

Investigating Factors Influencing Students' Emotional Engagement in English Language Learning: A Case Study at MA Guppi Samata

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Abstract

This research aimed to find out the emotional engagement of MA Guppi Samata's students in learning English and the factors influencing the negative emotional engagement of the students in learning English. This research was a sequential explanatory design applying a case study. The participants were 39 students in XI grade in the second semester of the 2022–2023 academic year at MA Guppi Samata. The data were collected through a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, which were analyzed using percentages and thematic analysis. The results of this research showed that the students experienced two types of emotional engagement: positive and negative. The positive emotions the students experienced consisted of enjoyment (84%), pride (78%), excitement (69%), hope (61%), and interest (53%). Meanwhile, the negative emotions they experienced were anxiety (65%), disinterest (48%), boredom (42%), shame (38%), frustration (32%), anger (20%), hopelessness (20%), and sadness (10%). The students revealed that the negative emotions were caused by boredom and disinterest in English, low teacher performance, lack of school facilitation, teacher-centered method, classmate negative interference, unavailable learning communities, low social and family control, and gender perspective.

Keywords: *Students' Emotional Engagement, Negative Factors.*

INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalization, English is as popular as math and science. Over 400 million people worldwide speak English as their native language. In addition, English has been used as a language of communication between nations around the world regarding education, technology, social issues, business, and politics. Consequently, knowledge of English is a requirement to survive, evolve, and compete in the globalization era.

However, some people think that learning English is difficult and boring. This was also felt by the researcher in the early days of learning English, around junior and senior high school. As a student, sometimes the researcher felt boredom, disinterest, or sadness because she thought that English was not an everyday language, so it was useless and of course difficult to learn. Coupled with the monotonous class environment, uninteresting, unmotivating, etc., it made learning English even more unpleasant. To change this prejudice, teachers must enable students to participate in all activities of the learning process. One way is to provide students with meaningful learning experiences by maximizing their engagement (Delfino, 2019). Participation means that students have a role to play in all learning activities, especially when it comes to emotional issues related to interests, motivations, and feelings. The learning process in educational units should be interactive, stimulating, fun, challenging, and motivating, so it should require active participation and create spaces for creativity and autonomy through interests and talents (Depdiknas, 2008). At school, students are expected not only to display behavior and intelligence but also to be able to communicate emotional responses. Emotions were

created by Allah to form more perfect people for teachers and classmates, such as interest, confidence, comfort, safety, boredom, sadness, fear, and enjoyment. A high level of emotional interest motivates students to find learning strategies, master material, and later achieve satisfactory grades. Conversely, low emotional interest makes students less genuinely involved and less committed to achieving school goals. Emotional involvement is therefore one factor that influences the process of achieving educational goals.

In the context of emotional involvement, positive reactions are shown by being comfortable, sympathetic, unselfish, respectful, friendly, and confident. Meanwhile, negative reactions are shown by being bored, ignorant, noisy, and truant. These reactions are influenced by internal and external factors (Fredricks et al., 2004). Internal factors can be supported by fulfilling their basic psychological needs and also by social contexts such as the school environment, parents, and peers as external factors. Especially for high school-aged students who are in a transitional phase from adolescence to adulthood, adolescents are prone to emotional outbursts, so the intensity of negative emotions is usually greater when coupled with faster technological development. The public opinion about the impact of this superior technology is the assassination of characters that affect the emotional development of adolescents. Technological advances, especially gadgets, have made teenagers so content with themselves that they ignore their parents and their surroundings as if nothing is more interesting than gadgets. Matters worse, gadget-obsessed teenagers do not like socializing, which makes them lose confidence and not know how to respect others. Even in the school environment, they will bring indifference and disrespect to each other, both with their peers and with their teachers.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher wanted to know about students' emotional engagement, especially at MA Guppi Samata. From the preliminary observation, the researcher discovered several behavioral trends when the students were not interested in English class, and some students even wanted to stop when English class started. However, some students showed respect for their teachers by staying in the classroom, finishing their homework, speaking politely, and cooperating in completing tasks, even if they were not interested in learning English.

