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BOOSTING ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' LEARNING INTEREST: THE IMPACT OF THE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER METHOD


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Abstract || This study examines the impact of the question-and-answer teaching method on elementary students' interest in learning Indonesian at State Elementary School Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura, Indonesia. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the research investigates students' joy in learning, active participation, and the effectiveness of teacher strategies in fostering engagement. Findings indicate that the question-and-answer method enhances student creativity, improves learning outcomes, and develops critical thinking. However, challenges such as language anxiety and focus issues persist. The study emphasizes the importance of creative and dynamic teaching methods to boost student motivation and participation, proposing strategies for reducing classroom disengagement and enhancing interaction.

Keywords || Question-and-answer method, Learning interest, Indonesian, Classroom engagement

Abstrak || Penelitian ini mengkaji dampak metode tanya jawab dalam pengajaran terhadap minat belajar siswa SD dalam mata pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SD Negeri Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura, Indonesia. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini mengkaji minat siswa dalam belajar, partisipasi aktif, dan efektivitas strategi guru dalam meningkatkan keterlibatan belajar siswa. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa metode tanya jawab dapat meningkatkan kreativitas siswa, memperbaiki hasil belajar, dan mengembangkan keterampilan berpikir kritis. Namun, tantangan seperti kecemasan berbahasa dan masalah focus dalam pembelajaran masih sering terjadi. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya metode pengajaran yang kreatif dan dinamis untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan partisipasi siswa, serta mengusulkan strategi untuk mengurangi ketidakikutsertaan di kelas dan meningkatkan interaksi.

Katakunci || Metode tanya jawab, Minat belajar, Bahasa Indonesia, Keterlibatan di kelas

Introduction

In the educational process, one critical component is the teacher, who serves as a class manager responsible for organizing, directing, and fostering an environment that motivates students to learn. The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, Chapter VII, Article 33, Paragraph 1, establishes Indonesian as the state language and the medium of instruction in national education. Additionally, Chapter XI, Article 40, Paragraph 2 (a), emphasizes the creation of a meaningful, enjoyable, educational, creative, dynamic, and dialogical atmosphere.

The 2013 Curriculum for Indonesian language subjects in elementary schools specifies the Graduated Competency Standards (GCS) across three domains: the attitude domain, the knowledge domain, and the skills domain. These domains are detailed in Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation Number 54 of 2013. In this curriculum, Indonesian language instruction is text-based, with an emphasis on text as the primary medium of learning. Through these texts, the curriculum not only teaches linguistic skills but also integrates character education. By engaging with reading materials, students are encouraged to develop attitudes aligned with strong character values.

Furthermore, a scientific approach is employed to facilitate character formation. This approach involves five key activities: observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating. Various methods can be utilized in teaching and learning activities, one of which is the question-and-answer method (Djamarah, 2015).

The question-and-answer method is described as a teaching technique where the teacher poses questions for students to answer or vice versa—students ask questions that the teacher answers (Hasibuan & Moedjiono, 2009). According to Aqib & Murtadlo (2016), the question-and-answer method involves presenting lessons in the form of questions requiring responses, typically from educators to students but also from students to educators. Kasim & Joseph (2022) similarly define the question-and-answer method as a way of presenting lessons where the teacher asks students questions or vice versa, creating direct, two-way communication between teachers and students.

The question-and-answer method involves the teacher posing questions to students and the students responding, or vice versa, with students asking questions that the teacher answers (Aqib & Murtadlo,

2016). This method is recognized as one of the most effective and efficient teaching approaches for fostering student creativity during the learning process, thereby enhancing student learning outcomes. Similarly, Nephawe & Lambani (2022) define the question-and-answer method as an interaction between students and teachers in a structured exchange of questions and answers on a topic. This approach helps to develop critical thinking skills and ultimately improves student learning outcomes.

From these definitions, the question-and-answer method can be concluded to be a teaching strategy in which the teacher poses questions about the lesson material previously taught or reading materials, focusing on the students' thinking process. It can also involve students directing questions to the teacher. This approach creates learning conditions that encourage student engagement and active inquiry by seeking information through observation rather than passively receiving instruction.

At The State Elementary School Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura Indonesia, students generally perceive Indonesian as a supplementary subject despite its significance, leading to poor participation in class. This situation is exacerbated by teachers who primarily rely on the lecture method, which fails to stimulate active student participation during Indonesian language lessons. The lack of teacher creativity in presenting engaging learning materials further diminishes students' focus. Additionally, teachers often deliver content too quickly, preventing students from fully understanding the material.

