English Learning Interest of the Junior High School Students: A Mixed Methods Study

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A B S T R A K

Pandemi telah memberikan perubahan signifikan dalam sistem pembelajaran. Itu mengubah metode guru dan siswa dalam belajar. Di masa pandemi, proses pembelajaran melalui layar dan learning management system. Kondisi tersebut memberikan dampak positif dan negatif dalam pembelajaran. Dampak positif dari pandemi adalah guru dan siswa dapat menggunakan metode pembelajaran daring dan meningkatkan keterampilan mereka dalam menggunakan internet dan IT, sedangkan dampak negatifnya adalah minat belajar siswa menurun karena siswa cenderung bingung dan salah paham pada penjelasan guru. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana minat belajar bahasa Inggris siswa kelas sembilan, mengapa siswa berada pada tingkat minat tersebut, dan apakah ada hubungan yang signifikan antara minat belajar siswa dengan penguasaan bahasa Inggris. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah mixed-method study dengan peserta 36 siswa SMP. Convergent parallel design digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah angket, wawancara, dan nilai akhir siswa pada semester pertama tahun pelajaran 2022/2023. Berdasarkan data yang diperoleh, terdapat 9 siswa yang memiliki tingkat minat bahasa Inggris tinggi, 26 siswa memiliki tingkat minat bahasa Inggris sedang, dan 1 siswa memiliki tingkat minat bahasa Inggris rendah. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan yang signifikan antara minat belajar bahasa Inggris siswa dan penguasaan bahasa Inggris siswa dan berpengaruh positif terhadap kemampuan bahasa Inggris siswa.

A B S T R A C T

The pandemic has provided a significant change in the learning system. It changed the teachers and students' methods in learning. During pandemic, the learning process through screen and learning management system. That condition gave positive and negative effect in learning. The positive impact of the pandemic is that teachers and students are able to used online learning methods and improve their skills in using internet and IT, while the negative impact is that students decreased their interest in learning because students tend to confused and misunderstood on the teachers' explanations. The purpose of this study was to analyze how the interest in learning English of nine grade students, why is the student on that level of interest, and whether there is a significant relationship between students' learning interest and English mastery. The research method used was a mixed-method study with 36 participants of Junior High School students. The convergent parallel design used in this study. The instruments used are questionnaires, interview, and students' final score in the first semester in academic year 2022/2023. Based on the data obtained, there are 9 students who have a high level of interest in English, 26 students have a medium level of interest in English, and 1 student has a low level of interest in English. The result showed that there is a significant relationship between students' English learning interest and students' English mastery and a positive effect on students' English skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

Based on the curriculum 2013, the English language is a compulsory subject for junior high school students. The methods of learning will run smoothly when there is engagement among teachers, students, and the lesson itself. Students' engagement is the motivation from students and makes the students active in learning and motivation was the key of success in learning (Purnama et al., 2019; Sawang et al., 2018).

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The goal of higher education is to make students have creative thinking, self-development, integrated with the curriculum and innovation in activities, and those skills are transferred by the teacher and the students should acquire that knowledge (Gruzdeva et al., 2016; Toquero & M., 2020). The covid-19 pandemic affects the learning methods in schools. Before covid-19 pandemic teaching and learning processes through face-to-face meanwhile during and after covid-19 used online mode learning. Covid-19 also affected students' interest in learning English. The students' perception of online learning was that students did not like to do online learning because it makes the learners difficult to recognize the lesson and the students prefer offline learning to online. Online learning makes some students left behind and the student's interest in learning decreased. Students' learning interest has a role in the student's achievement in learning; furthermore, students faced the obstacles in online learning such as sustainable of internet connection, accessibility of learning media, and compatibility of learning media (Agung et al., 2020; Harida et al., 2020).