Furthermore, these facts lead the researcher to investigate more students' emotional engagement and the factors influencing students' negative emotions in learning English, especially in the era of technological attacks that can destroy student character. The researcher hoped that the results of this research would serve as baseline data to increase student engagement with school.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research used sequential explanatory research as a mixed method with a case study approach to explore students' experiences of emotional engagement and to dig up information about the factors that influence the emergence of negative emotions. According to Mills & Gay (2019), mixed methods research combines two research methods, such as quantitative and qualitative methods in one study to better understand the phenomenon than using only one strategy. At first, the researcher conducted quantitative

research using a questionnaire that was presented in percentage form following the qualitative data by interviewing 3 samples based on questionnaire results.

Participants

The research was carried out at MA. Guppi Samata. It was located at Jln. H.M. Yasin Limpo No. 42, Romangpolong, Kecamatan Somba Opu, Kabupaten Gowa, Sulawesi Selatan. There were 39 total students in the 2022-2023 academic year at MA Guppi Samata who were selected through a total sampling technique to fill the questionnaire, they were 21 students from A class and 18 students from B class. In addition, a purposive sampling technique was used to select the interviewee. There were 3 students chosen based on their questionnaire results; they were the ones with the greatest negative score; more negative scores than positive scores; and the widest spread of positive and negative scores.

Data Collection & Data Analysis

The researcher conducted questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Here is the explanation:

1. Questionnaire

The researcher used a modified questionnaire from Fredrickson & Christine, (2005) and Pekrun et al., (2011) to determine the positive and negative emotional engagement of research samples. In addition, the Guttman Scale had 29 questions that must be answered. It was shared via a form with 39 students from A and B classes of XI grade, and the result was presented in the form of a percentage.

2. Semi structure interview

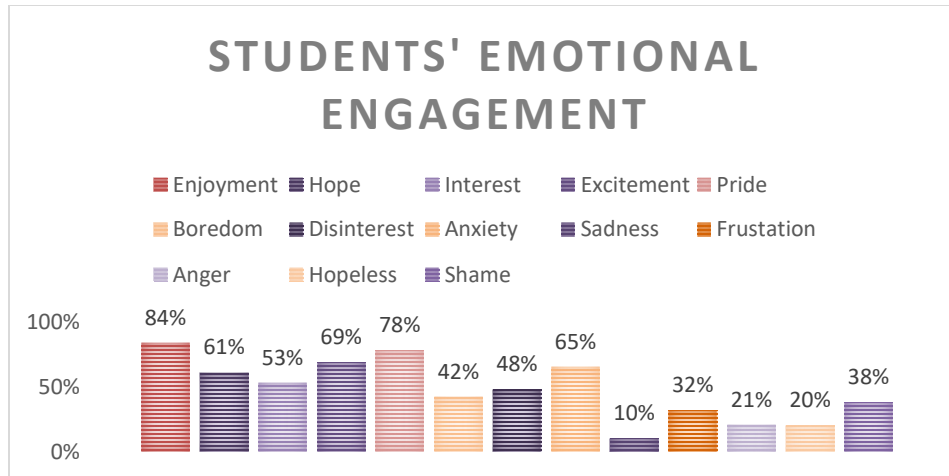
To obtain information from participants, the researcher used semi-structured interviews with 3 selected students with the initials SM, ZK, and RR. The researcher had prepared a list of questions which was modified from Parn, (2006) to gather information about factors that provoke students' emotions. A list of questions and a mobile phone were used as tools in this activity. In addition, to analyze the interviewed data, the researcher used thematic analysis proposed by Braun & Clarke (2021), the phases are familiarizing the data, coding the data, generating initial themes, developing and reviewing themes, refining, defining, and naming themes, and writing the report.

RESULTS

The researcher focused on thirteen emotional engagements including enjoyment, interest, excitement, hope, pride, disinterest, anxiety, sadness, boredom, frustration, anger, shame, and hopelessness, and also the factors that influence students' negative emotional engagement.

Students' Emotional Engagement

The result of the questionnaires was presented through a graph that displayed the students' scores for each indicator of emotional engagement.



Graph 1 The student's emotional engagement percentage

Graph 1 demonstrated that students felt positive and negative emotional engagement. In addition, enjoyment had the highest percentage of indicators 84%, followed by pride 78%, excitement 69%, anxiety 65%, hope 61%, interest 53%, disinterest 48%, boredom 42%, shame 38%, frustration 32%, anger 20%, hopelessness 20%, and sadness 10%. The researcher then categorized each indicator as either positive or negative emotions, as seen in the table below.

