

## **School Principal's Strategy to Increase Foreign Language Interest in Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School Jakarta Rokimin**

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### **Abstract**

Principal's Strategy to Increase Interest in Foreign Languages (Case Study of Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School) By holding several programs that support language improvement, students can find out their abilities and what to do to improve them, of course with support from the family and school environment. The method used is descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews and documentation. Sources of informants included school principals, teachers, English program supervisors, and students. Data analysis activities in the form of data reduction, data presentation as well as conclusion and verification. In testing the validity of the data, the researcher extended the research time, triangulation, and member checking. Based on the results of the research, it is known that there are several special programs that are the principal's strategy in increasing students' interest in language.

**Keywords:** *Principal's Strategy, Increasing Interest & Foreign Languages*

### **Abstrak**

Strategi Kepala Sekolah Untuk Meningkatkan Minat Berbahasa Asing di Pondok Pesantren Darunnajah Penelitian dilakukan dengan dasar keingintahuan peneliti terhadap strategi yang dilakukan oleh kepala sekolah guna meningkatkan minat berbahasa Asing siswa terutama dalam penggunaan Bahasa Inggris aktif di Sekolah Menengah Atas Pondok Pesantren Darunnajah Jakarta Timur. Dengan diadakannya beberapa program yang mendukung dalam peningkatan kebahasaan ini siswa dapat mengetahui sampai mana kemampuannya dan harus melakukan apa untuk meningkatkannya, tentunya dengan dukungan dari lingkungan keluarga dan sekolah. Metode yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Sumber informan antara lain Kepala Sekolah, guru, pembimbing program Bahasa Inggris, dan siswa. Aktivitas analisis data berupa reduksi data, penyajian data serta penarikan kesimpulan dan verifikasi. Pada uji keabsahan data peneliti memperpanjang waktu penelitian, triangulasi, dan member checking. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian diketahui bahwa ada beberapa program khusus yang menjadi strategi kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan minat berbahasa siswa.

**Kata kunci :** Strategi Kepala Sekolah, Peningkatan Minat & Bahasa Asing

## Introduction

In the advancement of world technology what students need is to be able to communicate with various languages.<sup>1</sup> In the environment, each family must have their own background and different cultures. The use and learning of daily language applied is also definitely not the same. So in its development humans are required to be able to properly use language skills, because through language we can know the attitudes, behaviors, and views of a nation, even though we have never visited the country.<sup>2</sup> A foreign language that is popular and widely used in all corners of the world, namely English.<sup>3</sup> Some views on the importance of learning foreign languages have been put forward by many previous scientists have also been studied and carried out by the companions of the prophetic age and the main purpose of learning them is none other than to master many things from the nation. It has also been said by Allah Almighty:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لِهِمْ فَيُضْلِلُ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْزِيزُ الْحَكَمِ

*We did not send an apostle, but in the language of his people, so that he might explain clearly to them. So God deceives whom He wills, and instructs whom He wills. And He is God Almighty and Wise.<sup>4</sup>*

In reality, it is very difficult to make students aware of what interests and talents each individual has. Because what often happens in the field is that parents / guardians do not know and are even indifferent to the interests and talents of their children, even though it is very important, especially in improving children's education. Parents must have a response, supervision and analysis of activities that refer to the talents of the baby. Parental selectivity is highly demanded when the child's talent looks not good. If the child has shown a talent that he is interested in and it is good, parents need to provide support for him. Because talent will not develop if there is no booster.<sup>5</sup>

With that, schools as a formal forum for education must also be able to take advantage of the interests and talents that have been instilled by parents in activity programs at school. Because not a few parents are new to the interests and talents of their children after entering the school level, in this case the school plays a role in addition to developing interests and talents as well as forming the character of their students.<sup>6</sup> In addition to knowing the interests and talents of students in communicating using foreign languages, schools must also take several attitudes and risks that must be accepted and carried out by the school. Because what is certain is that it is not easy to move and even accustom students to intensive communication using foreign languages. Because in addition to the classroom, schools must also be able to strive for the activation of the language in the school environment as well as with components in it including teachers and school staff. Activation efforts are definitely not only carried out by language teachers, this program but in controlling its running also empowers teachers in other fields.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rokimin & Sofwan Manaf, 'Peran Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kompetensi Guru', *Mudir : Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 1.5 (2023), 375–83 <<https://doi.org/10.55352/mudir.v5i1.28>>.