English learning interest is the feeling that motivates students to learn English. Students who have high interest follow the learning process by providing stimulus to the students and the learning interest has a positive correlation with the efficiency of learning such as managing time to study, learning strategy, and the method of how to learn the English language (Alfian et al., 2021; W. Huang & Chang, 2019). The learners who have interest in learning English, they find ways to understand English. They set their time to learn and learn seriously to learn English. Interest takes a dominant part in the educational process because interest affects students to do activities that they are interested. The learners are motivated in learning if they have an interest in the lesson, especially in English lessons. Many factors encourage students to learn in school. There are internal and external factors that motivate and increase students' learning interest. The factor supported learner in learning such as family environment factors, family education background, academic environment factors can motivate students to get high achievements and increase students' interest in learning. Besides that, the economic status and support from parents effected on academic achievement (Li & Qiu, 2018; Ramli et al., 2018). A family with economic sufficiency will think that education is important. They will motivate the children to continue their studies and they will support their economic sufficiency. The motivation from the family will improve students' learning interest. Students' English learning interests showed the differences in learning. Students who have high interest, they have more effort in learning. It made a great scores or achievements in English learning. Learning interest could built by teachers. Teachers' interaction in learning effective in enhance students' interest and the students who have a great interest in reading comprehension got a better score than students that have a low interest in reading comprehension (Amiruddin, 2022; Lee & Boo, 2022).

The definition of interest was various and some researchers have some perspectives on the definition of interest. Interest is an attitude, passion, curiosity, emotion, attraction, and motivation to the objects. Interest is a variable that motivates a person as a psychological state that occurred during a person and an object interact with each other, interest also refers to a relative tendency to the particular content such as an event, object, or idea (Hidi, 2006; Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Interest is a complex connection between affective and cognitive components that enhance motivation and include some interaction between the individual and the environment. The affective component refers to students' interest and positive effect to study, therefore cognitive component is about what students feel during learning (Choy & Yeung, 2022; Kraft, 2017). Related to students' learning interests, there were two kinds of interest. Situational interest and individual interest are the types of interest in education. The situational interest emerged from the aspects of academic teaching activity, school environment, teachers' role, school climate, and learners' relationship (Hidi, 2006; Iterbeke et al., 2021; Krapp, 2002). Individual interest concerns the individuals' preferences and individual developmental outcome for specific content which is stable (Hedges, 2018; Judith & Knogler, 2017). Based on the explanations above individual interest is a crucial factor in students' academic process. Individual interest also includes preferences, enjoyment, engagement, curiosity, and personal value related to a particular lesson such as mathematics, science, music, or some other lesson. The interest in learning was influenced by complex factors such as internal and external factors. The internal factors of interest related to English learning were the feeling of the students on how the teachers delivered the English lesson in front of the class. The method of the teacher in teaching, the role of the teachers to make the academic process interesting, how to enhance students' desire for English learning, built students' confidently in learning, and also make the students feel enjoy during the academic process were things come from outside that made students motivation to learn. The external factors of the student's English learning interest came from their family or the people outside that support or inspire the students to learn English. Support from the family can be a form of motivation, financial support, and spirit in learning English. The family member who has been succeeding in learning English will inspire the learner to be motivated in learning. They are inspired by the family's

experiences. There have been numerous previous studies on the learning interest of students. To start with, the primary review was finished by previous study looked into how learning media affect learning outcomes, how interest in learning affects learning outcomes, and how learning media affect learning outcomes (Apriani, 2019). Other study aimed to develop an appropriate English learning media for junior high school students in the countryside area by applying traditional games (Sugiarto & Hikmawati, 2019). The results of the need analysis were the students prefer learning English by using media. There is study that discovered that students' interest in learning English lessons at private junior high schools and the factors that influence their interest in learning English (Pravitasari et al., 2020). That reinforce by other study found the English achiever has some difficulties and obstacles in learning English, they often have a lack of interest and enthusiasm in learning English (Xu et al., 2022). They did a study on how to cultivate junior high school underachiever interest in English learning. They claimed that some methods can treat underachiever interest in learning by doing some treatment.

Based on the research, interest has an important role in English learning. Students who have a high level of interest in English learning got higher scores than students who have a low level of interest. It meant that interest gave motivation for the learners to learn English and also gave positive effects on the student's learning achievements. Previous study was done by and the result of the study was learning media has a significant influence on improving students learning outcomes, and the learning media and the learning interest provide significant interaction effects on improving the student's learning outcomes (Apriani, 2019). The previous study is analyzed the material design in that the students need to improve their English learning interest in junior high school students (Sugiarto & Hikmawati, 2019). They create the traditional games based on the textbook they have and they analyze the impact on the student's learning interest, meanwhile, the similarities with the present study were both of the study focus on English learning interest and identify the factor that affected the English learning interest (Pravitasari et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2022).

