

**“TIME TO SHINE IN ENGLISH”: EXPLORING STUDENTS’
LEARNING MOTIVATION AND PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS****Muhammad Haydar Nasir¹, Fika Megawati²**¹Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia²Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia**DOI: 10.23917/humaniora.v27i1.13947**Received: November 19th, 2025. Revised: December 10th, 2025. Accepted: December 12th, 2025
Available Online: February 02nd, 2026. Published Regularly: February, 2026**Keywords**English language learning
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This “Time to Shine in English” is a creative program designed to help students learn English in an enjoyable way. This program employs an interactive and innovative approach to enhance student engagement and motivation at the junior high school level. Understanding the benefits and challenges of its implementation is essential; therefore, this study aims to explore students' in-depth perceptions of the “Time to Shine in English” program, particularly regarding motivation and effectiveness in learning English. The study employs a qualitative methodology, utilizing a case study framework to explore the research focus in depth and contextually. A total of 19 students from grades 7 and 9 participated in the study, selected through purposive sampling. Data collection was carried out through comprehensive interviews and participatory observations. The findings reveal that a game-based approach is effective in engaging students. In the case of 7th graders, their willingness to participate in class as well as their confidence in speaking English improved greatly. Additionally, the memorization techniques applied in the program help 9th-grade students expand their vocabulary. Key factors influencing the program's effectiveness include the use of interactive media, teacher support, and diverse learning methods.

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Author**Fika Megawati
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English language proficiency is an important aspect of modern education in the era of globalization (Mauliska & D’Angelo, 2024). Proficiency in English provides easy access to a wide range of global information, improves prospects in the academic field, and prepares students to compete at the international level. As a result, there is an urgent need for innovative programs that focus on English language learning. One initiative that has been developed is the “Time to Shine in English” program at a junior high school in Sidoarjo, which aims to increase students' motivation and English proficiency through an interactive and fun approach (Indasari & Amaliati, 2023).

Previous studies at the elementary school level have also revealed similar challenges. Recent studies show that poor literacy skills among students, as well as a lack of engaging educational media, are major obstacles in the English language learning process. Research shows that the use of appropriate media, supported by innovative teaching approaches such as storytelling, music, and games, can significantly increase student interest and active participation. This approach is in line with the core philosophy of the “Time to Shine in English” program, which prioritizes interactive and enjoyable learning to stimulate and maintain students' desire to learn at various stages of education. Furthermore, contemporary analysis highlights that digital storytelling is a method integrating narrative with multimedia elements such as imagery, video, and text that will effectively foster a dynamic and stimulating learning atmosphere while substantially strengthening students' intrinsic motivation. This evidence further bolsters the view that interactive and imaginative pedagogical techniques, whether through narrative or game-based learning, are fundamental to maintaining student engagement.

The effectiveness of this program is highly dependent on students' perceptions of teaching methods and their influence on their motivation to learn. Motivation to achieve proficiency in English is an important determinant of academic achievement. Conceptually, motivation is divided into two types: intrinsic motivation, which stems from individual interest, and extrinsic motivation, which is influenced by external factors such as educators and curriculum design. Both forms of motivation play a valuable role in improving learning outcomes, especially in the context of foreign language learning, which necessitates active engagement (Adara, 2020).

Developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills requires the application of various innovative teaching strategies. Interactive methods not only encourage collaboration among students but also stimulate their creativity during the learning process (Ayu & Prastyo, 2023). In the “Time to Shine in English” program, students are involved in collaborative group activities that are specifically designed to train their listening comprehension and memorization of English vocabulary through creative and non-monotonous exercises. They share ideas, discuss, and provide feedback, which helps their understanding of the material and directly improves their communication skills (Aminatun et al., 2022).

A favorable perception of educational programs and their design increases students' dedication to their learning efforts. Conversely, negative perceptions can reduce their enthusiasm. High motivation has been proven to have a positive impact on students' academic achievement. Collaborative learning introduces various perspectives and deepens students' understanding (Lestari et al., 2024). Discussions among students help them understand the material more deeply, while reinforcement from teachers increases students' self-efficacy and motivation (S. Macalisang & G. Bonghawan, 2024). The creation of a conducive and supportive learning environment has been proven to be one of the crucial factors in encouraging an increase in students' motivation to learn (Maulana et al., 2024).

