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## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING ENJOYMENT AMONG INDONESIAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: SOCIAL INTERACTION IN ENGLISH SPEAKING LEARNING

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### *Abstrak*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki hubungan antara Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) dan interaksi sosial dalam pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris di kalangan mahasiswa sarjana di Indonesia, serta untuk menelaah apakah lamanya pengalaman belajar bahasa Inggris berpengaruh terhadap tingkat interaksi sosial mahasiswa. Data dikumpulkan dari 73 mahasiswa program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dari berbagai universitas di Indonesia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa secara umum mahasiswa mengalami tingkat FLE yang sedang hingga tinggi, khususnya ketika suasana kelas mendukung dan interaktif. Analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif dan signifikan antara FLE dan interaksi sosial, yang mengindikasikan bahwa mahasiswa yang menikmati proses pembelajaran bahasa cenderung lebih aktif dalam interaksi kelas. Namun, analisis regresi menunjukkan bahwa durasi belajar bahasa Inggris tidak memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap interaksi sosial mahasiswa. Penelitian ini mendukung perspektif teori konstruktivis sosial yang menekankan pentingnya komunikasi bermakna dan lingkungan belajar yang positif dalam proses pembelajaran bahasa asing.

**Kata kunci:** Foreign Language Enjoyment, Interaksi Sosial, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris

### *Abstract*

This study aimed to examine whether there was a difference in students' narrative text writing performance before and after the implementation of Picture Books as a teaching medium, and to explore the extent of that difference among tenth-grade students of TKJ 3 at SMKN 1 Nanga Pinoh during the 2025/2026 academic year. The research employed a quantitative method using a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design. The results showed that the standard deviation of the pre-test was 5.26, slightly higher than the post-test, which was 5.25. A paired sample t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores ( $t\text{-obtained} = 7.317$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, the effect size calculated using Cohen's  $d$  was 1.29, indicating a strong magnitude of difference. While the findings suggest a potential association between the use of Picture Books and improved narrative writing performance, they should be interpreted with caution due to the absence of a control group. The results are indicative, not conclusive, regarding instructional effectiveness.

**Kata kunci :** Foreign Language Enjoyment, Social Interaction, English Language Learning

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## INTRODUCTION

Mastering English is a vital skill for university students in the globalized era, particularly in academic and professional contexts. However, success in language learning is not solely based on linguistic competence but is also significantly affected by students' psychological and affective factors (Peng, 2012). A growing focus in recent years has been on positive emotional experiences, particularly Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE), which includes feelings of joy, interest, and satisfaction in learning a foreign language (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014).

FLE enhances student participation, builds motivation and confidence, and reduces anxiety, thereby supporting their Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (Dewaele & Li, 2020). One of the key contributors to FLE is social interaction, especially in speaking classes. Group discussions, collaborative tasks, and supportive feedback foster emotional connection and a sense of safety, which aligns with the social constructivist theory by Vygotsky (1978). This idea emphasizes that learning happens through social contact within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

From a constructivist viewpoint, language learning is a socially mediated activity rather than a purely cognitive task. Peer interaction, teacher support, and a positive classroom environment encourage emotional engagement, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective. Despite its importance, limited research has examined the impact of social interaction on FLE in the Indonesian context.

Most prior studies have been conducted in Western or East Asian settings. In Indonesia, research remains scarce. For instance, Alberth et al. (2023) identified teacher support and learner self-confidence as key factors in FLE, but focused more on its correlation with anxiety. Other studies (Wijaya & Rizkina, 2020; Tryana & Mahmud, 2021) examined FLE as a mediating variable, rather than analyzing its internal dynamics or classroom influences.

This highlights a research gap in understanding FLE from the perspective of Indonesian university students. Addressing this deficiency is essential for formulating more captivating and contextually pertinent English teaching methodologies. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the correlation between social interaction and FLE through a quantitative framework rooted on constructivist theory.

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## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design, which is effective for systematically analyzing measurable data to explore relationships between variables (Creswell, 2014). The study seeks to determine the principal determinants affecting Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) in students, employing structured questionnaires as the main instrument for data collection.

This approach facilitates objective measurement and statistical analysis to evaluate the correlation between FLE (as the dependent variable) and various independent variables: social interaction, teaching methodologies and materials, classroom environment, and self-confidence. These variables were selected based on previous studies highlighting the importance of both affective and contextual classroom factors in shaping FLE (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016; Jin & Zhang, 2018). As noted by Ary et al. (2010), quantitative descriptive studies are effective for describing population characteristics and identifying the prevalence of particular experiences—in this case, enjoyment in learning English.

The research subjects are Indonesian undergraduate (S1) students currently enrolled in English courses, particularly speaking classes. These students are considered appropriate subjects as they directly experience the classroom conditions under investigation (Sugiyono, 2016). The inclusion criteria are: (1) active undergraduate students; (2) currently or previously enrolled in English-speaking classes; and (3) willing to complete the questionnaire. Purposive sampling is used to select participants from semesters 2 to 8, with the planned number of respondents ranging from 70 to 100.

