

# **Exploring Papuan English teachers' strategies in enhancing junior high school students' reading motivation**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Reading motivation is a critical factor in English language acquisition, recognized as a significant issue for decades. Scholars have explored this topic from various perspectives, including teachers' strategies and students' intrinsic motivation. However, no studies have examined teachers' strategies for fostering reading motivation among junior high school students in the Papuan context, particularly in Wamena, Papua Pegunungan Province. This study addresses this gap by investigating the strategies employed by Papuan English teachers to enhance students' reading motivation. Data were collected using a qualitative approach through a descriptive case study. Eight Papuan English teachers participated, responding to open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicate that teachers employed several strategies to boost reading motivation, including designing engaging reading materials, modelling enthusiasm for reading, allowing students to choose their reading texts, providing constructive feedback on reading progress, and fostering strong teacher-student relationships. These findings offer valuable pedagogical implications and practical recommendations for educators to underscore the importance of reading, thereby fostering greater student motivation to engage with texts.

**Keywords:** *Junior high school students; Papuan English teachers; Reading motivation*

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## **1. Introduction**

Reading is one of four crucial elements in learning English and is required in the academic context. The students are always expected to create reading habits to comprehend literary texts. According to Atmazaki and Indriyani (2019), students can enlarge their vocabulary and critical thinking through reading. Moreover, new information could be captured, and their knowledge will improve automatically. Besides that, the students who tend to read some English materials regularly will make them more familiar with the academic texts. Furthermore, reading will help the students to maximize their cognitive and emotional abilities (Sari, 2020). Thus, it can be said that reading can activate students' abilities in all aspects of life, such as thinking, feeling, emotion, imagination, character, and so on.

However, there is a tendency for students to often neglect reading activities. In the book entitled *Curriculum; Foundation, Principle, and Issues*, Ornstein and Hunkins (2018) emphasize that many students assume reading is a burden that should be avoided because it is an "uncool act or boring activity." It indicates that most students have not yet created and built literacy skills. This phenomenon is related to the situation that Indonesian students have encountered. Based on the results of PIRLS in 2011, Indonesian students' literacy skills were 45 out of 48 countries (Hidayat, 2019). Meanwhile, in 2015, the Program of International Students Assessment (PISA) results revealed that Indonesian students ranked 64 out of 72 countries (OECD, 2015). Furthermore, PISA in 2018 measured international students' literacy skills and found that Indonesian students had low literacy skills, specifically reading performance. In this sense, Indonesian students only obtained 371 out of 600 points (Anandari & Iswandari, 2019). Thus, it can be concluded that Indonesian students have low literacy skills compared to other countries, which is still a significant problem in this country.

Therefore, the quality of education in Indonesia should be improved by encouraging the students to develop their reading motivation. In other words, teachers should make some breakthroughs in enhancing students' reading motivation to improve literacy quality (Yusuf et al., 2020; Fitria et al., 2024). Consequently, Indonesian students will not continue to be left behind in other countries.

Based on the data above, we can see that Indonesian students lack motivation to read. According to some experts, reading is positively related to motivation (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Barber & Klada, 2020; Guthrie et al., 2007; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). Reading activity will grow if students have good motivation in reading. It means students with high motivation will spend more time reading than those who have not. Meanwhile, Wang et al., (2020) argue that students who lack motivation cannot increase their reading proficiency. In line with this, Saeheng (2017) emphasizes that reading motivation is urgent in gaining comprehension. It indicates that students cannot achieve reading comprehension without motivation. In other words, motivation can lead and guide students to achieve reading comprehension.

Therefore, in the academic context, English teachers play a crucial role in enhancing students' reading motivation. They need to make some breakthroughs to help students strengthen their motivation in reading. In order to make students engage in the learning process, the teachers should be able to design the learning process to become enjoyable (Dornyei, 2001; see also Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013; Yasin & Mustafa, 2020; Yuniarti et al., 2024). In this case, teachers must have the capability and creativity to make the learning process enjoyable for the students to stimulate students' reading motivation (Indrayadi, 2021; Zulfikar et al., 2022). In other words, the teacher should be able to create, design, and provide the learning materials or content that can develop students' reading motivation because teachers can assist students to be more motivated in reading. Thus, it can be seen that students' motivation in reading could be shaped by the teachers. By employing several appropriate strategies in the learning process, students will be guided to develop their interest in reading.