A critical factor in fostering student interest in learning is the presence of educators who provide meaningful and solution-oriented feedback. This supporting foundation is significantly reinforced by pedagogical strategies that encourage collaboration. For example, group work has been shown to significantly increase student engagement, creating a more active and conducive classroom environment for academic achievement (Regidor et al., 2024). In addition to teacher-student dynamics, a collaborative structure, strategic use of technology, and the availability of creative learning materials are also very important. These resources play an active role as key mechanisms for maintaining students' interest and intrinsic motivation throughout the learning process (Suleman et al., 2024).

It is in this context that the “Time to Shine in English” program was created. Its main objective is to increase student motivation and the overall quality of English language

teaching at the junior high school level. The program aims to achieve this by using traditional methods and implementing interactive and innovative approaches using technology. The ultimate goal is to create a learning environment that is highly engaging, effective, and actively encourages participation and facilitates the comprehensive development of students' English skills. Central to its methodology is the introduction of creative, collaborative techniques specifically designed to advance proficiency in all key language areas.

Keller states that the attention aspect of this model can be achieved in two ways: (1) perceptual stimulation, which involves creating surprise or uncertainty to attract interest by using events that are new, unexpected, incongruous, or ambiguous; and (2) exploratory stimulation, which triggers students' curiosity by presenting challenging questions or problems to solve (Pribadi et al., 2021).

One of the main challenges in English language learning is low student motivation, which is often caused by a repetitive or inappropriate learning approach that does not meet student needs (Susanti et al., 2024). Junior high school is an important growth period where students benefit greatly from engaging and participatory pedagogical approaches (Fatina & Zaitun, 2024). Therefore, the main challenge in this context is the low student interest or engagement, which is often reflected in difficulty understanding academic material and eventually leads to less optimal learning outcomes. Compounding this problem, research highlights the important role of social support systems as a key factor in shaping student motivation. Therefore, there is an urgent need to design educational experiences that are not only diverse and creative but also strategically designed to increase student motivation and their ability to master English skills more effectively.

In direct response to these challenges, the “Time to Shine in English” program has been designed. This innovation plays an active role as a structured intervention aimed at increasing student motivation through a framework based on interaction and innovation. The main design principle is to create a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere. This principle aims to directly increase students' confidence and involvement in learning activities. Through the implementation of collaborative learning strategies and the use of technology, this program aims to create an engaging and effective learning environment. The main design principle is the creation of a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere, which is aimed at directly building confidence and greater engagement in learning activities. By utilizing collaborative learning strategies and planned technology integration, the program is expected to significantly increase students' interest and active participation in their English studies.

This involves adopting varied learning strategies, such as incorporating technology-based instruction, integrating collaborative and game-based activities, and choosing course materials that are both relevant and engaging (Musa & Salim, n.d.). However, as a research gap, the effectiveness of this program still requires further investigation into students' perceptions of the methods used. Although the program adopts interactive and collaborative methods, there has been no in-depth research evaluating how students' perceptions of “Time to Shine in English” affect their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Furthermore, this research result will show a clear understanding of how students' views of program methodology affect their learning motivation and academic participation. In addition, specific aspects that contribute to effective learning design, along with potential obstacles to increasing student engagement, have not been described proportionally.

This study aims to explore students' views on the “Time to Shine in English” program. Through this assessment, the study seeks to identify factors that support or hinder the program's effectiveness, thereby providing valuable guidance for education practitioners and stakeholders involved in designing and implementing the same key design principles in the future. Given these objectives, this study is guided by one main research question: What are students' perceptions of the “Time to Shine in English” program, and how do they view its role in shaping their educational experience?

