

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE UTILIZATION OF THE FEYNMAN LEARNING METHOD IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT SMPN 1 SUKOMORO

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe students' perceptions of the utilization of the Feynman learning method in teaching English at SMPN 1 Sukomoro, with a specific focus on class IX-B. The Feynman method, known for its emphasis on deep understanding and the ability to explain concepts in simple language, was applied to support English learning in the classroom. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. The data were collected through observation, questionnaire, and documentation involving 20 students as respondents. The findings revealed that most students held a positive perception of the Feynman learning method. They stated that this method helped them understand the material more clearly, encouraged them to be more active in class, and increased their confidence in explaining English concepts to others. Additionally, students felt more engaged and responsible for their learning process through peer teaching and self-explanation, which are central elements of the Feynman approach.

In conclusion, the Feynman learning method was perceived as an effective and enjoyable strategy for learning English among the students of class IX-B. The results suggest that incorporating this method can enhance students' comprehension and participation in English learning activities.

KEYWORDS: *Perception, Feynman learning method, English teaching, Qualitative descriptive.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Learning to read in English helps students get information from various sources such as books, articles and digital media, most of which are written in English. Students acquire better critical and analytical thinking skills as a result of this learning, which not only improves their understanding of the content of the text but also teaches them to select relevant information and understand its meaning in context. Therefore, according to According to Cline et al. (2006:2), reading is a process of deriving meaning from a text, in which students attempt to understand the author's ideas, grasp the message contained in the text, and reflect on what they have read. Therefore, learning to read in English is an important foundation for supporting student development. In addition, According to Nunan (2003:4), reading is a fluid process in which readers combine information from the text with what they already know to create meaning. In addition to just "reading," the reading process involves attempting to establish a dialogue between the reader

and the text. information has to do with how the reader interprets meaning from written symbols and mentally processes information. In daily life, the ability to read is very important. By reading will gain the latest knowledge that we have not understood before. Reading a lot can also increase intelligence and reasoning power. But reading is not just reading word for word. Understanding the reading text is essential to find and get the information we need. Proficient readers make theories and predict events using their past experiences and current knowledge (Amin, 2019). One component of English language learning is reading comprehension. This means reading English texts with the aim of gaining in-depth understanding. Therefore, to learn and master reading comprehension, it must be done as much as possible. Reading skills are an important component that needs to be improved in teaching. The level of one's understanding of the text being read is called reading comprehension. This understanding comes from how the written words interact with each other and how they generate knowledge beyond the text. People are thought to have processing capacity, or the capacity to store and absorb data. Because of this, individuals frequently think that being able to detect words fast and easily is a prerequisite for good reading. Students that struggle with word recognition overuse their processing skills to read specific words, which hinders their comprehension of what they read.

A reader must have good reading skills in order to understand reading material thoroughly and quickly. This reading skill is typically referred to or known as reading comprehension in the context of language learning. The process of deriving meaning from a text by integrating the reader's viewpoint, the material presented in the text, and past knowledge and experience is known as reading comprehension. (Duke, 2003), The capacity of students to grasp written material and what they have read is known as reading comprehension. Compared to students who lack strong reading comprehension abilities, those who possess these abilities will find it easier to understand the content. According to Anderson and Cheng (1999), reading comprehension is a complex mental process that requires top-down or bottom-up cognitive engagement. Reading comprehension is the process of extracting and making meaning by engaging or interacting directly. Reading comprehension is a very intricate mental activity that has to do with organizing and creating meaning. It involves cognitive aspects through combining prior experience and knowledge with current knowledge (of the reading material), using both top-down and bottom-up reading models, and directly interacting or engaging with meaning. From some of the descriptions above, both in terms of language in general and in terms of reading comprehension, learning to read is not only to recognize words but also to understand texts or reading materials.

The core of the Feynman method is an attempt to learn quickly and effectively by teaching what is learned to others (learning by teaching). The Feynman method or technique has several advantages, including helping students understand the topic well, fostering a strong curiosity for the topic they are learning, and giving them the ability to explain clearly what they are learning. Therefore, this learning approach greatly assists students in constructing ideas and communicating them so that others can understand them. This suggests that the Feynman Method can greatly help students acquire communication skills, one of the essential skills in the 21st century (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Teaching reading comprehension using the Feynman learning method provides many advantages, especially in improving students' understanding of the material. This method involves students understanding a concept by explaining it back using simple language as if they were teaching someone else. In the context of reading comprehension, this method helps students not only read and memorize the content of the text, but also understand the main message, supporting ideas, and the relationship between parts of the text. When students are asked to re-explain the content of the reading, they need to organize their understanding, so they naturally practice critical and analytical thinking skills.