To address these issues, it is essential for teachers to adopt diverse and dynamic teaching methods. Employing a variety of approaches can make learning more engaging and effective, particularly in improving student outcomes in Indonesian language education. Teachers must strive to teach both effectively and efficiently, moving beyond reliance on traditional lecture methods to create a more interactive and impactful learning experience.

The Role of Teachers in the Educational Process

Teachers play a strategic role in the educational process, serving not only as facilitators of learning but also as class managers responsible for fostering a conducive learning environment. This environment serves as a critical foundation for supporting students' success in understanding lessons, developing skills, and building strong character. Teachers must organize, direct, and create an atmosphere that enhances

students' learning motivation, ensuring they feel comfortable, engaged, and actively involved in the learning process. As class managers, teachers fulfill the following key roles:

1) Organizing the Learning Process

Teachers must ensure a structured learning process, encompassing planning, implementation, and evaluation. This includes preparing appropriate materials, methods, and strategies tailored to students' needs (Wahyuningtyas et al., 2023).

2) Directing Learning Activities

Teachers guide students' learning activities to align with educational objectives. This involves providing clear instructions, employing relevant teaching methods, and offering constructive feedback to enhance understanding and performance (Meng, 2023).

3) Creating a Supportive Learning Atmosphere

Teachers are tasked with creating a conducive learning environment that minimizes distractions and fosters creativity, openness, and dialogue. In such an atmosphere, students feel comfortable asking questions, participating in discussions, and sharing their ideas freely (Tufail et al., 2023).

The role of teachers is explicitly defined in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which provides a normative framework for their responsibilities and duties. Chapter VII, Article 33, Paragraph 1 emphasizes that Indonesian is the language of instruction in national education, positioning it as a crucial tool for communication between teachers and students. Teachers are responsible for using clear and correct language to ensure lesson materials are accessible and understandable. Furthermore, they should encourage students to actively use Indonesian in discussions and learning activities.

Chapter XI, Article 40, Paragraph 2(a) mandates teachers to create an educational atmosphere that is; a) meaningful, learning must be relevant to students' needs and experiences. Teachers should contextualize lesson materials to students' daily lives, making them more applicable and practical, b) enjoyable, teachers should make learning enjoyable through engaging activities such as educational games, captivating learning media, or interactive approaches that actively involve students, c) creative, teachers are expected to innovate

in their teaching, utilizing technology, visual aids, and diverse methods to maintain student interest and prevent monotony, d) dynamic, the learning process must adapt to students' evolving needs and classroom dynamics. Teachers should employ flexible approaches that respond to these changes effectively, e) dialogic, teachers should facilitate open and constructive discussions, fostering effective two-way communication between students and teachers. This helps students feel valued and motivates them to engage in learning.

Despite their critical role, teachers often encounter significant challenges in creating a conducive learning environment, including: limited facilities and infrastructure in schools, which hinder the implementation of innovative teaching methods, low levels of student motivation, which can impede engagement and active participation, and diverse student needs, requiring teachers to adopt differentiated teaching approaches to address varied learning styles and abilities. Teachers must employ creativity and adaptability to overcome these obstacles and ensure an effective and enriching educational experience for all students.

Question and Answer Method in Teaching and Learning Indonesian

Teaching the Indonesian language plays a strategic role in developing students' communication skills and fostering character values. To achieve effective learning outcomes, various instructional methods can be employed, one of which is the question-and-answer method. This approach is particularly relevant due to its interactive and student-centered nature. By implementing this method, the learning process becomes more dynamic, engaging, and capable of enhancing students' critical thinking abilities (Torong et al., 2023).

The question-and-answer method is defined as a teaching approach that emphasizes two-way interaction between teachers and students. In this method, the teacher poses questions relevant to the material being taught or based on specific readings, and students provide responses (Suprihatmojo, 2022). Conversely, students are also encouraged to ask questions about concepts they find unclear, enabling a reciprocal flow of information. This method facilitates direct communication between teachers and students, aiming to deepen understanding of the subject matter. Questions are strategically designed to provoke student engagement through answers and discussions, making the learning experience more interactive and meaningful.