Several studies have investigated teachers' strategies for enhancing students' reading motivation. Marzona and Astria (2019) in their research, they found that many students were not interested in reading because of the materials and the teaching strategy. The provided materials might not activate their interest because they were not familiar with the reading text, or the text did not have any correlation to their lives and daily experiences. In other words, they did not have any background knowledge of it. On the other hand, in the teaching process, the teachers tended not to give any feedback to the students and did not try to encourage and motivate students to engage in reading activities. Besides that, the teachers sometimes used a teaching strategy that was not varied (monotonous) and it made the students unmotivated to read. Similarly, Yuliasari et al., (2020) found that many students were unmotivated in reading because the teachers were unaware of the importance of their teaching strategies. The students could be encouraged to be motivated in learning by designing an attractive classroom, materials, and strategies for teaching. By using varied approaches, the learning process would be enjoyable for the students, and those strategies could stimulate and activate students' reading motivation (Muluk et al., 2021). Furthermore, Roorda et al. (2017) found that teachers can develop students' reading motivation if a good relationship is built between teachers and students. Having a good relationship, students would engage in reading activities and be more motivated to do what the teachers want. In this study, they found that there was a significant correlation between the teacher-student relationship and reading achievement.

In such conditions, the researchers were interested in investigating Papuan English teachers' strategies for enhancing students' reading motivation. Although several current studies discuss these two things, no one has investigated them in this context. So, the researchers perceive that this study needs to be done to give an overview of the teachers' situation in developing students' reading motivation. Hence, the question of this research was; What strategies do Papuan English teachers employ to develop students' reading motivation?

## **2. Literature review**

### *2.1. Reading motivation*

Motivation is one of the most essential elements in the learning process. It influences how students approach tasks, persist through challenges, and achieve learning goals. Without sufficient motivation, students may fall behind their peers who are driven to learn. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) define motivation as the key reason behind an individual's decision to undertake a task, the effort they put into sustaining it, and the intensity with which they pursue it. Similarly, Manuas et al. (2022) describe motivation as an internal drive that pushes individuals to act and stay committed to an activity. In this sense, motivation can be assumed as a trigger or driver of action that enables students to take a particular activity and maintain engagement.

In accordance with this, Deci and Ryan (1985) classify motivation into two main types: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation originates from within an individual and it is often driven by personal interest, curiosity, or enjoyment. For example, the students who read because they find reading as an enjoyable activity can be categorized as intrinsically motivated (Sande et al., 2023; Sari, 2020; Schiefele et al., 2012). This type of motivation can be strengthened through experiences of pleasure and satisfaction while reading (Prawita et al., 2019). On the contrary, extrinsic motivation comes from outside influences, such as rewards, pressure, or obligations (Xia et al., 2019). Students who read to avoid punishment or to earn a good grade demonstrate extrinsic motivation (Salikin et al., 2017). These motivations can be differentiated by the initial drives and the way the process is carried out.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, motivation also plays a vital role in determining students' success, particularly reading. This motivation can be directly influenced by the content and structure of the textbook used in the classroom. A well-designed EFL textbook that includes relevant topics, age-appropriate materials, interactive tasks, and culturally engaging texts can play a crucial role in stimulating students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Guna & Darong, 2023). When the textbook aligns with students' interests and needs, it will encourage them to participate actively in reading activities, sustain their attention, and develop a deeper connection with the language learning process (Manuas et al., 2022).

On the other hand, motivation serves as the driving force that encourages learners to initiate, persist in, and invest effort in reading activities (Amalia et al., 2024; Samad et al., 2012). According to Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), reading motivation is a multifaceted construct that encompasses learners' individual goals, interests, values, and beliefs about reading. These elements influence how students interact with reading materials, how much effort they are willing to put into reading, and how they evaluate their reading progress. In this sense, reading motivation is not limited to the desire to begin reading but also extends to the persistence and engagement required throughout the reading process.

Furthermore, reading motivation significantly contributes to the development of reading skills. Motivated students tend to read more frequently and engage with a broader range of texts. As a result, their vocabulary, understanding of sentence structures, and exposure to diverse genres are effectively enhanced. Moreover, this leads to the improvement of their language acquisition, comprehension ability, and reading fluency (Biyik et al., 2017). Besides that, motivated students often employ cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies such as predicting, inferring, summarizing, and clarifying. Such strategies are essential, particularly in academic contexts, where deeper levels of understanding and critical analysis are required (Maruli et al., 2021). In other words, motivation can be assumed as a prompter that not only initiates reading behavior but also sustains the students' effort to engage with increasingly complex texts.