The population is focused on one university, but may include students from multiple faculties or institutions, both public and private, depending on access and permission. This broader scope aims to capture diverse experiences related to FLE and classroom dynamics.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### A. Findings

The descriptive analysis found that Indonesian undergraduate students reported moderate to high levels of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) in English-speaking classrooms. The majority of students thought that encouraging instructor feedback, peer cooperation, and an engaged classroom environment all contributed significantly to their pleasure of learning. These findings suggest that the classroom atmosphere favorably influences students' emotional involvement in language acquisition.

## Correlations

		ENJOYMENT	SOCIAL INTERACTION
ENJOYMENT	Pearson Correlation	1	.921**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	73	73
SOCIAL INTERACTION	Pearson Correlation	.921**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	73	73

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

The Pearson correlation test revealed a substantial positive association between FLE and social contact ( $r = 0.921$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This shows that students who love studying English would participate more actively in classroom interactions, particularly speaking activities. As a result, students' propensity to speak and cooperate in class is strongly predicted by their enjoyment.

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However, regression analysis revealed that the length of time students spent learning English had no significant impact on their level of social engagement. This suggests that the length of exposure to English is less important than emotional elements and classroom dynamics. In other words, good emotions and helpful learning settings seem to have a bigger influence on students' participation in speaking activities than the amount of years spent studying the language. These findings are congruent with the positive

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psychology paradigm for second language learning, which stresses that enjoyment boosts motivation, decreases fear, and encourages active conversation (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). They also agree with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which states that meaningful engagement in collaborative situations improves both the cognitive and emotional elements of language acquisition.

## Discussion

These findings are consistent with positive psychology notions in second language learning (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), which highlight the ability of pleasant emotions, such as enjoyment, to facilitate the learning process. While learners enjoy language learning, they are more resilient to problems, less anxious, and more willing to take chances while speaking and engaging with people. This is congruent with the current study, which found that students with higher levels of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) were more ready to engage in social contact during speaking lessons. Enjoyment therefore serves not just as a motivator but also as a shield against negative emotions that may impede communication.

Furthermore, the substantial positive relationship between FLE and social contact supports Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist paradigm, which sees learning as a socially mediated process. In this approach, collaborative learning settings allow students to co-construct information, share viewpoints, and develop both emotive and cognitive abilities. The findings of this study show that students enjoy themselves more in interactive environments with instructor assistance and peer cooperation, and that this pleasure leads to greater active involvement in classroom communication.

At the same time, the fact that the duration of English learning had no significant affect on interaction shows that emotional and social variables in the learning environment may be more important than the number of years spent studying the language. This suggests that learners may reach high levels of engagement and communication confidence regardless of past experience, as long as they are placed in supportive and engaging learning environments. As a result, promoting enjoyment and collaborative engagement becomes an important educational method for improving students' overall language learning experience.

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## CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate Indonesian undergraduate students' Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE), its relationship with social interaction in English-speaking classes, and whether the duration of English language learning influences classroom engagement. The findings offer several key insights:

First, the data showed that students have a moderately high level of FLE. Positive classroom circumstances, such as helpful teachers, interesting activities, and inclusive environments, were found to be particularly enjoyable. This suggests that enjoyment is a socially influenced emotion, shaped by the atmosphere and dynamics within the classroom. Moreover, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between FLE and students' social interaction. Students who report higher satisfaction tend to participate more actively in class discussions, group projects, and other communicative activities. This supports the idea that FLE reduces anxiety, increases self-confidence, and encourages students to actively use the language. To add more, this study found that the length of time spent learning English had no significant effect on the level of social interaction among students. Instead, the findings highlight that factors such as personality, classroom climate, and teacher behavior may have a stronger influence on students' willingness to interact.

The emotional and social aspects of learning emerged as more impactful than time alone. Even students with limited exposure to English can exhibit high levels of interaction when they feel supported and included. This reinforces the importance of creating a positive, emotionally safe classroom environment that encourages student participation. These findings are consistent with the paradigm of social constructivism in language learning, which promotes active participation, collaboration, and the creation of common knowledge. Language acquisition is a cognitive process and social interaction that occurs both within and outside of the classroom, facilitated by meaningful interaction, enjoyment, and support from lecturers or peers.

To sum up, this study demonstrates that how students feel in the classroom—particularly their sense of enjoyment—has a critical influence on their social interaction and, by extension, their language development. Educators and institutions should prioritize the emotional and social dimensions of language instruction, ensuring that classrooms are not only academically rigorous but also supportive, interactive, and emotionally engaging. Doing so may significantly enhance learners' communicative competence and overall success in foreign language acquisition.

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