By fostering active interaction, the question-and-answer method not only enhances students' comprehension but also cultivates their critical thinking skills. This approach prioritizes students' cognitive processes as a key tool for understanding the material. Teachers can inspire deeper thought, analytical reasoning, and logical responses by asking relevant and thought-provoking questions. Consequently, this method serves as a student-centered learning approach that emphasizes active involvement and intellectual engagement.

The application of the question-and-answer method offers several notable benefits in teaching Indonesian:

1) Enhancing Student Creativity

The question-and-answer method encourages students to explore their ideas, offer unique perspectives, and connect the material to their personal experiences. This process fosters creativity by prompting students to think “outside the box” and develop innovative solutions to problems presented in question form. In Indonesian language learning, this creativity is evident when students interpret texts, answer questions with personal insights, or generate new, relevant questions (Ulfa et al., 2022).

2) Improving Student Learning Outcomes

The question-and-answer method effectively enhances students' learning outcomes. Through intensive interaction, students develop a deeper understanding of the material. Active participation in answering questions goes beyond rote memorization, allowing students to process and internalize knowledge. This is particularly important in Indonesian language studies, where mastering linguistic structures, textual meanings, and communicative contexts requires deep cognitive engagement (Torong et al., 2023).

3) Developing Critical and Logical Thinking Skills

This method trains students to formulate answers logically based on available information. Teachers often design questions to assess students' comprehension, analytical skills, and ability to synthesize material. Consequently, students practice critical thinking, rational reasoning, and constructing sound arguments, all of which are vital for academic and real-world problem-solving (Nephawe & Lambani, 2022).

4) Strengthening Teacher-Student Interaction

The question-and-answer method fosters a dialogic learning environment, encouraging active communication between teachers and students (Suprihatmojo, 2022). This interaction creates a closer, more positive relationship, resulting in a comfortable and enjoyable classroom atmosphere. In the context of Indonesian language learning, such interaction helps students gain confidence in expressing their opinions and seeking clarification on challenging topics.

5) Motivating Students to Learn

By actively involving students, the question-and-answer method enhances their motivation to learn. Students feel valued when their questions and opinions are taken seriously by teachers. This recognition fosters a sense of engagement and encourages students to participate more actively in the learning process (Tamba et al., 2023).

Methodology

The current research employs qualitative methods, which are conducted in natural settings where the researcher acts as the primary data collection instrument. This approach utilizes inductive analysis and emphasizes understanding from the participant's perspective. Qualitative methods are research procedures that generate descriptive data, often in the form of written or spoken words and observable behavior (Moleong, 2012). The research was conducted at State Elementary School Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura. In this study, the researcher focuses on issues related to Indonesian language education at State Elementary School Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura, with the following research sub-topics: (a) students' interest in learning, as observed through their enjoyment of active learning, and (b) the application of the question-and-answer method in Indonesian language instruction.

Results

This research explores the level of interest in learning among Class II students at State Elementary School Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura, specifically in Indonesian language lessons. The findings are based on observations, interviews with the teacher (Mrs. Welsa V.R. Werimon, A.M.Pd.), and student interviews, which provide insights into two key aspects: students' enjoyment of learning and their activity during lessons.

The table below breaks down the research findings into key aspects of student interest and activities in learning Indonesian, assigning qualitative scores based on the observed behavior and interviews with the teacher and students.

Table 1. Students' Interest and Activity in Learning Indonesian

Aspect	Findings	Level of Interest
Students' Joy in Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Majority of students enjoy learning Indonesian, especially with engaging activities like storytelling, pictures, and media. - 15 out of 19 students were happy and interested. - Students expressed dissatisfaction due to difficulties with reading. 	15/19 (79%) happy, 4/19 (21%) unhappy
Student Participation (Activity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many students are hesitant to ask questions and participate actively. - Some students, like Michael, distract others or chat with friends during lessons. - Teacher's methods like random questioning, supervision, and discipline help maintain activity. 	Average participation low to moderate
Confidence in Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students show anxiety regarding language errors (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation), affecting their speaking confidence. - Anxiety inhibits active speaking and performance. 	70% of students show anxiety, 30% confident
Focus During Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While many students pay attention, a few students have difficulty focusing, such as daydreaming or scribbling during lessons. - Teacher's strategies like warnings and random questioning maintain student focus. 	70% attention, 30% distracted
Engagement with Learning Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are more engaged when the material is presented creatively. - Disengagement occurs when material delivery lacks variation. 	60% engaged, 40% disengaged
Classroom Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most students sit quietly or follow the teacher's instructions. - Some students (like Michael) occasionally talk with friends or get distracted. 	70% follow teacher, 30% distracted
Active Participation Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher uses practical activities and projects to encourage engagement. - Quiet students are motivated through these active learning methods. 	60% participation in practical activities