Therefore, Locher et al. (2019) propose that reading motivation can be conceptualized through three interconnected dimensions: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral. The emotional component refers to the feelings of enjoyment and interest experienced during reading (Nadian & Afifi, 2023). When students experience positive emotions while reading, they are more likely to perceive reading as a rewarding activity. The cognitive component involves the learner's beliefs about their own reading competence and the perceived value or usefulness of reading in their lives (Maglangit & Limpot, 2022). For instance, students who believe they are capable readers and who understand how reading benefits their academic and personal growth are more inclined to engage in reading tasks. Lastly, the behavioral component is reflected in the students' reading habits and choices, such as voluntarily reading during free time, actively seeking out books, or completing reading assignments without external pressure.

Hence, it can be concluded that reading motivation enables students to foster positive attitudes toward reading, enhances reading engagement, and encourages the use of effective strategies. In other words, students who have higher levels of motivation are more likely to develop into a proficient, independent, and lifelong reader. Therefore, it is essential for educators to recognize the importance of reading motivation and actively work to nurture it in their classrooms.

## *2.2. Teachers' strategies for developing students' reading motivation*

In the academic settings, teachers play a crucial role in shaping and fostering students' motivation to read. While motivation can arise from within the students themselves, it is often influenced by the learning environment and the strategies used by the teachers. Therefore, teachers must take intentional steps to build a classroom atmosphere that supports reading as an enjoyable and meaningful activity. These strategies include designing engaging materials, creating a supportive environment, and providing both emotional and instructional guidance throughout the learning process (Dharmakharyadhika, 2019; Macklem & Gayle, 2018).

One of the most effective ways teachers can build students' reading motivation is by selecting or creating reading materials that are interesting and relevant to students'

lives. According to Dornyei (2001), materials that align with students' personal interests and real-life experiences are more likely to capture their attention and spark intrinsic motivation. Teachers can strengthen this effect by allowing students to choose what they want to read. Giving students a voice in their learning fosters a sense of autonomy and ownership, which leads to greater engagement (Wang et al., 2020). If students are invested in what they are reading, they are more likely to persist, even when the text is challenging.

However, the availability and quality of interesting EFL books still vary across regions. In many urban schools, students may have access to modern and engaging textbooks that include stories, pictures, fun exercises, and culturally relevant topics. Yet, in more remote areas like Papua Pegunungan, the situation is quite different. Many schools in Papua Pegunungan still face challenges such as limited resources, outdated textbooks, or materials that are not aligned with students' local culture and daily lives (Butarbutar et al., 2019). Consequently, many Papuan students find reading English textbooks boring, difficult, or unrelated to their real-life experiences (Leba et al., 2021). This lack of engaging material can weaken their motivation to read and reduce their interest in learning English. Therefore, it is essential for educators to provide interesting, meaningful, and culturally sensitive EFL materials. By including stories that reflect students' own backgrounds, using local contexts, and applying interactive reading tasks, students' interest in reading will automatically enhance and they can compete with other students in Indonesia or even around the world (Romrome & Ena, 2022).

Moreover, teachers can also boost students' reading motivation by encouraging autonomy and helping them understand the value of reading tasks. When students are given the opportunity to set goals or participate in making decisions about their learning, they are more likely to feel responsible for their progress (Johnson, 2017). Therefore, Muthalib et al. (2024) suggest that teachers should explain the purpose behind reading tasks, helping students see how these activities connect to their personal goals or future success. It indicates that clear instructions and achievable objectives build students' confidence and promote engagement (Lunenberg et al., 2014).

Another key factor in developing students' reading motivation is incorporating interactive and collaborative reading activities. Group discussions, peer reading, and book clubs allow students to learn from one another and explore texts in a social setting (Manuas et al., 2022). These activities turn reading into a shared experience, which can make it more meaningful and enjoyable (Guna & Darong, 2023). In other words, when students read, discuss themes, ask questions, and interpret meaning together, they collaboratively build their communication skills and attain a deeper level of comprehension.