METHOD

Research methods are techniques used in conducting research. In this study, a descriptive qualitative approach was applied. The results of the interviews were then reanalyzed (Thenu & Rudianto, 2024). This study uses a qualitative methodology with a case study framework to explore students' perceptions of the motivation and effectiveness of the "Time to Shine in English" program in two different grade levels, namely 7th and 9th grades, at one of the junior high schools in Sidoarjo. The research subjects consisted of 19 students selected through purposive sampling, with each class comprising eight students for grade 7 and 11 students for grade 9. The selection of subjects aimed to obtain their experiences and perceptions related to the program.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

No.	Name	Class	Gender
1	DK	IX	Male
2	LBD	IX	Male
3	AIK	IX	Female
4	GBR	IX	Female
5	ANS	IX	Male
6	CML	IX	Female
7	AMD	IX	Male
8	MD	VII	Male
9	WLDN	VII	Male
10	IMTY	VII	Female
11	ALFN	VII	Female
12	HMR	VII	Female
13	ARG	VII	Male
14	ARD	VII	Female
15	FTM	IX	Female
16	ALF	IX	Male
17	KHRN	IX	Male
18	IBN	VII	Male
19	NSF	IX	Female

Several of the questions used in this study were adapted from previous research instruments (Pramesti, 2025; Rachma, 2024) to ensure their relevance to the context of the "Time to Shine in English" program. The adapted questions include: 1) How actively do you participate during the "Time to Shine in English" program activities? 2) How well can you maintain your attention and focus during the program? 3) How often do you interact with peers or tutors during the program activities? 4) How much do you enjoy the learning activities provided in the program? 5) How confident do you feel when participating in speaking or group tasks in the program? 6) How motivated are you to learn English because of your own interest or enjoyment during the program? 7) How do rewards, recognition, or encouragement from the program influence your motivation to learn? 8) How does the program help you maintain your interest in learning English? 9) How does the program help you improve your English vocabulary? 10) How does the program help you improve your speaking fluency? 11) How does the program influence your confidence in using English in daily communication? These items were refined to align with the dimensions of student engagement, motivation, and learning improvement as examined in prior studies, while also being adjusted to fit the specific characteristics of the program and participants in this research.

In this study, each group of students received different treatments according to the learning strategies applied. In grade 7, students used Kahoot!, an online game platform

tailored to the curriculum and learning topics in the classroom. This activity took place for 30 minutes each week over a period of eight consecutive weeks. Meanwhile, ninth-grade students used a paper-based learning method focused on memorizing and learning irregular verbs. Students are required to memorize a list of vocabulary words that has been provided, and their progress in memorization is evaluated regularly every week over the same period of eight weeks. To obtain comprehensive data, this study combined various instruments, including in-depth interviews and participatory observation. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore students' experiences and perceptions of the "Time to Shine in English" program. Participatory observation was conducted with the aim of observing student engagement in the learning process, interactions with peers, and reactions to the methods provided.



Figure 1. Research Procedures

This research procedure consists of several systematic stages, as shown in Figure 1. In the preparation stage, researchers conducted preliminary observations to understand the learning context and select research subjects. In addition, research instruments were prepared, such as interview guidelines and observation sheets. Next, the implementation stage was carried out by applying the program according to the predetermined method for each class for eight weeks. During this period, researchers actively engaged in participatory observation and documented all learning activities to obtain comprehensive data. The data collection phase was conducted after the intervention ended. In this case, researchers conducted in-depth interviews with students to explore their experiences and perceptions of the "Time to Shine in English" program. The analysis included transcribing interviews, identifying themes, and interpreting data to explain the patterns and key findings that emerged from the students' experiences.

This process involved several critical steps: first, the interview recordings were carefully transcribed. Then, the transcripts were systematically coded, which involved identifying recurring and significant themes. Finally, these themes were interpreted to reveal core patterns and insights gained from the students' narratives. To support the consistency of the findings, this study integrated methodological triangulation. This was done by combining and cross-validating evidence from various sources, including in-depth interviews and direct observation. Additionally, a peer verification process was conducted to ensure that the resulting data interpretations were consistent with the students' experiences and perspectives (Karwanto et al., 2025). With this qualitative research approach, it is hoped that the study will provide deep insights into students' perceptions of the motivation and effectiveness of the "Time to Shine in English" program and its impact on English language learning at the junior high school level (JHS).