Indicators	Percentage	Rank
Enjoyment	84%	1
Pride	78%	2
Excitement	69%	3
Hope	61%	4
Interest	53%	5

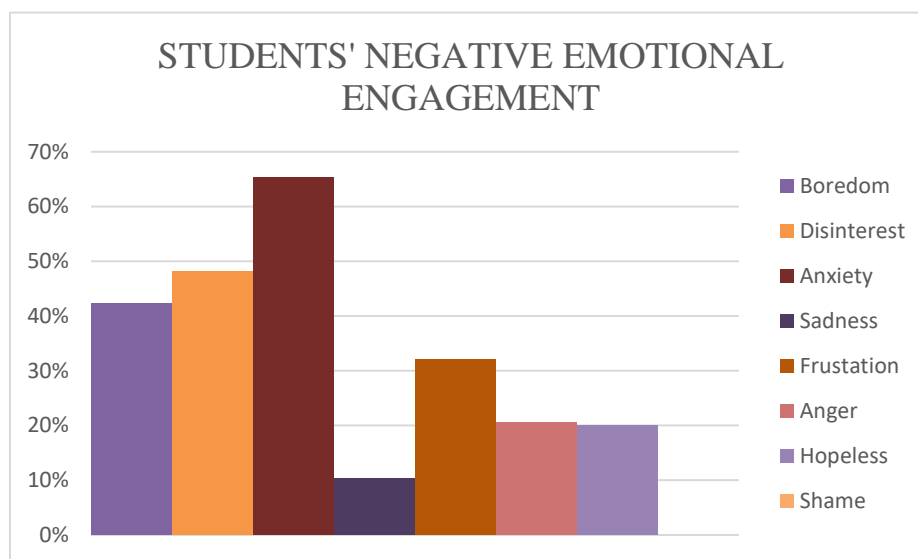
Table 1 Positive emotional engagement

Table 1 above shows that the most positive indicators felt by the students were enjoyment 84%, pride 78%, excitement 69%, hope 61%, and interest 53%.

Indicators	Percentage	Rank
Anxiety	65.4%	1
Disinterest	48.1%	2
Boredom	42.3%	3
Shame	38.5%	4

Frustration	32.1%	5
Anger	20.5%	6
Hopeless	20.1%	7
Sadness	10.3%	8

Table 2 Negative emotional engagement



Graph 2 The students' negative emotional engagement result

However, table 2 and graph 2 showed that there were eight indicators of negative emotion. The researcher discovered that students who felt anxious 65%, followed by students who were disinterested 48%, boredom 42%, shame 38%, frustration 32%, anger 20%, hopelessness 20%, and sadness 10%.

Relatively, the researcher found that MA Guppi Samata's students felt positive and negative emotional engagement. In this case, students felt positive emotions such as enjoyment 84%, pride 78%, excitement 69%, hope 61%, and interest 53%, and students felt negative emotions such as anxiety filled 65%, followed by students who were disinterested 48%, boredom 42%, shame 38%, frustration 32%, anger 20%, hopelessness 20%, and sadness 10%. However, there were 6 forms of emotion $\geq 50\%$ that were felt by students those are 84% of enjoyment, 72% of pride, 69% of excitement, 65% of anxiety, 61% of hope, and 53% of feeling interested in English. To sum up, most of the emotions felt by MA Guppi Samata students are positive emotions which are 5 indicators that are the highest percentage.

Students' Negative Emotional Factors

Based on the guidance of a semi-structured interview that had been done on 3 samples that had the highest negative score, the researcher found eight themes which were found from the thematic analysis that had been done which can be seen in Table 3 below.