On the other hand, providing consistent and constructive feedback is another effective way for teachers to enhance students' reading motivation. According to Marzona and Astria (2019), positive feedback helps students recognize their progress and feel proud of their efforts. It can be inferred that such feedback increases students'

confidence and supports their self-regulation. Therefore, Romrome and Mbato (2022) suggest that, rather than focusing solely on correctness, teachers should emphasize effort, strategy use, and improvement. In other words, feedback that focuses on the learning process rather than outcomes helps students build internal motivation and encourages them to keep trying (Fadillah et al., 2022).

In addition, building strong teacher-student relationships can enhance students' willingness to engage in reading. According to Estes (2016), students are more motivated when they feel that their teacher genuinely cares about their success. In line with this, Roorda and Koomen (2021) emphasize that emotional closeness between teachers and students can increase students' resilience and reduce anxiety around academic tasks. In such environments, students are more likely to ask questions, admit confusion, and accept challenges (Sulistyo et al., 2024). It indicates that a supportive and respectful classroom culture in which students feel safe to express themselves and take risks is an essential thing to be implemented by teachers.

Finally, teachers should serve as role models by demonstrating their own love for reading. According to Kember (2016), modeling genuine interest in reading can inspire students to imitate those behaviors, reinforcing the idea that reading is both valuable and enjoyable. It can be inferred that when students observe teachers talking about books, reading aloud with enthusiasm, or sharing personal reading experiences, they are more likely to view reading as a positive habit. Thus, their reading motivation will be gradually developed.

### **3. Method**

#### *3.1. Research design*

The current study used a qualitative method to collect and analyze the data through a descriptive case study. According to Creswell (2014) this method is a part of the qualitative method that can be utilized to explore a real-life phenomenon that people encounter. It indicates that the researchers used this method to find out the actual situation that English teachers face during their teaching practice.

#### *3.2. Participants*

This research was conducted in 4 Junior High Schools in Wamena, Papua Pegunungan Province, Indonesia. 8 English teachers participated in this study. These participants were selected based on their experience implementing various teaching strategies to increase students' reading motivation. Thus, they were able to answer the questions based on their experiences. The demographic data of participants can be viewed in table 1.

**Table 1**

Demographic data of participants.

<b>Initial name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Working experiences</b>
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SK	Female	26	3 Years
LM	Female	58	26 Years
FAW	Male	32	8 Years
KAY	Male	46	21 Years
RSA	Female	37	14 Years
RG	Female	34	11 Years
NW	Female	29	7 Years
KM	Male	30	4 Years

### 3.3. Instruments

In gathering the data, two types of instruments were used in this study: open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews. Barriball and While (1994) asserted that researchers could utilize these two instruments to gain more valid information and clarification regarding someone's opinion in a specific context. In this case, the researchers employed these instruments to obtain data on English teachers' strategies to enhance students' reading motivation.

Before collecting the data, the researchers contacted one participant to help us distribute open-ended questions and a consent form. After getting the results of the open-ended questions, the researchers contacted each of them to organize the interview time. The researchers then interviewed the participants through WhatsApp voice calls one by one. Each session took 30-45 minutes and was recorded. During the interview, Bahasa Indonesia was used to make the participants free and easy to answer each question. The researchers delivered nine questions to obtain information from the participants regarding their strategies to enhance students' reading motivation.

### 3.4. Data analysis procedures

In analyzing the data, the researchers used the thematic analysis method. According to Braun and Clarke (2008), this method is a strategy to identify, analyze, and report the data that focus on the theme pattern. This method comprises six steps: familiarizing the data, generating initial codes, determining the themes, reviewing the themes, entitling the themes, and producing the data report. Thus, the researchers analyzed the data from open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews based on these six steps.

In the first step, the researchers listened to the data recording several times to familiarize themselves with the data after collecting it from the interview. After that, the researchers wrote down the interview data into structured paragraphs to analyze them. According to Xu and Zammit (2020), the transcription of the interview data is crucial in familiarizing the data. The second step was to generate initial codes. In determining the codes, the researchers employed two different forms of coding: inductive and deductive. In this sense, inductive codes were based on the transcription data, while deductive codes were extrapolated from theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2008). Thirdly, the researchers determined the themes by considering initial codes. In this case, the

researchers merged the various codes by considering how they related to one another to choose the themes. It implied that if several codes were closely related, they would be combined into a single theme. Fourthly, the researchers reviewed the themes by paying attention to the research questions to avoid irrelevant themes. The themes closely connected with the research questions would be entitled, while others would be omitted. Finally, the data were ready to be reported.