<sup>2</sup> Nofrion, *Educational Communication: Application of Communication Theories and Concepts in Learning*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2016), p. 89

<sup>3</sup> Neneng Maria Kiptyah, *Become a Widyaiswira Learner*, first printing (Sidoarjo:Nizamia Learning Center, 2020), p. 17

<sup>4</sup> Q.S. Ibrahim verse 4

<sup>5</sup> Dwi Suci Citra Handa Lusia Ekta, *The Importance of Parents' Response to Children's Talents*, <https://www.infosumbar.net/artikel/pentingnya-respon-orang-tua-terhadap-bakat-anak/>, Accessed January 2, 2013 – 8:09 pm

<sup>6</sup> Ahmad Susanto, *Guidance and Counseling in Schools (Concepts, Theories, and Applications)*, 1st printing, (Jakarta: Pranadamedia, 2018), p. 65

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

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The role of the Principal in this matter is very important. The Principal as the *Top Leader* certainly has more obligations for the running of this program. Starting from the preparation of the concept to the consistency of its application by students and all school residents. The strategy carried out by the Principal determines where it will be taken in which direction the development of students and their schools. So it is necessary to know what strategies have been pursued by the school in developing students' interests and talents, especially in the ability to communicate with foreign languages (English).<sup>8</sup>

Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School has applied to students, teachers, and even administrators to communicate using a foreign language, namely English. Even in active learning, using English is mainly *exact subjects* such as Mathematics and Science. In addition to the introductory learning book, the teacher also actively explains with *billilingual speaking*.<sup>9</sup> Judging from how active in foreign languages in this school, researchers will explore strategies that have been planned and carried out by the principal so that the improvement of foreign languages can run continuously and istiqomah.

## Research Methodology

*The method used is a qualitative method that is descriptive and tends to use analysis and research that tends to use the prominence of the research process and the use of theoretical foundations so that the focus of research focuses on what is in the field.<sup>10</sup> Infoman in this study is the Principal, Language Teacher, and several learners. Data collection techniques in this study used observation, interviews, and documentation. While testing the validity of the data by extending the observation time and triangulation.*

## Discussion and Research Results

### Principal's Strategy

Strategy is an approach that aims to achieve a *goal* where this approach can be done by starting the idea, planning and implementation within a certain period of time. At first this word was used in a military context, but in its development it became widespread and widely used in other aspects such as business strategy, sports strategy and marketing strategy for example.<sup>11</sup>

Etymologically the word "strategy" is derived from Greek *stratēgos* which has meaning 'Military Commander' in the days of Athenian democracy. Strategy has a different meaning than tactics. The word tactic can only be used for narrower, shorter-term contexts. Usually used in things that are only done for a moment. Like tactics in winning a game or something that has a small scope.<sup>12</sup>

Based on its scope, educational planning can be distinguished from (1) macro planning, national level, covering all educational efforts at all levels and types of education, curriculum,

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<sup>8</sup> Kompri, *Standardization of School Principals' Competencies*, 1st printing, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2017), p. 312

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Shobri Muzakki, March 29, 2021 via mobile phone.

<sup>10</sup>Rukin, *Qualitative Research Methodology*, First Printing, (Takalar: Yayasan Ahmar Cendikia Indonesia, 2019), p. 6

<sup>11</sup> Aris Kurniawan, *Understanding Strategy — Level, Types, Business, General, Experts*, (online), <https://www.gurupendidikan.co.id/pengertian-strategi/>, accessed May 28, 2021

<sup>12</sup> Retina Sri Sedjati, *Strategic Management*, print 1, (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, March 2015), p. 1

students, and educators in an education system that is used to achieve national education goals; (2) meso planning, i.e. regional or local level, covering all types and levels of education in a region; and (3) microplanning, usually institutional. Includes various planning activities at a particular institution or educational unit or at several institutions that are the same and close to their location.<sup>13</sup>

New problems and challenges that vary and tend to increase in intensity can have an impact on educational assignments. With practical management, the current management is very inadequate. To review its improvement and development, it is necessary to apply the concept *Strategic Planning & Strategic Management* which is expected to reduce stagnation in education development.<sup>14</sup> Rowe in the Education Planning Book written by Manap states that "*strategic management* is a process in managing strategic planning, organizational culture, control strategy, and the four component groups".<sup>15</sup>

While in the school management strategy here the scope is broader, the goals are clear and the time used in realizing these goals is not obtained in an instant way in other words requires careful ideas and planning. So that with the strategy planned by the school, students can look further at the educational process and have an overview of the next level of education.