Student Interest in Learning Indonesian

Joy in learning is one of the core aspects of students' interest, and this research reveals that most Class II students enjoy learning Indonesian. According to Mrs. Welsa, language plays an essential role in students' intellectual, social, and emotional development. It is crucial for their success across subjects, enabling them to better understand themselves, their culture, and others, and express their thoughts and emotions. During interviews with students, the majority expressed a strong fondness for the subject, especially when the teacher incorporates storytelling, pictures, and other educational tools to make the lesson more engaging.

However, some challenges emerged during the observation of the learning process. For instance, several students struggled with speaking in public, often due to a lack of confidence. They showed signs of anxiety regarding language errors such as grammar mistakes, poor vocabulary choices, or mispronunciations, which inhibited their ability to fully participate in speaking activities. This anxiety seemed to prevent them from demonstrating their speaking abilities.

Additionally, there were moments during lessons when students became disengaged and distracted. The research highlighted instances where the material presented by the teacher did not captivate students' attention, leading to disruptions in the classroom as students either played alone or engaged in side conversations with their peers. Students admitted that they sometimes talked with friends during lessons to clarify things they didn't understand or simply to borrow stationery.

Despite these distractions, 15 out of 19 students showed enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning Indonesian. Only four students reported dissatisfaction, mainly due to their struggles with reading. This finding suggests that while most students enjoy the subject, there are some challenges in maintaining their focus and addressing individual learning difficulties.

Students' Activity in Learning Indonesian

The second focus of the research was the level of students' activity during lessons. While students showed a general interest in the subject, their active participation in the learning process appeared to be low. Observations made on May 8, 2023, revealed that a significant number of students were hesitant to ask questions or express their opinions. Many students preferred to remain silent rather than actively engage in

discussions. The lack of interaction was especially noticeable when the teacher asked questions or when students had to provide feedback to their peers.

Mrs. Welsa emphasized that active participation in class is not just about talking; it involves students giving answers, asking questions, and contributing to discussions. However, to foster a more engaging classroom environment, she stressed the need for varied teaching methods. Teachers must incorporate active learning strategies to ensure that all students participate, such as involving them in practical activities and projects. This approach would help quiet and shy students feel more comfortable engaging in class.

The research also found that students generally paid attention to the teacher when explaining the lesson. However, there were instances where students, like Michael, admitted to chatting with friends during the lesson. Despite this, many students were still able to answer the teacher's questions correctly, suggesting that some students might be passively absorbing information while appearing distracted.

The teacher's approach to keeping students active included several strategies, such as providing warnings, randomly asking students questions, supervising students closely, and using disciplinary actions for those who were disengaged. These methods were intended to maintain students' focus and ensure their active participation. Interviews with students revealed that most were attentive to their friends' presentations during class. Additionally, some students found it helpful to write down what the teacher said in their notebooks, demonstrating a level of active engagement in the learning process.

Discussion

The study explored two main aspects: students' enjoyment of learning and their activity during lessons, both of which play crucial roles in determining the success of educational experiences. The results indicate that the majority of students (79%) enjoy learning Indonesian, especially when the lessons incorporate engaging activities such as storytelling, pictures, and media. This aligns with Vygotsky's Social Development Theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and engaging activities for cognitive development. Vygotsky argued that students learn best when they can connect new information to their existing knowledge in an engaging and meaningful way (Gajdamaschko, 2011). In this case, the creative use of educational tools helped students

make these connections, leading to a more enjoyable and effective learning experience.

However, some students reported dissatisfaction due to difficulties with reading, highlighting the importance of differentiated instruction. As highlighted in Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, students have different strengths, and some may struggle with traditional methods of learning, such as reading (Patanella & Ebanks, 2011). The teacher's ability to tailor lessons to accommodate different learning styles, such as using visuals for students with spatial intelligence or storytelling for those with linguistic intelligence, can help address these challenges. This finding is supported by previous research by Kharb et al. (2013), which found that students' interest in learning improves when teaching methods cater to their varied learning preferences.