#### **4. Findings**

In this part, the researchers provided the results from open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews. Five themes have been entitled based on the aim of this study, namely, designing and providing enjoyable reading materials for students, displaying reading interest for students, giving freedom for students to select their reading, giving feedback based on students' reading achievement, and creating a powerful teacher-students relationship. Since this study aimed to explore Papuan English teachers' strategies for enhancing students' reading motivation, the researchers need to dig deeper into teachers' strategies to develop students' reading motivation. Thus, the results could be viewed below.

##### *4.1. Designing and providing enjoyable reading materials for students*

Based on the results of open-ended questions, participants admitted that designing and providing enjoyable learning materials for students is an essential strategy for teachers to enhance students' reading motivation. It indicates that teachers should be able to choose suitable reading materials for students. The participants also emphasized that they usually designed English activities and materials by utilizing several media on the internet that provide reading materials, such as articles, short stories, magazines, newspapers, and so on. In providing learning activities, they usually searched and chose reading materials that suit students' language proficiency levels. In other words, reading materials should contain vocabulary that students are familiar with. This finding gained support from them in the interview sections. One participant shared that:

I usually try to provide enjoyable reading materials for my students by giving them a text that can be easily absorbed and understood. It means that in choosing a text, I will always consider the language used and whether it is easy to understand or not. Thus, my students can follow the contents easily. (Teacher 1).

Another participant added:

In my experience, I usually design reading content based on students' interests. For instance, many of my students like football, that's why I provide a reading text containing football. By doing that, my students will be interested in and put more effort into reading that text. Thus, their reading motivation will be enhanced gradually. (Teacher 3)

Pertaining to this finding, it could be viewed that Papuan English teachers have tried to encourage their students to be more motivated in reading by providing reading materials that consist of three things. First, the materials should be familiar to students' background knowledge. Second, the words, sentences, and paragraphs in the reading materials should be understandable for the students. Last, the reading materials should refer to students' interests. Thus, students will enjoy and put more effort into reading the provided reading materials.

#### *4.2. Displaying reading interest for students*

As role models, teachers should be able to show their interest in reading. From the open-ended questions, the majority of the participants asserted that one of the suitable strategies to stimulate students' interest in reading was through the ways teachers perceive reading activities. In this sense, teachers must be able to display their interest in reading by not perceiving reading as stressful activities or as burdens. By doing this, students will be encouraged to perceive reading as an enjoyable activity and they will become more motivated to read. This finding was underpinned by one participant in the interview sections. She Clarified that:

Displaying my interest in reading for my students is one strategy that I always take. When my students notice that, they will try to do the same because most teenagers usually learn from what they see and hear. (Teacher 6)

Besides that, one participant also emphasized that:

I realize that motivating my students to read is not a piece of cake for me. It requires a lot of time and effort to do. Therefore, I usually try to promote the importance of reading for my students by showing my interest in reading. (Teacher 4)

It indicates that participants have strengthened students' interest in reading by displaying their interest in reading activities. In other words, they promoted the importance of reading for their students through their reading habits and perceptions.

#### *4.3. Giving freedom for students to select their reading*

Based on the findings from the open-ended questions, the participants clarified that they always tried to provide a lot of opportunities for their students by giving them the freedom to choose their reading text to read. Giving students more chances to select their reading enables them to explore more information and get knowledge based on their interests. Besides that, since students have various interests in learning, they can differently determine the appropriate ways to absorb new information through their strategies. Thus, it will lead them to become autonomous learners. This finding was supported by the result of semi-structured interviews. One participant claimed that:

In my opinion, giving freedom for my students to choose the reading text is the best strategy to improve their reading motivation. You know that each student has a different interest thing to read, that's why I will never restrict them to read a certain text. (Teacher 2)

Moreover, the participants also emphasized that:

Giving freedom to my students to select their reading does not mean that I allow them to learn alone. Normally, I always try to guide them by discussing their understanding of the reading text. If they do not understand the reading, I usually attempt to help them by explaining reading strategies that can be employed by them to succeed in achieving reading comprehension. Besides that, I also encourage them to find other sources that are related to their topic in order to make them combine one reading with others. Thus, they will easily capture the meaning of each text. (Teacher 3)

From the results above, it could be seen that Papuan English teachers not only give their students the freedom to choose their reading text based on their interests but also keep supporting and guiding them to achieve learning goals efficiently.