The previous study focused on the way how to treat the underachiever learning interest by doing some treatment and the differences with the present study was not focused on the way how to improve students' English Learning interest, and the similarities with the present study were both study discussed about students' English learning interest. The purpose of this study was to analyze how the interest in learning English of nine grade students, why is the student on that level of interest, and whether there is a significant relationship between students' learning interest and English mastery.

2. METHOD

A mixed-method research design used in this study. A mixed method design aimed to give a broader and deeper understanding of a phenomenon and the procedure for collecting data, analyzing and mixing or combining both qualitative and quantitative studies in a single study, it involved perspective, data collection, and data analysis (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). There were some types of design in mixed-method research. In this study, convergent parallel design used which is both quantitative and qualitative data were collected independently and in parallel to each other and they converge and offer complementary data on the research question or problems. The researchers gathered both qualitative and quantitative separately, compare the results from the analysis of both database than put together in the discussion session to make an interpretation as to whether the results support or contradict to both data. On the other words, the representative data compared and contrasted to look for similarities, correlations, differences, and complementarities each database. This study was conducted in SMP Karya Dharma Bhakti Palembang. The school is located on Karya Baru street number 264, Alang – Alang Lebar District, Palembang – South Sumatera. The school conducts the teaching and learning process five days a week. The school uses curriculum 2013 for junior high school programs. There are five classes at all levels. The total number of students is 110 students. The participants in this research are 36 students of ninth-grade students of SMP Karya Dharma Bhakti Palembang in the academic year 2022/2023. The class divided into two room in grade nine. Data collection is the method that the researchers use in this study to answer the research questions. The researchers used questionnaire instruments for answering qualitative study. The questionnaire is the instrument for collecting survey information and providing structured and numerical data. Closed-ended questions were used to collect data from the participants. The close-ended questions determine the range of responses from the participants or respondents may choose. Close-ended questions help respondents to give responses easily. There were 30 items that students should answer based on the five-point Likert scale. Scale 1 or A for not true, 2 or B for slightly true, 3 or C for moderate true, 4 or D for mostly true, and 5 or E for very true. Ready-made questionnaires used in this study. The researchers modify some statements related to English learning interests and the aspects of interest. The instruments showed in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire Instruments

No.	Statements
1	The content of this English course relates to my expectations and goals.
2	In this English class, I try to set and achieve high standards of excellence.
3	I find the challenge level in this English course to be about right: neither too easy not too hard.
4	I feel that I get enough recognition of my work in this English course by means of grades, comments, or other feedback.
5	The amount of work I have to do is appropriate for this type of English course.
6	I get enough feedback to know how well I am doing.
7	I have to work too hard to succeed in this English course.
8	To accomplish my goals, it is important that I do well in this course.
9	I feel confident that I will do well in this English course.
10	As I am taking this English class, I believe that I can succeed if I try hard enough.
11	The thinngs I am learning in this English course will be useful to me.
12	The instructor makes the subject matter of this English course seem important.
13	You have to be lucky to get good grades in this English course.
14	I do NOT think I will benefit much from this English course.
15	The personal benefits of this English course are clear to me.
16	Whether or not I succeed in this English course is up to me.
17	I feel that the grades or other recognition I receive are fair compared to other students.
18	It is difficult to predict what grade the instructor will give my assignments.
19	I feel rather disappointed with this English course.
20	I feel satisfied with what I am getting from this course.
21	This English class has very little in it that captures my attention.
22	I feel that this English course gives me a lot of satisfaction.
23	As a student in this English class, I am curious about the subject matter.
24	I am pleased with the instructor's evaluations of my work compared to how well I think I have done.
25	I often daydream while in this English class.
26	My curiosity is often stimulated by the questions asked or the problems given on the subject matter in this English class.
27	The instructor uses an interesting variety of teaching techniques.
28	The subject matter of English course is just too difficult for me.
29	I enjoy working in English course.
30	The instructor knows how to make us feel enthusiastic about the subject matter of English course.

