 2017. "Being English Teachers in Malaysian Islamic Schools: Identity Narratives From A Five Year 'Life Journey'. *Journal of Arab World English*/Vol. 8/No. 1/March 2017/220-233.
- Faisal. 2022. "Pengaruh Pendidikan Orang Tua dan Gaya Belajar Siswa terhadap Kemampuan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris". *Journal of Akrab Juara*/Vol. 7/No. 2/Mei 2022/84-93. Tangerang
- Fatkuroji, F. 2012. Kebijakan Pembelajaran Terpadu Dalam Meningkatkan Minat Konsumen Pendidikan. *Nadwa: Journal of Pendidikan Islam*, 6 (2), 249–268. <https://doi.org/10.21580/Nw.2012.6.2.591>
- Ilham, Et Al. 2021. "Pendampingan Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Dasar Pada Santri Pondok Pesantren Nurul Islam Di Kekalik, Sekarbela, Mataram". *Journal of Character Education Society*/Vol. 4/No. 4/Okttober 2021/1051 1060. Mataram
- Indriastuti, N.R. 2018. "Mempertahankan Idealisme Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Sekolah Dasar di Ponorogo". *Journal of Dimensi Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*/Vol. 6/No. 1/Januari 2016. Surabaya
- Kamaluddin, 2020. "Understanding Parental Choice For Private and National Schools in Malaysia and its Implication for National Unity". Published Dissertation. Malaysia: Kulliyah of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Maduwu, B. 2016. "Pentingnya Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Disekolah". *Journal of Warta Dharmawangsa Edisi 50 / Oktober 2016*. Medan
- Muid, A. 2015. "Pentingnya Bahasa Inggris Dan Bahasa Arab Pada Kurikulum Pendidikan". *Journal of Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*/Vol. 14/No. 2/Juli-Desember, 2015. Surabaya
- Ningsih, D.W. 2022. "Mindset Di Pikiran Siswa Bahwa Belajar Bahasa Inggris Sangat Sulit". *Murabbi : Journal of Ilmiah Dalam Bidang Pendidikan*/Vol. 5/No. 1/Januari-Juli 2022. Medan
- Nurginaya, Et Al. 2021. "Sikap Bahasa dan Motivasi Belajar Indonesia, Bahasa Inggris, dan Bahasa Arab Santri di Sekolah Putri Darul Istikamah Kabupaten Maros". *Journal of Ilmu Budaya*/Vol. 9/No. 1. Makassar
- Prasanti, Y. 2016. "Pengelolaan Pembelajaran Berbasis Lingkungan pada Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di MIN Gabungan Sragen". Published Thesis. Semarang: Magister Administrasi Pendidikan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.
- Rao, P.S. 2019. *The Role of English As A Global Language*. *Research Journal of English*, Vol-4, Issue-1, Pp, 1, 2019.
- Risdianto, A. 2016. "Model Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Di Ponpes Ta'mirul Islam Surakarta". *Journal of Bahasa dan Sastra*/Vol. 1/No. 1/Januari-Juni, 2016. Semarang
- Suparno. (2018). Analisis Faktor-Faktor Pembentuk Karakter Smart Siswa Di Sekolah Islam Terpadu. *Journal of Pendidikan Karakter*, 8(1), 62–73.

Suyatno. 2015. "Integrated Islamic Schools in The National Education System". Journal of Al-Qalam/Vol.21/No. 1/Juni 2015. Yogyakarta

Zulkarnindra, E. 2021. "Metode Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Tingkat SMP di Nuraida Islamic Boarding School Bogor". Journal of Rayah Al-Islam/Vol. 5/No. 2/Oktober 2021/437-446. Bandung