#### *4.4. Providing feedback based on students' reading achievement*

Feedback is essential in the assessment and learning process to help improve students' performance. Providing feedback should be a positive experience for the student, or at least neutral. Negative feedback can discourage student effort and success. Teachers must help students learn and provide feedback in a way that helps them feel successful. In the open-ended questions, all the participants shared that giving feedback on students' reading achievement can trigger students to be more motivated in reading the academic text. One participant clarified that:

As a teacher, I realize that providing feedback for my students is a must. When my students encounter difficulty in the reading process, I always ask them about their problems and their understanding of the text. By knowing their difficulty in the process of reading, I will try to find the appropriate ways to assist and guide them in overcoming their reading problems. (Teacher 7)

This statement was also supported by another one during the interviews

In my opinion, giving feedback to my students is crucial to be considered. Through provided feedback, my students can analyze and evaluate their understanding and reading strategies that they usually employ. Thus, it can give them valuable information that can contribute to the development of their reading interest and motivation. (Teacher 5)

Based on the data above, it could be viewed that the participant had been aware of the importance of feedback in the learning process.

#### 4.5. *Creating a powerful teacher-students relationship*

It is undeniable that in the teaching and learning process, the relationship between students and teachers must be built regularly and continuously. From open-ended questions, the participants shared that the teacher-student relationship should be bounded to create positive circumstances in the learning process. Besides that, they also shared that a powerful relationship can shape and develop students' motivation in reading. During the interviews, two participants confirmed that:

I actually learned from my experiences that students will be interested in reading if they really like their teachers. What I mean is when my personality is good and the way I approach and treat them is meaningful, they will actively engage and participate in the learning process. In such situations, it can enhance their motivation to read and automatically reading activity will run well. (Teacher 8)

This statement gained support from another teacher who shared that:

For me, the teacher-student relationship and reading motivation are highly correlated with one another. That's why, as a teacher, I usually try to create a positive relationship by treating them with love and care. If I and my students have a close relationship, my instructions will be automatically followed by them. They also will feel comfortable sharing their learning problems with me and enjoy the learning process. (Teacher 1)

From the data above, it could be inferred that Papuan English teachers had tried to treat their students with authentic love and care. Showing love and affection to their students makes the bond stronger. Thus, their students will be triggered to show their effort to make their teachers happy.

## 5. Discussion

The findings above suggested that Papuan English teachers have tried to implement several strategies to enhance students' reading motivation. Those strategies consisted of designing and providing enjoyable reading materials for students, displaying reading interest for students, giving freedom for students to select their reading, giving feedback based on students' reading achievement, and creating a powerful teacher-students relationship.

In accordance with designing and providing enjoyable reading materials for their students, the Papuan English teachers emphasized that they usually tried to employ this strategy in the teaching process. These findings were similar to Theobald's (2006) recommendation which highlighted that teachers should be able to select various reading materials that can make reading activities more enjoyable for the students. It indicates that teachers can utilize several learning media to make the reading class more varied and not monotonous (Guna & Darong, 2023; Marzona & Astria, 2019). Providing varied reading activities for students is an appropriate way to stimulate students' interest to read

(Kember, 2016). In the interview sections, the participants underlined that they typically produced English activities and materials by leveraging various online media that contain reading resources, such as articles, short stories, magazines, newspapers, and so on. As mentioned by Chitra (2017), over 70% of students preferred reading magazines, and newspapers. Thus, when Papuan English teachers utilise these media in reading activities, their students will be triggered to be more motivated in reading.

When planning learning activities, the participants frequently looked for and selected reading materials that were suitable for the students' language competence levels. To put it another way, reading materials should include terminology that students are already familiar with. This finding was similar to Bain's (2004) study that emphasized that the relatedness and relevance between reading materials and students' background knowledge should be considered by teachers in designing and providing reading materials. In this case, the provided reading materials should be familiar to students' daily experiences or background knowledge (Locher et al., 2019; Schiefele et al., 2012). Thus, students will put more effort into reading the provided reading activities.