The research also found that many students show anxiety about making language errors, which affects their confidence in speaking. This aligns with the concept of foreign language anxiety Daymiel et al. (2022), where students feel apprehensive about speaking due to fear of making mistakes. Language anxiety has been shown to hinder students' willingness to participate in speaking activities, as observed in this study where 70% of students experienced anxiety. Strategies to reduce anxiety, such as creating a supportive classroom environment and using methods that build students' confidence over time, are crucial. This finding corresponds with the work of Huashan (2019), who suggests that language learners need a non-threatening environment to overcome their fears and engage more confidently in speaking.

Regarding students' participation, the research found that many students were hesitant to ask questions or contribute actively, and several engaged in off-task behaviors during lessons. This can be linked to student engagement, which identifies emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement as key components of a productive learning experience (O'Regan et al., 2023). The low to moderate participation observed in this study suggests that students were emotionally or behaviorally disengaged, which may be partly attributed to a lack of varied instructional methods. The teacher's strategies, such as random questioning and close supervision, are aligned with active learning strategies, which promote greater student involvement. This is consistent with previous research by Wijaya et al. (2021), who argued that active learning methods, such as peer discussions and practical activities, encourage deeper student engagement and participation.

The observation that many students had difficulty focusing during lessons (30% distracted) despite the teacher's strategies to maintain attention supports cognitive load theory. According to this theory, students can become overwhelmed or distracted if the material is not presented in an engaging and manageable way. This is reflected in the findings where students appeared distracted when the material lacked variety (Garzón et al., 2020). It suggests that teachers need to present information in ways that minimize cognitive overload and sustain students' attention, which can be achieved by varying teaching methods and using interactive tools that capture students' interest.

The research found that students were more engaged when the material was presented creatively, a finding that supports constructivist theory, which emphasizes the importance of learners actively constructing their own knowledge through interaction with engaging and meaningful content (Fitria et al., 2021). The lack of engagement when the material was presented monotonously corresponds to research by Alghamdi & Khadawardi (2024), who found that students are more likely to stay engaged when lessons are perceived as interesting and relevant. It underscores the importance of diverse instructional strategies to maintain students' interest and engagement in learning.

Finally, regarding classroom behavior, the research observed that the majority of students followed the teacher's instructions, but a few students engaged in off-task behaviors, such as chatting with friends or being distracted. The teacher's use of discipline and structured supervision helped maintain some level of order and engagement. This aligns with, which emphasizes the role of reinforcement and discipline in shaping student behavior (Nurfadillah et al., 2024). However, it also suggests that behavior management strategies alone may not be enough. The integration of positive reinforcement and active learning strategies may be more effective in fostering consistent student participation.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research on the use of the question-and-answer method to increase the interest in learning of Class II students at State Elementary School Inpres Dok VIII Atas Jayapura, several conclusions can be drawn that the interest in learning among the students is positively influenced by their enjoyment of the lessons and their level of active participation. The research reveals that students' enjoyment in learning Indonesian is high when the teacher employs creative and innovative teaching methods, such as using varied media

to present lessons. Monotonous teaching, especially when relying solely on lectures, leads to disengagement and boredom among the students. Additionally, students' active participation in learning is strongly linked to their ability to concentrate and focus on the lesson. The internal motivation and attention students give to the material play a key role in fostering active learning.

The use of the question-and-answer method has been found to increase students' interest in learning. This method encourages interaction between the teacher and students, where both parties actively ask and answer questions. The research shows that when students are engaged in asking questions and responding, their involvement in the learning process increases, which, in turn, enhances their interest and attention. However, the effectiveness of this method depends on the teacher's ability to design engaging lessons and manage classroom interactions effectively.

Suggestions for further research can be carried out: 1) by exploring other interactive teaching methods. While the question-and-answer method has shown promise, further research could explore other interactive teaching methods, such as group discussions, peer teaching, and project-based learning, to assess their impact on student engagement and learning outcomes. 2) Longitudinal studies on learning interest. Future research could conduct longitudinal studies to examine how students' interest in learning develops over time with the continuous use of varied teaching methods, including the question-and-answer method. 3) Investigating teacher training and development. Given that the success of the question-and-answer method depends significantly on the teacher's mastery of lesson design, future studies could focus on teacher training and professional development programs. 4) Student-centered learning approaches. Further research could investigate the role of student-centered learning approaches, such as inquiry-based learning or flipped classrooms, in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation to learn.

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