This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Sukomoro, a public junior high school located in Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia. Sekolah Menengah Pertama, or "SMP" in the Indonesian educational system, is the junior high school equivalent, covering grades 7 to 9 for students aged approximately 13 to 15 years old. SMP Negeri 1 Sukomoro is known for its commitment to academic excellence and active student participation in various educational programs. At SMPN 1

Sukomoro, because it can effectively improve their pupils' reading comprehension, teachers employ the Feynman technique while instructing reading comprehension. According to Yingna Zhao, Tianguai Miao, and Jiayu Liu (2020: 100), theories pertaining to the Feynman learning method are frequently referred to as "the strongest learning method in history," "a globally efficient learning method," "a scientific and effective learning method," and so on. This method is a way for teachers to teach students in study guidance. In the classroom, students only ask about what they don't understand. Then, the teacher explains it clearly. Then they do the exercises on their own. To put it briefly, pupils study at home before consulting the teacher and completing the tasks. Additionally, just as they require desire to read textbooks and complete assignments, kids should be highly motivated and driven to read the content at home.

It is clear from the previous description that the Feynman learning approach aids pupils in comprehending the content being taught. Therefore, this study intends to ascertain how students at SMP Negeri 1 Sukomoro perceive the application of Feynman's learning approach in tutoring, with the hope that it will advance theoretical understanding and practical applications in the area of reading comprehension.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of key terms in this study covers three main concepts. Perception is understood as a psychological process whereby the five senses provide experiences that are then processed through stages of selection, interpretation, and reaction, resulting in positive or negative perceptions. Knowledge forms the basis of perception and is obtained through various experiences such as seeing, hearing, touching, feeling, and receiving information, which are then selected, organized, and analyzed to form a meaningful picture of the stimuli received. The Feynman Learning Method is an innovative learning approach that has the potential to help slow learners by breaking down complex topics into simple and easy-to-understand parts, then explaining those parts to others. This method encourages active learning, helps students identify gaps in their understanding, and overcomes language barriers by simplifying concepts using everyday language. Meanwhile, Reading Comprehension refers to the ability to understand written words, grasp the meaning of the material being read, and build a comprehensive understanding of the information, as explained by Woolley (2011) that reading is not just about understanding separate words or sentences, but about making sense of the text as a whole.

Previous studies have discussed the use of the Feynman method in the English language learning process, particularly in improving students' understanding of the material. The study conducted by Iqbal Agam Alfareza (2022) titled "The Effect of Using the Feynman Method on Students' Reading Comprehension at the Eleventh Grade of SMKN 2 Kediri in the 2021/2022 Academic Year" focuses on the impact of implementing the Feynman learning method on students' reading comprehension skills. The study used a quantitative approach, with results showing a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes after the method was applied. Unlike the study the researcher will conduct, the study titled "Students' Perception of the Utilization of the Feynman Learning Method in Teaching English at SMPN 1 Sukomoro" used a qualitative method to explore students' perceptions of the use of the Feynman method in English language learning.

3.0 METHOD

A qualitative approach was used in this study. This approach involves measuring quantities or numbers. Castellan (2010) explains that this approach is suitable for phenomena that can be expressed as quantities. This study focuses on students' perceptions of the use of the Feynman learning method in English language learning at SMPN 1 Sukomoro. In order to accomplish the

goals of the study, the survey was created to quantitatively characterize and analyze a phenomenon. Generally speaking, surveys are descriptive research methods. Descriptive approaches describe a phenomenon by describing "what it is" or "how it is", (Latief, 2012). Perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, or inclinations of the individuals of interest to the researcher are described and explained via the survey research method. According to Check and Schutt (quoted in Ponto, 2015), survey research is the process of gathering data from people by asking them questions.

This research was conducted in the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year and was located at SMPN 1 Sukomoro, which is located on Jl. Sukomoro-Gondang, Sukomoro District, Nganjuk Regency, East Java 64481. Nasution (2003, p. 43) states that the location in a study reflects the concept of place in a social situation consisting of three main elements, namely: (a) place, (b) actors, and (c) activities. Based on this framework, the location of this study includes: (a) place, namely SMPN 1 Sukomoro as an educational institution where the learning process takes place; (b) actors, namely grade IX-B students who are directly involved in the English learning process; and (c) activities, namely students' perceptions of the application of the Feynman learning method in English lessons. These three elements form the basis for understanding the social and academic context of this research. The techniques used by researchers to obtain data were threefold:

1. Observation

The process of choosing, observing, and documenting the traits and behaviors of live organisms, objects, or occurrences in a methodical way is called observation. This process is carried out without special training, so the results of observation are greatly influenced by personal preferences regarding what is considered important to observe and remember. According to Marshall and Rossman (2014, p. 79), observation is the methodical description of actions, events, and objects in a particular social setting that is the subject of the research. Researchers can get a clear image of the actual situation in the field by using the observation method, which is an advantage. Typically, researchers will record their observations in the form of observation checklist, which contain conversations with subjects, field activities, and descriptions of observed events.