RESULT

The results of interviews and observations show the many experiences gained from the dimensions of motivation and program effectiveness as seen from the responses of 7th and 9th-grade students participating in the "Time to Shine in English" program. Table 2 is a summary of the responses coded from the interviews conducted by the researcher.

Table 2. Results of Interview Data Analysis

No.	Aspect	Dimension	Category	Respondents
1	Activity atmosphere	Motivation	Positive	Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
2	Opportunities to Practice Speaking English	Motivation	Sufficient	Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
3	Direct Interaction	Motivation	Helpful	Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
4	Variety of Materials	Motivation	Varied	Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
			Not very varied	Student 13
5	Duration of Activities	Effectiveness	Sufficient	Students 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19
			Too short	Student 4
			Too long	Students 9, 13, 17
6	Encouragement to Participate	Motivation	Sufficiently encouraged	Students 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 18
			Very encouraged	Students 1, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17
			Not encouraged	Students 9, 13, 19
7	Understanding of Instructions	Effectiveness	Easy	Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
			Difficult	Students 5, 16, 18
8	Quality of Materials Taught	Effectiveness	Good	Siswa 1, 4, 5, 9, 13
			Very Good	Students 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
9	Relevance of Materials to Needs	Effectiveness	Very relevant	Students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
			Less relevant	Students 9, 13
10	Impact on Vocabulary Acquisition	Effectiveness	Less influential	Students 9, 13, 18
			Influential	Students 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16
			Very influential	Students 1, 4, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19
11	Impact on Memory	Effectiveness	Less influential	Student 18
			Average	Students 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 16
			Influential	Students 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19

Based on observations, they actively answered questions, discussed, and showed enthusiasm when participating in the game. Students enjoyed completing English assignments using the Kahoot! and Duolingo platforms because this method made learning more enjoyable; *"I feel that learning English is more fun with Kahoot!. Sometimes it doesn't even feel like I'm studying"* (Response "HMR"). The implementation of Kahoot! and Duolingo for seventh-grade students is achieved through two distinct

approaches: individual and collaborative. In the individual approach, students take turns coming to the front of the class to answer questions in the form of quizzes, matching words, filling in blanks, and speaking exercises. Providing immediate feedback from teachers to students who give correct answers has been proven to motivate individual activity and self-confidence. On the other hand, the collaborative model requires students to participate in group discussions before group representatives complete and submit their overall answers. This structure is designed to foster a sense of responsibility, deepen cooperative learning, and ensure that members participate actively every time.

In addition to group dynamics, the pedagogical approach also applies the Duolingo application. Students focus on developing listening and speaking skills. Students interact with the platform through targeted activities, including repeating short audio clips, pronouncing specific vocabulary, and responding to spoken commands and instructions. The implementation of these activities has a diverse impact on improving linguistic abilities. First, these activities serve to strengthen vocabulary and understanding of language structure. Secondly, they have been shown to engender improvements in communication skills, self-assurance, and collaborative abilities (Figure 2).