Moreover, the participants also shared that they have tried to encourage and motivate their students by showing their interest to read. In this sense, they demonstrated their passion for reading as role models. In other words, they displayed their enthusiasm for reading by not viewing it as a difficult or burdensome activity. This finding was underpinned by Guthrie and Davis (2003) who stated that one of the appropriate tactics to strengthen students' interest in reading was through the ways teachers view reading activities. It indicates that in the learning and teaching process, teachers should be able to provoke the importance of reading for their students to view reading as a pleasurable activity (Zhang et al., 2012). Consequently, they will be more driven to read academic materials.

Another strategy that was usually employed by Papuan English teachers was to provide freedom to their students to select reading materials based on their reading interests. From the findings, it could be seen that the participants highlighted that they always sought to give a variety of chances for their students by allowing them to select their reading texts. These findings were underpinned by Saeheng (2017), who claimed that giving students additional opportunities to choose their reading allows them to discover more information and gain knowledge depending on their interests. When teachers are able to provide more opportunities for their students to decide what they want to read, it will lead their students to become autonomous or self-directed learners (Romrome, 2024; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). In this sense, teachers can enhance students' motivation and reading engagement by supporting students' autonomy and decision-making (Guthrie et al., 2007; Nyoman et al., 2023). As defined by Lee et al. (2014) that "self-directed learning refers to one's ability to control themselves purposively and consciously in gaining knowledge, solving problems, and developing or strengthening a skill". Therefore, self-regulated learning enables students to be more aware of their own needs in the learning process and struggle to achieve them in their

lives effectively (Schuitema et al., 2016). It also indicates that self-regulated learning gives students the self-control to perform reading activities in maximizing their ability and skills (Zainuddin et al., 2019). Thus, students will be more motivated and successful in the reading process.

From open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews, the majority of the participants shared that they often provided positive feedback based on students' reading achievement. This finding was different from Marzona and Astria's (2019) study which found that some English teachers in Pasaman Barat, Indonesia tend to ignore providing positive feedback to their students. It made the students unmotivated during reading. Therefore, it was important for teachers to be able to give positive feedback based on students' reading achievement. Providing positive comments on students' reading achievement can accelerate progress rather than discouragement (Macklem & Gayle, 2018; Yusuf et al., 2020). According to Bain (2004), teachers can help students to become more aware of their skills and increase their ability to regulate their learning by giving positive comments on their reading achievement. When teachers provide positive feedback based on students' reading achievement, the students will know their problems and learn to analyze and criticize their own reading strategies (Dornyei, 2001; Hidayati, 2024; Romrome & Mbato, 2023; Yasin & Mustafa, 2020). It indicates that positive feedback on students' efforts will provide them with positive feelings and ideas that will encourage and motivate them to succeed in reading (Theobald, 2006). Consequently, they will know their weaknesses and their reading motivation will improve automatically and effectively.

In addition, the participants also tried to stimulate students' interest in reading by building a good relationship between them and their students. They confirmed that the teacher-student relationship and reading motivation are highly correlated with one another. This finding was supported by Roorda et al. (2017) who emphasized that students' motivation in reading can be influenced by their relationship with others, especially their teachers. It was similar to Sulistyono et al's. (2024) study which found that the teacher-student relationship is one of the crucial factors that impact the development of students' reading motivation. It indicated that teachers should be able to create a positive relationship with their students by showing authentic love and care. The more they show, the more motivated their students are (Rogers & Webb, 1991; Romrome & Mbato, 2022).

## **6. Conclusion**

This study explored the strategies used by Papuan English teachers to enhance junior high school students' reading motivation. The findings revealed five commonly employed strategies: designing engaging reading materials, modelling enthusiasm for reading, allowing students to choose their texts, providing constructive feedback based on reading progress, and fostering strong teacher-student relationships. Implementing these strategies in the teaching process can significantly enhance students' reading

motivation. Therefore, educators are encouraged to adopt these strategies to stimulate greater student interest in reading. By effectively integrating these approaches, teachers can foster a more motivated and engaged reading culture among students. However, this study has limitations. It involved only eight participants, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the researchers did not directly observe the classroom practices. Future studies could address these limitations by including a larger sample size and incorporating direct observations. Such approaches would likely yield more robust and generalizable data, contributing valuable insights to reading motivation strategies across various educational levels.

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