Theme	Code
Boredom and Disinterest in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The belief that ideas do not need English b. Students disliked English in school. c. Just too lazy to learn English. d. Drowsiness when studying lack of interest in English e. Internal unwillingness f. Since middle school, students have disliked English. g. MTS is conscientious, but SMA is sluggish. h. Passion for internet games i. Inability to communicate in English j. Since middle school, students have been unable to communicate in English. k. English is tough and tedious. l. English views that are difficult to mention English is a headache m. The intensity of English meetings is increasing.
Low Teacher Performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The teacher who is tedious and difficult to understand b. The teacher doesn't come to learn since the teacher is dull. c. The teacher is uninteresting. d. The method the instructor teaches affects students' interest in English. e. The belief that the English teacher does not help students grasp f. When the power teacher changed, so did the students' interest in English. g. Teachers do not provide students with the opportunity to expand their knowledge. h. The explanation given by the teacher is not comprehended. i. The students still need to find the right teacher.
Lack of School Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lack of use of computer facilities in schools b. Poor school facilities c. Computer and Wi-Fi are not used in learning d. Less learning resources e. Learning media only uses worksheets
Teacher-Cantered Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Less diverse learning b. Monotonic methods of learning that are deemed uninteresting c. The lecture approach is used by the teacher. d. Learning activities that are not differentiated
Classmate Negative Interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The impact of classmates who ignore to study b. More classmates persuade students not to study. c. Influence friends not to study

No Learning Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is no place for the development of English language skills. b. The facility for language development is not accessible. c. There are no study groups available.
Low Social and Family Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is no community or playmates' support or appreciation. b. Friends who are uninterested in English c. Parental control is lacking.
Gender Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The female gender invites others to study b. The male gender partner is adamant about never studying.

Table 3 above shows that eight factors influence students' negative emotional engagement which were boredom and disinterest in English, low teacher performances, lack of school facilities, teacher-centered method, classmate negative interference, no learning communities, low social and family control, and gender perspective. Each theme is explained below:

Boredom and disinterest in English

The samples were asked about their feelings when the English learning process, students said that English was boring and were not interested in learning. Even if the students simply heard English words, they lost interest in learning. It was demonstrated when the researcher talked about the illustrations of the samples when the word "English" was mentioned. According to the interview results, the students already had an opinion that English was difficult, which caused dizziness, tiredness, and boredom in class,

Table 3 The codes of each theme of negative emotional engagement factors

ultimately leading to students being disinterested and not engaged in the English learning process.

Low teacher performances

The samples assumed that their emotional engagement depended on the teacher's performance which started from planning, implementing, and evaluation, but they did not get it from their English teacher. In this case, the samples stated that they usually did not participate in learning because the teacher's performance was boring, the explanations were difficult to understand, and the material moved too quickly. Contrarily, the students wanted a cool English teacher and wanted the teacher to change over the material when students already understood the material being taught.

From the findings above, it can be concluded that teachers' performance such as material preparation before entering class, appearance, gestures in presenting material, assertiveness, and physical and psychological approaches are very influential on students' emotional engagement. When those are not prepared properly, it will make students uninvolved and indifferent during learning. This causes the activity of the learning process not to be carried out.

The Lack of the School Facilitates

The samples additionally highlighted that the institution offers low-learning facilities. Students must acquire learning tools that are only utilized in the form of student worksheet books for each semester. Then RR added that facilities such as computers and WIFI were only used during exams. Despite the reality that the school provides facilities such as Wi-Fi computers, projectors, and speakers which are only used during assessments. This implies students are not flexible in getting those tools for English learning. In the days of faster technical technological developments, students, previously said, rely only on books. It was also possibly noticed from the results provided in interviews when the researcher asked about the availability of educational resources used.

Teacher-Centered Method

This research also noticed that a lack of variety in learning methods was another factor that led students to get bored when studying English. The samples also claimed that the strategy employed in the classroom was solely focused on the teacher. As a result, students get unfocused and bored in class. Nevertheless, RR's statement was also supported by ZK who said that there was no learning method other than worksheet by using a student's worksheet while exemplifying the way his teacher gave instructions.

In addition, the researcher believed that there were no other methods applied in class except completing student worksheets and that the teacher was ultimately offering answers to students. This was due to students' lack of understanding of the knowledge and guidance given, as well as the teacher's preference for alternatives for instance supplying answer keys.

Classmate Negative Interference

During the data collection procedure, the samples pointed out that another reason students did not participate in English learning was the influence of classmates. The students stated that they would be affected when one of their classmates did not study in that class. Also, the samples said that only one of their friends invited them to participate in the lesson. It indicated that the students who did not study were more extreme than students who followed the teacher's instructions well.

No Learning Communities

The researcher became aware of the lack of a learning community in schools as another problem. The students had never heard of or seen related English club activities as an extracurricular activity while attending school at the research site. A summary of the results of the interviews, no learning community develops and distributes English skills outside of study hours. As a consequence, students were limited to depend on the knowledge they learned in the classroom.