Article 15 paragraph 1 states that: "The Principal's workload is entirely to carry out the main duties of managerial, entrepreneurial development, and supervision to teachers and education staff."<sup>16</sup> From this it can be understood that the Principal has an important role as *School Leader*. The scope is not only strategies in learning, but also supporting components of schools such as administration and infrastructure. Judging from the management functions, namely *planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating, and controlling*, Therefore, the principal must also act as a supervisor of teaching and as an evaluator of school programs.<sup>17</sup>

In the implementation of this strategy, steps are needed in its arrangement, commonly called management. Strategy management is a process of decision making and action that leads to the development, as well as information systems to achieve success. There are several stages that must be carried out by an organization to achieve the desired goals as follows: a) Strategy planning includes developing long-term missions and goals, identifying opportunities and threats from outside as well as organizational strengths and weaknesses, developing alternative strategies and

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<sup>13</sup> Manap Somantri, *Education Planning*, First printing, PT. IPB Press Publisher, (Taman Kencana, IPB Campus: July 2014), p. 8

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid* p. 14

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid* p. 15

<sup>16</sup> Government Regulation Number 6 of 2018 concerning the Assignment of Teachers as Principals article 15 paragraph 1

<sup>17</sup> Roni Angger Aditama, *Introduction to Management: Theory and Application*, first printing, (Kepanjen: AE Publishing, June 2020), p. 10

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determining appropriate strategies to be adopted, b) Strategy implementation includes determining annual operational goals, organizational policies, motivate members and allocate resources so that the established strategy can be implemented, c) Strategy evaluation/control includes efforts to monitor all outcomes of strategy planning and implementation, including measuring individual and organizational performance and taking corrective steps if necessary.

### **Increase Interest in Foreign Languages**

Interest is not something static and can stop but a dynamic that has ups and downs. Interest is the drive in a person to a particular object. Many factors influence interest, including genetics and personality. A child who has an interest in sports is usually because his parents also have an interest in sports. Interest can also mean a fixed tendency of the soul to something valuable to itself.<sup>18</sup>

The school of Nativism in terms of cultivating this interest every human being has 2 (two) main factors, namely: heredity of parents and congenital since birth. And the environment has absolutely no influence on its development. This heredity factor is considered to determine everything in the individual, even the cultivation of morals and personality in school is considered not to affect at all.<sup>19</sup>

Not all students have an initial interest and cultivation in this foreign language, therefore the cultivation and habituation of using foreign languages in this school needs to be improved by all components of the school. With that, every student can get used to it even though it starts with strict discipline.

Why a foreign language? If viewed its existence, technological developments in this world are very influential on the way of communication that takes place in the midst of the community of these development actors. People who have the ability to master foreign languages can easily grasp the world because directly he will understand what problems are being felt which can eventually have solutions to these problems that are beneficial if not for his institution then to develop himself. The importance of mastering foreign languages in order to master international competition. The role of language in development is also very vital because it has several functions

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<sup>18</sup> Meity H. Idris & Izul Ramdani, *Fostering Interest in Reading in Early Childhood*, (Jakarta: Luxima Metro Media, 2015), 2nd printing, p. 7

<sup>19</sup> Siti Muri'ah & Khusnul Wardan, *Child Development Psychology and Teenagers*, (t.k:Literacy Nusantara), p. 35

based on one's needs, namely as a tool for self-expression, communication, social integration and adaptation, and a tool of social control.<sup>20</sup>

The Indonesian state has taken advantage of many global developments ranging from economics, politics, to education. The system used has now adapted to modern developments. In the current era of globalization, the foreign language that exists is used is English which also includes computer language and technological language in computers.<sup>21</sup>

Learning and getting used to foreign languages is not an easy thing to do because this language is not the mother tongue that children usually hear since they are in the womb. The method used must be right so that students can quickly grasp new things in life. There are several methods in foreign language learning that are commonly done are as follows:

In general, the skill base targeted in language learning includes: (1) *listening*; Listening and listening is our ability to understand what others are saying very well.,(2) *Reading*; Reading is the process of looking at a series of words and deriving meaning from existing written words and symbols., (3) *speaking*; Speaking is the use of spoken language in the form of words., and (4) *writing*; Writing is one aspect of language skills that is programmed in the specific purpose of language use.