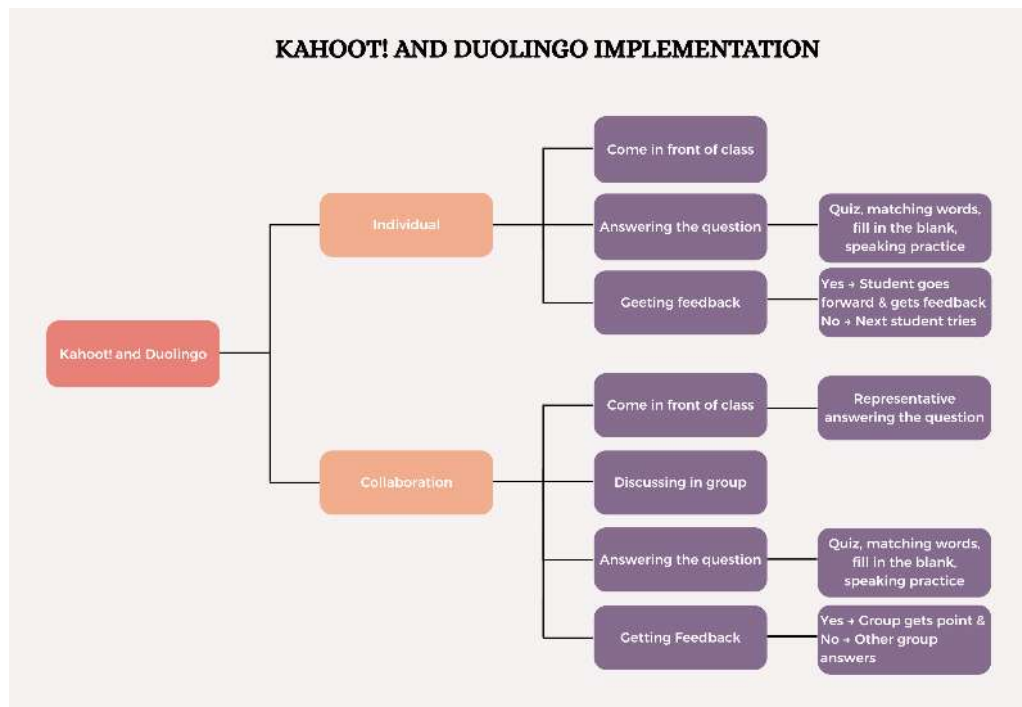


Figure 2. Kahoot! And Duolingo Implementation

In contrast, ninth-grade students who used the memorization method with paper media showed mixed responses. Some students felt that this method helped them memorize irregular verbs, while others experienced difficulties and boredom in the process. One student also stated, “*Memorizing verbs is helpful, but sometimes I find it difficult and tedious*” (Response “LBD”). Observations revealed that some students appeared less enthusiastic and tended to be passive in memorizing, although there were also those who attempted to practice with their classmates to correct each other. The Circle Memorization Process is a structured pedagogical technique designed to strengthen memory, with specific applications for mastering irregular verbs (see Figure 3). This activity is initiated by the instructor, who distributes a list of selected verbs. This step aims to direct students' attention and establish a framework for the subsequent learning sequence.

Next, students silently read and repeat the words they read. This phase is very important for strengthening concentration and utilizing visual and auditory cognitive

pathways to internalize new vocabulary. It should be noted that this method differs from the simultaneous approach used by the Duolingo platform, which combines listening and speaking exercises (for example, reading aloud while listening). The next phase involves the teacher calling on students in turn to say verbs or make sentences aloud. This has two purposes: as a direct assessment of memory skills and as practice for building confidence in public speaking. The cycle ends with the teacher providing timely and positive corrective feedback, a critical step that allows students to quickly recognize and correct mistakes, thereby reinforcing accurate learning. This process is then repeated with the next student, creating a dynamic and participatory classroom atmosphere. The cyclical nature of this pedagogical approach ensures that students repeatedly engage with the material, build confidence, and receive ongoing reinforcement, while also fostering a sense of responsibility and discipline in the learning process.