The second data collection were documentations. The data related to the students' English scores got from the English teachers and school administrator. The student's English scores were gathered from some assignments, daily tests, projects, and final examinations. The scores calculated to find the average and it used for final score. In this study, the student's English scores used to identify students' competence in English mastery. Besides that, the student's English scores correlated with students' learning interests that were gotten by the questionnaire. Then the reason why the students have that level got from the interview students who have high level and low level of interest. The interview instrument show in Table 2.

Table 2. Interview Instruments

No.	Statements
1	Why do you assume that the content of this English course *relate/don't relate* to your expectations and goals?
2	Why do you *try/don't try* to set and achieve high standards of excellence?
3	Why do you claim that you *find/don't find* the challenge in this English course to be about right: neither too easy not too hard*.
4	Why do you *feel/don't feel* that you get enough recognition of your work in this English course by means of grades, comments, or other feedback?
5	Why do you assume that the amount of work I have to do *is appropriate/not* for this type of English course?
6	Why do you assume that you *get/don't get* enough feedback to know how well I am doing?

No.	Statements
7	Why do you assume that you have to **work /don't work** hard to succeed in this English course?
8	Why do you claim that to accomplish your goals, it **is important/not important** that you do well in this course?
9	Why do you **feel/don't feel** confident that you will do well in this English course?
10	Why do **believe/don't believe** that you can succeed if you try hard enough?
11	Why do you **think/don't think** that the things you are learning in this English course will be useful for you?
12	Why do you asuume that thee instructor **makes/doesn't make** the subject matter of this English course seem important?
13	Why do assume that you have to be **lucky/have't lucky** to get good grades in this English course?
14	Why do you **think/don't think** that you will benefit much from this English course?
15	Why do you assume that the benefits of this English course are **clear/not clear** to you?
16	Why do you claim that whether or not you succeed in this English course **is up to you/isn't up to you**?
17	Why do you feel that the grades or other recognition you receive **are fair/not fair** compared to other students?
18	Why do you assume that it **is difficult/not difficult** to predict what grade the instructor will give my assignments?
19	Why do you feel rather **disappointed/don't disappointed** with this English course?
20	Why do you feel **satisfied/don't satisfied** with what you are getting from this course?
21	Why do you claim that this English class has very **little/ lot** in it that captures your attention?
22	Why do you feel that this English course gives you **a lot of/little** satisfaction?
23	Why do you **feel/don't feel curious** about the subject matter.
24	Why do you feel **please/don't please** with the instructor's evaluations of your work compared to how well you think you have done?
25	Why do you **often/don't** daydream while in this English class?
26	Why do you assume your curiosity **is often/isn't** stimulated by the questions asked or the problems given on the subject matter in this English class?
27	Why do you assume that instructor **uses/doesn't** use an interesting variety of teaching techniques.?
28	Why do you assume that the subject matter of English course is just **too difficult/isn't** difficult for you?
29	Why do you **enjoy/don't enjoy** working in English course?
30	Why do you assume that the instructor **knows/doesn't know** how to make us feel enthusiastic about the subject matter of English course?

The researchers analyze the qualitative database first and then the quantitative database after that compared the result from the two databases and noted whether there is a convergence or divergence between the two databases. Three phases of data analysis in a convergent design. First phase is analyze qualitative data by coding the data in the specific code that represent data collection, second phase is analyzing data quantitative in the statistical result. The data quantitative can be show in the table, percentage, and the graphic. The last phase is integrating the finding of qualitative and quantitative data by merging the data to analyze. The researcher will show the qualitative data first, second show the quantitative data finding and then compare the qualitative and quantitative result. For the questionnaire, there are 30 items of 5-point Linkert scale. The score range of the questionnaire is 30 – 150. To determine the level of the interest, The level divided into three level or predicate. There are high level, medium level, and low level of interest. The score range show in Table 3.

Table 3. Score Range of The Level Of Interest

No.	Score Range	Categories
1.	111-150	High level
2.	71-110	Medium level
3.	30-70	Low Level

Beside the questionnaire, the documentations of students English learning score were used in this study. The minimum score criterion of the English language learning at SMP Karya Dharma Bhakti is 60.