## Research Results

### Foreign Language Interest in Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School

Apart from being a formal learning institution, schools also have another role as enhancers and developers of students' interests and talents. Students of Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School have different educational backgrounds which means that not all of them are output from Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School, but also from other schools that may not have the same educational base as Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School. For example, the cultivation of interest in foreign languages, especially English by the school. In developing this interest, the school has a variety of activities to support the improvement and development of student interest.

Many ways are done to be able to instill and develop student interests. School as a forum for children's expression and education has an important role in this. One way is that schools can always strive for all formal and non-formal learning activities of students using English instruction which is none other than with various activities that are well planned by the school.

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<sup>20</sup> Sari Nur Rohmah, "The Existence of Indonesian and English in Science in the Era of Globalization" in Jurnal, (Surakarta:n.p 2019), p. 3

<sup>21</sup> Karina Sofia, *The Importance of Mastering English in Today's Globalization Era*, (online), <https://www.kompasiana.com/karinasonia13/5e4d18f0d541df2b1627e552/pentingnya-menguasai-bahasa-inggris-dalam-era-globalisasi-masa-kini> , accessed 19 February 2020 18:23

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The Principal as a *leader* is very influential because he has a very important role in the organization he leads. Moreover, in schools, the Principal is in the spotlight from various parties, especially in increasing student interest and other school activities in general.

## **Principal's Strategy to Increase Foreign Language Interest in Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School**

Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School is an international standard Islamic school that has a foundation of success as mentioned in the school's mission, one of which is to improve student competence to be ready to become *global players* or international insight competencies, especially English.

For this reason, the following strategic steps have been taken in an effort to increase interest in foreign languages at SMA Pondok Pesantren Darunnajah: (1) Familiarize students with language in every formal, semi-formal, and informal activity, (2) Hold several agendas for students as English language development, including: *English Day*, *English Club*, *Research Paper* grade 12, and Holding internal competitions between classes every year and external competitions, (3) Learning English in class more than other lessons, (4) Inviting teachers to speak during and other than teaching time and *English Day*, (5) Evaluating activities periodically with teachers.

## **Factors influencing the success of the Principal to increase interest in foreign languages at SMA Pondok Pesantren Darunnajah**

### **1. Supporting Factors**

- a) Bring *expatriates* to teach English lessons. English learning at SMA Global School has 2 sessions, one session filled by local teachers with basic material and the other session by non-local teachers (*expatriates*) for special lessons such as *native speakers* and others that require professionals.
- b) Has many supporting language programs such as: English Day, English Club, Research Paper, and external and internal competitions.
- c) Supporting facilities for developing student interest such as: Language Laboratory and Podcast Studio.
- d) An environment of family and friends who actively communicate in English.

### **2. Inhibiting Factors**

- a) Not all students have an interest in speaking English.
- b) Lack of courage from students in language.

- c) Lack of student literacy where reading should be the main source of knowledge, therefore many things that students have not been able to master because of lack of interest in reading.

## Conclusion

The Principal's Strategy to Increase Foreign Language Interest in Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School is very influential on its improvement. As explained above, teaching and learning activities and out-of-class agendas carried out at SMA Global School are not far from what the principal planned which was certainly discussed also with the teachers. Some supporting activities at school are a means for students to be able to develop students' interests and talents, including in terms of language. Supporting programs such as English *day*, *English club*, *native speaker*, *research paper*, as well as internal and external competitions are routinely carried out. Each child has a different background before joining SMA Pondok Pesantren Darunnajah. The background here also includes what talents you have and what activities are in demand. Teachers as teachers and formal educators in schools must know it and can play a part in developing these two things. As stated in the school's vision and mission, which is to make Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School High School students global, then what is used as a superior program is the cultivation of foreign language interests to all students. Although not instantaneous, the school continues to try by formulating new programs.

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