Low Social and Family Control

The social and familial context is another factor that promotes students' poor emotional engagement. According to the instance stories, parents just provided suitable trust and support for school materials without checking and maintaining the improvement of their children's English abilities. Likewise, peers and the surrounding community did

not give appreciation, and the samples did not find a place such as an English course or English club to support them in developing their English skills. The samples said nobody supported inviting them to join the English club when asked whether or not anyone else ever asked to learn English.

Consequently, the problems above could have taken place as a result of a lack of family and public knowledge and support about the value of English language skills in everyday life that could assist in accomplishing goals. It occasionally causes students unwilling to pursue English study, even though it is the foundation of English.

Gender Perspective

This research also found that males and females had different levels of emotional engagement. The interviews found that female students were more engaged and frequently invited their friends to learn English than males who were uninterested in English courses. When students asked who frequently requested them to learn English, students stated that female classmates invited them, but all male students decided not to engage in English.

Although female students encouraged their male classmates to study or do assignments, male students remained not involved and did not attend English classes. It was difficult to imagine the lack of student participation in a class where everyone was male, no one could bring their friends to study even if someone else was in the classroom, the researcher believed that only the class leader was the teacher's confidante.

DISCUSSION

This discussion is related to the student's emotional engagement and the negative emotional engagement factors in English language learning.

Students' Emotional Engagement

Based on the previous research, various emotions have been gained from the participants related to the emotional engagement of the students. All types of emotions researched were felt by students, but the percentages certainly had differences. Pekrun et al. (2011) said that positive or negative emotions will certainly have a great influence on students' knowledge and learning strategies. In addition, most of the students felt positive emotions in English language learning. The finding was in line with Bond and Laird (2019) who proposed a definition of student engagement and provided an exploration of positive student engagement indicators.

The results of this study provided great hope in terms of academic achievement for schools. Carmona-Halty et al. (2021) found that positive emotion was directly proportional to student academic achievement. It means that that is going to make it easier for students to participate in learning activities. In contrast, the facts on the ground showed that MA Guppi Samata students feel positive emotions but it did not make them active in learning and achieve good academic results. They even showed negative behavior such as truancy, impolite, smoking, playing games, sleeping, and so on. Likewise, their knowledge of English did not show progress. Therefore, the researcher concluded that emotional engagement was not always directly proportional to cognitive engagement and behavioral engagement. It has happened because influenced by some factors from within the student and the environment. For example, students who have skills and a willingness to learn and have

responsibility for lessons placed in a school where the environment has been formed automatically are going to be carried away.

Students' Negative Emotional Factors

The first finding above shows that students have a more positive engagement in studying English. Still, it cannot be ignored that students also have a negative emotional engagement, which should be monitored as the percentage increases. Accordingly, the researcher found out the factors that cause students to feel negative emotions in learning English. The thematic analysis produced eight factors specifically boredom and disinterest in English, low teacher performance, school facilities, classmate negative interference, teacher-centered method, no learning communities, low social and family control, and gender perspective.

Building upon the findings, most of the code showed that boredom and disinterest in English were the biggest problems experienced by the students in learning. This factor is also in line with Parker et al. (2021) who said that internal factors such as boredom and disinterest greatly affect the students' actions, motivation to learn, and learning strategies.

In addition, educators are one of the objects that should stimulate and arouse students' emotional engagement. Devito (2016) said that to attract positive student engagement a teacher should have expertise in giving instructions, building communication, and creating learning materials. Teachers who are good at taking students' hearts, are friendly, authoritative, and disciplined are very much liked by students, and this will arouse students' interest in learning English. Conversely, a teacher who has a bad character will not be liked by students so it will be difficult to stimulate students' attention and interest. Therefore, in the learning process, Pedler et al. (2020) said that teachers must be sensitive to the needs and development of their students. A teacher should pay attention and know the various types of teacher-centered methods that are suitable and on the level of intelligence of his students.

Besides, the availability of facilities and infrastructure that is still lacking creates less student interest. Whereas according to Kurnia (2015), facilities will help students understand the material. In addition, the facilities also really help teachers to make material that is more varied so that students can be more interested in learning. The availability of supporting facilities can create more varied, interesting, and meaningful learning activities which are expected to increase emotional interest and learning outcomes.