Based on the minimum score criterion, researchers classify the English language learning achievement into 4 categories. The categories showed in Table 4.

Table 4. Score Range Categories

No.	Score Range	Categories
1.	88 - 100	Excellent
2.	74 - 87	Good
3.	60 - 73	Average
4	< 60	Poor

To find the correlation and the regression between students' English learning interest and English mastery, researchers used IBM SPSS 26 version 26.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The data presented in Chart 1 shows the result of questionnaire related to students' English learning interest. There are 30 questions in the questionnaire and there are 5 Linkert-scale as show in **Table 5**.

Table 5. The Result From Questionnaire

No.	Score Range	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	111-150	High level	9	25 %
2.	71-110	Medium level	26	72 %
3.	30-70	Low Level	1	3 %

Table 5 showed the level of student's English learning interest. The category of interest were classify into 3 categories, there were high level of interest, medium level of interest, and low level of interest. Based on the table there were 9 students or 25 % who have high level of interest which have score range in 111 to 150. There were 26 students or 72 % who have medium level of interest, and there were 1 student or 3 % who has low level of interest. The components are students'' projects, students' daily exam, students' mid-semester exam, and final examination. The average score shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Students' Final Score

No.	Score Range	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	88 - 100	Excellent	13	36 %
2.	74 - 87	Good	16	44 %
3.	60 - 73	Average	7	19 %
4	< 60	Poor	0	0 %

From Table 6 showed the students' score classification within first semester. There were 13 students or 36 % who got excellent category, 16 students or 44 % who got good category, 7 students or 19 % who got average category, and there were no students who got poor category in the final score The interview conducted to some participants who have high level of interest and low level of interest in the ninth grade students. The participants answer the questions have given by the researchers and all responses have recorded. The results were the participant who have high level of interest claimed that English learning related to their goals and expectations because English is an international language and it is important for their future, they learn how to protect the environment, English will support them to reach their goals. Because of that, they tried to reach a high score in the class. Then they assumed that they found the challenge in English class because English is foreign language so it was hard for them to understand and they could not understand how to solve the problem. Next, they assumed that they got enough appreciation from the teacher because teachers gave clear explanation, they got a great score, and compliment from teacher. Then the lesson they learn was appropriate for them because the topic related to their life. The students who has low level of interest assumed that English learning was not related to their goals and expectations because they did not like English lesson and they would continue their family business. Then they did not try to reach the highest score because they assumed that English was difficult

for them and they did not understand the lesson. Some participant claimed that English was not useful for them because they claimed that they have different passion for their future and it made them daydream during the lesson. Next, they claimed that the benefit of learning English was not clear for them because they cannot speak in English and they did not have a plan to study abroad. Then they said that they felt disappointed to the lesson because they always get low score in the test and the test was hard to understand.

Discussion

The purpose of this research are to know how is English learning interest in the SMP Karya Dharma Bhakti students and the reason, and is there any significance correlation between English learning interest and the English mastery. According to previous study state that the interest of learning in education are situational and individual interest (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). The situatiational interest related to the attention and the reaction of the condition and the situation that come from the environments' stimulation. The teachers in the school support the participants or students to get what the students expected from English learning. Teachers gave enough recognation of the students' work by giving comments and feedbacks to the students (Naparin & Binti Saad, 2017; Sukmawati et al., 2022). English learning interest also movivated by the teachers. The teachers motivate the students by making the English class looks important to them and the teachers also teach the class with the mathods which make the students feel enthusiastic to learn. The participants who have high level of interest also got the support from their family. Previous study mentioned that family factors and academic environments motivate students to learn and get high score (Ramli et al., 2018). It was connected with the situational interest that students' learning interest affected by the learning environments and and situation. The reseachers found that some participants have high learning interest of English, they got support from their family to learn English because they have a plan to continue thier study abroad, hence they put more efford in learning English.