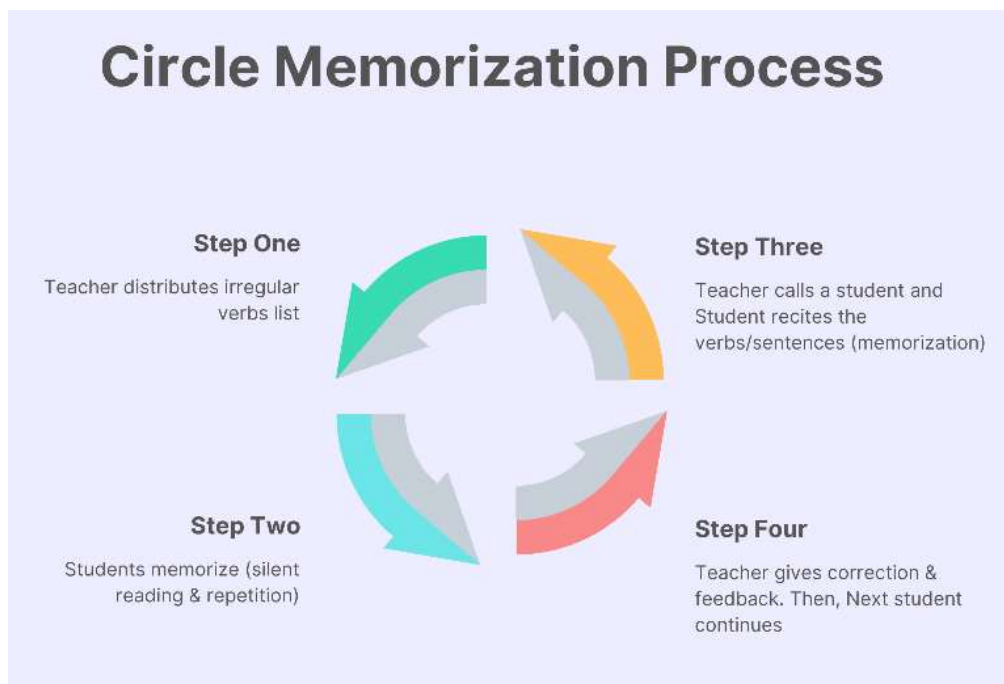


Figure 3. Students's Circle Memorization

The analysis results show an improvement in English language proficiency in both groups of students, despite the different approaches. Seventh-grade students were more active in game-based learning using Kahoot!, such as vocabulary quizzes and image-based exercises, which encouraged them to be more confident in asking questions, answering, and speaking in English. Meanwhile, ninth-grade students focused more on memorizing irregular verbs through various strategies, such as writing vocabulary and paired memorization sessions, which improved their ability to identify irregular verbs, although some still struggled to remember less commonly used words (Astuti et al., 2024). Additionally, speaking and listening exercises through the Duolingo app also contribute to the development of students' skills (Herlina et al., 2021). Seventh-grade students practiced with topics such as professions, food, and fruits, while ninth-grade students focused on sentences with irregular verbs. In oral tests, an increase in the number of students who were able to correctly identify irregular verbs compared to previous weeks indicated progress in their memorization. However, observations also found that some students still struggled to remember certain words, especially those rarely used in everyday conversations (Amalia, 2023). After the "Time to Shine in English" program was implemented, both groups became more confident in pronouncing new vocabulary and more active in simple conversations than before.

DISCUSSION

The study also identified several factors that influence the effectiveness of the “Time to Shine in English” program. The main supporting factor is the use of interactive media such as Kahoot!, which successfully increased student motivation and engagement, especially in grade 7 (Mustafa, 2022). The use of Kahoot! in this study supports the finding that online gaming platforms can increase student participation and strengthen their understanding of the material being studied (Rahmawati, 2022). Through the interactive features provided, students are more encouraged to actively participate in answering questions, compete with classmates, and review the material in a more enjoyable way (Emilio et al., 2024).

The results of this study emphasize that student motivation in English learning increases when interactive media and enjoyable methods are applied. While their study focused on elementary school students using illustrated books and storytelling, this research expands the perspective to junior high school students by applying technology-based media such as Kahoot! and Duolingo. Both contexts underline the importance of media variation in maintaining student enthusiasm and overcoming monotony in English learning (Salsabila & Megawati, 2024).

Similarly, digital storytelling fosters active participation, creativity, and collaboration in the classroom. Although prior research concentrated on enabling educators to develop media rooted in storytelling, the present study demonstrates that comparable outcomes can be attained through the implementation of student-driven digital tools like Kahoot! and Duolingo. Collectively, these findings affirm that blending technological innovation with creative pedagogical strategies is instrumental in fostering sustained student motivation in English language learning (Megawati et al., 2025).

This stands in stark contrast to the conventional memorization techniques frequently deployed in ninth-grade classrooms, which are typically characterized by a traditional emphasis on rote repetition and mechanical recall. The existing literature does acknowledge the benefits of this method for vocabulary acquisition, but research data shows that boredom and less student participation are the main obstacles that reduce its effectiveness at certain ages. Although students successfully improved their memorization of irregular verbs, the lack of variety in the method resulted in a decline in their motivation to learn.

Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the argument that memorization methods must be enhanced with a variety of approaches in order to remain relevant and enjoyable. In addition, the use of the Duolingo app for speaking and listening practice has a positive impact on students' English proficiency, especially in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary comprehension in real-life contexts (Pale et al., 2024).

This is in line with previous research that emphasizes the benefits of technology in improving English language skills independently. With the results of this study and comparing it with previous studies, it can be concluded that diverse English language learning by combining interactive methods such as Kahoot!, application-based technology, and a more flexible traditional approach can increase the effectiveness of learning and student motivation.

Based on the results of the study, the “Time to Shine in English” program has a positive impact on the motivation and effectiveness of English language learning for 7th and 9th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in Sidoarjo. The findings of the study show that interactive and technology-based learning methods can increase student engagement and motivation in learning English.

Based on the results of observations and interviews that have been conducted, the results show differences in perception between 7th-grade students and 9th-grade students. Seventh-grade students tend to be more active, enthusiastic, and enjoy the learning process more. This is because the game-based learning method, specifically the use of

Kahoot!, has proven to make students feel more relaxed and less stressed during the learning process, thereby boosting their confidence in speaking and expressing their understanding of the material. Research at MAN 4 Kebumen also found that the use of Kahoot motivated students and significantly increased their motivation to learn compared to classes without Kahoot (Aulia Karima Zuhda & Hamdun, 2020). On the other hand, in 9th grade, students using the memorization method showed varied responses. For some students, this method helped them remember irregular verbs, although some felt bored and unable to recall them. This shows that learning methods that lack variety and involve a lot of repetition cause students to lose enthusiasm. This further reinforces the findings of a study on classroom activities and student motivation in Cambodia. Another important insight concerns the role of material variation in increasing motivation in general (Bon et al., 2022). They found that variation in learning activities can help avoid boredom and enable students to become more engaged in lessons.

Direct interaction during the learning process has also been shown to increase student motivation. Most students feel that they are given sufficient opportunity to practice speaking English, although some of them state that they could be given more space to speak and choose topics that interest them. This is in line with Baker's statement that giving students choices in learning activities can increase their motivation (Baker & Baker, 2021). In addition, language learning using technology has also shown positive results. The Duolingo app, used as a supplement to the learning method, provides benefits in improving students' vocabulary and pronunciation. Speaking and listening exercises through this app help students build confidence in speaking English. Overall, several interrelated factors appear to influence the effectiveness of the Time to Shine in English program. The main factors include creating a supportive learning environment, using a variety of teaching methods, providing opportunities for meaningful interaction, and applying technology tailored to learning needs. Therefore, it can be said that a successful and appropriate English language learning program must be able to combine various strategies, interactivity, and technology in a balanced manner. Such an integrated approach appears fundamental to elevating student motivation and catalyzing their active involvement in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

The "Time to Shine in English" programme has been proven to increase motivation and effectiveness in learning English at the junior high school level. The utilisation of an interactive approach in this programme, notably the incorporation of Kahoot! for 7th-grade students, has effectively augmented engagement, confidence, and the level of enjoyment derived from the English language learning process. It is evident that students are demonstrating a heightened level of engagement and a more pronounced interest in the subject matter. The memorization technique, which was then applied to ninth-grade students, proved its usefulness in improving vocabulary acquisition, especially related to irregular verb forms.

The pedagogical insight gained through this comparison is that although traditional methods still have their core usefulness, their effectiveness in maintaining student interest and improving overall results is based on innovative delivery and presentation methods. The success of language programs appears to be primarily influenced by several interrelated factors, such as the seamless integration of interactive media, the application of diverse pedagogical strategies, the creation of numerous opportunities for verbal practice, and the structured application of technology.

Recognizing the limitations of this study, it should be noted that the limited sample size of participants restricts the broad application of these findings. Consequently, it is recommended that future studies seek to validate these observations through research involving a larger, more demographically diverse cohort of students drawn from a variety of educational institutions. These studies will be conducted over an extended timeframe,

with the objective of generating more comprehensive results and providing more substantial contributions to the development of English language learning strategies.

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