The next factor is the negative influence of classmates. Classmates can influence the direction of a student's learning interest, especially in their teens. The influence of friends is very large because it is in the association that they develop personality and carry out joint activities to reduce the tension they experience in class.

Further, the factor that influenced emotional engagement was the learning-centered method. The learning method that the teacher uses in conveying the lesson plans that have been arranged in the form of activities must be able to attract the attention of students so that they can participate in learning. However, the fact at MA Guppi Samata was different, where the lecturing and assignment methods were the monotone methods. Whereas MA students are teenagers who always want to move, are full of enthusiasm, have great curiosity, active in conveying arguments, and always want to have their wishes followed.

Based on the information from the samples, they wanted learning methods that varied according to their age and learning needs.

The next factor is learning communities. In addition, study groups are also really needed by students to train leadership and communication skills, and exchange information. Students who have a healthy community will certainly have an impact on their confidence in learning in class but on the contrary, if students do not have a place to develop themselves, they will become shy and always feel they don't know anything so they no longer have an interest in learning.

Additionally, low family and social control were the factors that influenced students' negative emotional engagement. The family is where a child is cared for and raised while the community environment is where a child plays, hangs out, and interacts every day. The size of the influence of the environment on a person's growth and development depends on the state of the environment. In the family environment, both parents are the closest people to students and are very influential in determining student learning interests in subjects. In addition, the family is also very influential in the development of a person's soul, so the process of developing emotional engagement requires support, attention, and guidance from the family, especially parents.

The last factor is the gender perspective, in which female students participate more actively in English learning than male students who prefer to play. However, according to Anwar et al. (2019), female students are typically superior in language and writing, and male students are higher in mathematics because of their stronger spatial ability. This viewpoint supports the researcher's findings that male students in senior high school show lower participation in language learning than female students.

From the eight factors above, it can be concluded that negative emotions can occur in any student. However, everyone can control their emotions by being aware, finding out the causes, and maintaining the social environment that can trigger negative emotional engagement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research it has been concluded that MA Guppi Samata's students felt positive and negative emotional engagement. In positive emotions, they felt enjoyment 84%, pride 78%, excitement 69%, hope 61%, and interest 53%, and students felt negative emotions such as anxiety 65%, followed by students who were disinterested 48%, boredom 42%, shame 38%, frustration 32%, anger 20%, hopelessness 20%, and sadness 10%. The most emotional engagement felt by the students was positive emotional engagement but it cannot be ignored that students also have a negative emotional engagement. Eight factors cause the students' negative emotions. Those are boredom and disinterest in English, low teacher performance, lack of school facilities, teacher-centered method, classmate negative interference, no learning communities, low social and family control, and gender perspective.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alamin. Firstly, the researcher would like to express her highest gratitude to the almighty Allah SWT. For HIS guidance, blessing, and mercy upon

her, the researcher can complete this thesis. Secondly, the researcher would like to thank our prophet Muhammad SAW who brought us from stupidity to cleverness. Thirdly, the researcher would like to express her special thanks to Ms. Nurfajri Ningsih, S.Pd., M.Pd., who gave the researcher the best guidance and suggestions during the process of this research and allowed her to conduct this research, and Ms. Hardiani Ardin, S.Pd., M.Pd. as the great advisor who had been patient spending her time to guide, assists, encourage her to finish this thesis since the preliminary draft until the completion of the research. Also, thanks to Ms. Nurwahida., MA., TESOL. and Ms. Aminah, S.Pd., M.Pd.I as the researcher's examiner guided, gave corrections, and advice for the improvement of this thesis.

Additionally, the researcher would like to express the deepest appreciation to Prof. Dr. Azhar Arsyad, MA as an advisor to the Indonesian Parahikma Institute, Mansyur S.Pd.I., M.Pd.I as Dean of Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan (FTK) IPI, Fatmawati Akhmad S.Pd.I., M.A as the person responsible for managing the English Tadris Department, and their staff for the support and facilities provided while studying. The researcher also thanks the English Tadris Department lecturers who educated her at IPI and the MA Guppi Samata students who participated in this research.

Likewise, the researcher would like to express heartfelt gratitude to the Pangmaroan Family, Engtionine Classmates, all friends, the Edentsa Family, the Aqilah Kost Fam, and the Happy Institut Gowa (HIGO) family for their assistance, advice, suggestions, and motivation in completing this thesis, as well as to those I have not mentioned.

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