2. Questionnaire

To obtain data on students' perceptions of the application of the Feynman learning method in English lessons, the researcher developed an instrument in the form of a questionnaire with a total of twenty closed statements. This questionnaire was given to students in class IX-B as the main respondents in the study. Each statement in the questionnaire was compiled based on six main indicators that represent important aspects of the use of the Feynman method. The first indicator covers the use of the Feynman method in the learning process, which describes the extent to which the method is applied in the classroom. The second indicator assesses the ease students feel when learning using the Feynman method, which is related to their understanding of the material. The third indicator covers the diversity or variety of uses of the Feynman method, which shows the creativity of teachers in applying this method. The fourth indicator measures the level of interest and enthusiasm of students towards the material when taught using this method. Meanwhile, the fifth indicator evaluates students' ability to convey or explain the material well and correctly after using the Feynman method.

Each statement in the questionnaire uses a Likert scale with the following answer options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. This scale is used to determine the level of agreement of students with each statement, which will then be processed and analyzed to identify patterns in their perceptions. Thus, through these twenty statements, researchers can obtain a comprehensive and systematic understanding of how students evaluate the use of the Feynman method in English language learning, both in terms of experience, effectiveness, and learning outcomes.

In analyzing student responses, researchers used a formula. Researchers used a Likert scale in analysing student responses, as shown in the following table:

Table 3. 1 Likert Scale Category Table

Positive Statement Category	Score
Very Agree	5
Agree	4
Neutral	3

Disagree	2
Very Disagree	1

Table 3. 2 Rank Score Table

No	Classification	Interval
1	Very Strong	81% - 100%
2	Strong	61% - 80%
3	Moderate	41% - 60%
4	Low	21% - 40%
5	Very Low	0% - 20%

Calculating the average percentage of students' perceptions of the use of the Feynman method in teaching English scores:

X = Presentation

F = Frequency $X = (F / N) \times 100\%$

N = Number of samples

3. Documentation

One method for gathering information from a variety of textual sources, including books and other materials, is documentation. In this sense, documentation is a way to record different information that has been recorded by the principle, teachers, administrative staff, and other relevant parties in order to gather data for scientific research. The lesson plan was one of the instruments the researcher used to gather data for this study.

1.0 FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1.1 Perception

Perception is a psychological process through which the five senses impart experiences; people can process responses into positive or negative perceptions through the stages of selection, interpretation, and reaction. Knowledge is the foundation of perception and is obtained through a process of connection that includes seeing, listening, touching, feeling, and receiving. A person

then chooses, arranges, and analyzes the data they get to create a meaningful image. Therefore, the process begins with a stimulus received by the five senses, then organized and interpreted by the five senses to find out what is sensed.

1.2 Feynman Learning Method

The Feynman method, an innovative learning approach, has the potential to transform slow learners (Feynman, 2018a; Reyes et al., 2021). This technique is very helpful for those who face difficulties with traditional learning methods. This method involves breaking down a complex topic into smaller, easier to understand parts, then teaching these parts to others. By doing this, students who are slow learners can gain a basic understanding of a subject and build their knowledge from that foundation. The Feynman Technique encourages active learning, which makes it especially effective for students who are slow learners (Feynman, 2018a; Reyes et al., 2021). Those who use this method must actively engage with the material by teaching it to others. This process increases their understanding and gives them the ability to spot gaps in their knowledge. Feynman's technique is also advantageous in terms of its emphasis on language. Students who are slow learners often experience language barriers, which makes understanding complex concepts difficult. Feynman's technique allows slow learners to understand even the most challenging subjects by simplifying concepts and using everyday language.

1.3 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is understanding the written word, comprehending the subject being read, and creating meanings. Woolley (2011) states that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The objective is not to understand the meaning of individual words or sentences, but to obtain a comprehensive grasp of the information presented in the text.

5.0 RESULTS

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the Feynman method is able to increase students' interest in learning English. This is evident from the results of the questionnaire distribution, which shows that more than half of the students in class IX-B responded positively, stating that the application of this method had a positive impact on their learning process. Students felt an increase in active involvement during learning activities. They became more motivated to attend classes, showed higher curiosity, and demonstrated enthusiasm in understanding and explaining the lesson material using their own words. The Feynman method, which emphasizes re-explaining the material in simple terms, not only helps students focus but also encourages them to think critically about the content. By verbally restating the material, students are indirectly trained to develop cognitive abilities, boost their self-confidence, and strengthen their conceptual understanding. Through this approach, learning becomes more interactive and meaningful, as students do not merely receive information but truly process and internalize it. Therefore, the Feynman method has proven to be effective in creating a more lively learning atmosphere that is oriented towards deep understanding.

This conclusion is in line with the theory put forward by Novak (2010),

who states that the learning process will be more effective when students are asked to explain the material in their own words, as this can strengthen understanding while increasing intrinsic motivation. Additionally, according to Feynman himself, explaining a concept in simple language requires deep understanding and helps create an emotional connection to the material being studied (Gleick, 1992). Thus, the Feynman method is not only a strategy for understanding information but can also serve as a means to cultivate students' interest in learning in a more meaningful and sustainable way.

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