The participants who have low level of interest, they have an interest on the different area, it because of their family have a conventional bussines so that they need to continue the family bussines. It means that the family factors affected students' learning acchievement (Mee Mee et al., 2020; Taufiq et al., 2019). The disccusion above related with the statements by previous study stated that support from family are not only the motivation but also the schools' funding in the future (Li & Qiu, 2018). The family economic sufficiency to pay the participants' fee to the next level or university also affects the students interest in learning. They assumed that they do not need to learn English intensively because they will stay in Indonesia and they will help their family businnes that the bussiness do not need English. The factors mention above made the participant who has low level of interest got low score in the final report. The English learning subject did not capture their attention, it make them day dream during the lesson. They also assumed that the English learning classes looks boring, they did not feel corious of the lesson that given by the teacher.

Based on the result and the testing of Pearson correlation was 0.743 and the significance level of the correlation was .000. The significance level of the correlation testting show that it was less than 0.05, it mean that there is a significant correlataion between students' English learning interest and students mastery. The value of the Pearson Corellation testing was between 0.70 to 0.90 based on the Pearson Correlation table. It showed that the correlation is positive. The alternative hypothesis of this research was there is sifnificance correlation between English learning interest and English mastery. The Hypothesis tests if English learning interest has a significance correlation. The dependent variable English mastery was regress on predicting variable English learning interest to the alternative hypothesis. English mastery significanly predicted English learning interest, $F(1,34) = 41.975$, $p<0.0001$, which indicate that English learning interest gave significance role in English mastery ($b= .445$, $p < .001$). These result clearly direct the positive affects English learning interest. Moreover, the $R^2 = .539$ represents that the model explains 53,9 % of the varience in English mastery. The table shows the summary of the findings. It was agree with the previous study that was done state that learning interest gave the effect to the learning outcomes (Apriani, 2019). English learning interest is really important for the students. It encourage students to learn about the lesson with their desire. The students who has high level of interest, they set the goal and try to do their best in doing work on the english lesson. The students who has interest in English, they have positive feeling in English, they have affort to learn English (C. T. Huang & Yang, 2015; W. Huang & Chang, 2019). Students have an action in mastering English, they can manage the time and they can faced the challenge in learning English, and also they know how to overcome the problem in learning English. English learning interest play the role in the students' English learning mastery or students' learning achievements. Students who have high interest, they will have good score and also the students' learning interest has a relationship with the ability to understand English lesson (Elyas et al.,

2020; Rachman, 2018). They investigated English learning interest and reading understanding ability. The results also shown that english learning interest play role in the reading understanding ability.As we mention that, one of the factors that affect the students interest is the teachers' instruction in English lesson itself. Some of the students did not show the interest because English lesson is difficult and hard to understand for them. Previous study stated that students did not show the interest in leraning English because they had struggling to comprehen the teachers' instruction especially in creating the sentences using correct grammatical order, the students also did not have any idea about what has the teacher said to them (Amjah, 2014).

The ramifications of this examination are that can be involved by the educators in the school as references in instructing. The student's learning achievements are not only determined by the student themselves but also by a variety of internal and external factors that aid students in learning. So educators ought to understand that they ought to cause the understudies to have an excited outlook on advancing by making various learning guidelines and strategies. Additionally, this study was also carried out at the junior high school level, and the fact that it was only conducted on English students in the ninth grade does not apply to students in other study programs. The scientists prescribe that further examination be directed to research the Understudies' English learning interest in the other review program or English in unambiguous significant abilities. Researchers hope that the result of this research gave a good impact for English teachers that they have a crucial role in teaching. The teachers should have a bond of feeling with the students. The researchers hope that teachers should be realize that students learning interest is important for the students and influence students learning achievement.

4. CONCLUSION

English learning interest is one of the factors in learning that help students to succeed the goal in learning. The students will have learning interest in the study program if other factors around them also supporting the learning process. The family factors, classmate factors, school environments factors, and also teachers factors. The teachers have a role to improve students' learning in the class especially in English classes. The teachers should know how to make students feel happy during the lesson and they have to be able to change students' mind-set about English study program that English is hard to study, difficult to understand, and there is no benefit in learning English in the future. The results of this research obtain after data collection and testing the data collection. The results show that only twenty five percent of the participant have high level of interest in English learning program, whereas the rest of participants have medium level and low level of interest to the English learning program. The researchers also obtain the results that there is significance correlation between students' English learning interest and the students' mastery or achievements, and the students' English learning interest also have positive affect on the students' learning achievement.

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