The Correlations among Parents' Socioeconomic Status, the Twelfth Grade Students' Language Learning Attitude and English Achievement

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Abstract: This paper was aimed at finding out whether or not (1) there was a correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and the twelfth grade students' English achievement, (2) there was a correlation between students' language learning attitude and English achievement (3) there was a correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and students' language learning attitude, and (4) there were contributions of parents' socioeconomic status and, students' language learning attitude simultaneously toward students' English achievement. The data were collected through questionnaires and school documentation. From the population of 579 twelfth grade students in Academic Year of 2019/2020, the writer chose 119 (20%) students as the sample by using proportional random sampling method. The result showed that there was a significant correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and English achievement (r=595); there was a correlation between students' language learning attitude and English achievement (r=622); there was a correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and students' language learning attitude (r=4.340) and there were contributions of parents' socioeconomic status, and students' attitude simultaneously toward students' English achievement simultaneously, with R square value was 0.929. It meant that the variability of English achievement could be explained at a percentage of 92.9% by parents' socioeconomic status and students' attitude.

Keywords: *parents' socioeconomic status, students' language learning attitude, and English achievement*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah (1) ada hubungan antara status sosial ekonomi orang tua dengan prestasi belajar bahasa Inggris siswa kelas dua belas, (2) ada hubungan antara sikap belajar bahasa siswa dengan prestasi belajar bahasa Inggris (3) ada hubungan antara status sosial ekonomi orang tua dengan sikap belajar bahasa siswa, dan (4) ada kontribusi status sosial ekonomi orang tua dan sikap belajar bahasa siswa terhadap prestasi bahasa Inggris siswa. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kuesioner dan dokumentasi sekolah. Dari populasi 579 siswa kelas XI tahun pelajaran 2019/2020, penulis memilih 119 (20%) siswa sebagai sampel dengan menggunakan metode proporsional random sampling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan yang signifikan antara status sosial ekonomi orang tua dengan prestasi belajar bahasa Inggris siswa kelas XII (r = 595); ada hubungan antara sikap belajar bahasa siswa dengan prestasi bahasa Inggris (r = 622); Ada hubungan antara status sosial ekonomi orang tua dengan sikap belajar bahasa (r = 4,340) dan ada kontribusi status sosial ekonomi orang tua dan sikap siswa terhadap prestasi belajar bahasa Inggris siswa secara simultan, dengan nilai R square 0,929. Artinya variabilitas prestasi bahasa Inggris dapat dijelaskan 92,9% oleh status sosial ekonomi orang tua dan sikap siswa

Kata-kata kunci: *status sosial ekonomi orang tua, sikap belajar bahasa siswa, dan prestasi Bahasa Inggris*

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Although English is an international language, it is still as the foreign language in Indonesia. Kirkpatrick (2010) notes that lack of use in the real communication may be one of the reasons why people in Indonesian prefer to use non-standard form in speaking English. Researchers have proven that learning English as a second or foreign language could be a long and challenging process for students or learners. In relation to second language learning, a child must gain mastery of the language through a formal education. Slamento (2003) states that a child must get his/her formal education in a school since a school functions as a place for learning activities that are planned, arranged and directed systematically. In addition, the quality of motivation, attitudes, anxiety, learning achievements, aptitudes, intelligence, age, personalities, etc. are considered as various important factors in language processes (Gardner, 1960, cited in Abidin, 2012). Fayeke (2010) states that attitude is acknowledged as one of the major significant factors that impact language learning. Starks & Paltridge (1996) also state that attitude plays the role in accepting and rejecting something. Language learning process cannot be achieved unless the students tend to own positive attitudes toward it. Likewise, Dadi (2009) examined that a student's attitude is one of the leading predictors of success in learning a target language besides intellectual capability.

In language learning, attitude itself is categorized into two groups, i.e. positive attitude and negative attitude. Both attitudes may influence students in the second language learning process (Ellis, 1994). To be successful in learning a language at least, a student must have a positive attitude (Dalvit & Klerk, 2004). It is a good starting point to learn a language (Crystal, 2003). Karahan (2007) asserts that positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English. In other words, a positive attitude will significantly correlate with success in second language learning. Nyamubi (2016) agrees that second language learners with positive attitudes towards the target language learn more effectively than people who do not have such positive attitudes, they can have a good starting point towards learning a language with hearts, bodies, and minds, memories, fantasies, loyalties and identities besides being communicators and problem-solvers while students with negative attitudes may lead them to have anxiety, low cognitive achievement, and low motivation. It can be said that a successful learner may be a learner who perceives a positive attitude and belief towards the target language (Hosseini & Pourmandnia, 2013).

A number of researchers' attention has emphasized the relationship between parents' socioeconomic status, indicated by the level of parental education, parental occupation, as well as parental income, and students' academic achievement (Heckman, 2008). Socioeconomic conditions in a family affect adequacy and the necessities of life and it is also considered that someone who has higher socioeconomic status in a society might be more respected. Parents with high SES will have a greater level of self-esteem and self-confidence since they have such criteria as; a position or employment, education, wealth, or politics (Soekanto, 2012). Therefore, students from wealthy families can have a great motivation and positive attitude because the needs can be fulfilled such as powerful computers, reliable internet connectivity, space, books and supplies, as well as extra-curricular educational support to make their children get concentration both in school and at home. Jeynes (2002) also adds that highly educated parents are likely to make more sacrifices in order to make to establish their children's educational success. Meanwhile, it is believed that low SES negatively affects academic achievement because low SES prevents access to vital resources and creates additional stress at home. They might have no place for learning alone and it is worsened by the number of family members who live in one house (Majoribanks, 1996). Low SES students have been found to get score about ten percent lower on the National Assessment of Educational Programs than higher SES students (Seyfried, 1998).

The researcher has been an English teacher for almost three years and teaching only for the twelfth-grade students at State Senior Vocational School 4 of Palembang. Students in the school often seemed uninterested in learning English. Their English achievement scores were among the lowest scores in the city, i.e. they ranked seventh among nine schools (see Table 1). Many of these students came from low-income family. Parents admitted that since they made very little income, they had inadequate ability in fulfilling their children's needs for learning. They had chosen the school because it was tuition-free. The parents also believed that it was the teachers' dominant responsibility to

give their children education. In addition, they believed in teachers' competence because the teachers' education levels were higher than theirs. was better than them. This situation was relevant to Ewumi's (2012) notion that higher-income parents think education is a collaboration work between both teachers and parents while low-income parents view education as fully their children teachers' responsibility and job. Halsey, Health and Ridge (1980) cited in Kapinga (2014) add that low SES parents tend to have lower aspirations, do not realize the importance of their interaction with schools as they are probably intimidated, just like they were in school (Gratz, 2006, 4).

The researcher also found that many of her students were not much interested in learning English. However, English is one of the compulsory subjects in Indonesian schools. As mentioned earlier, students' English scores were among the third lowest in the city. Table 1 shows the results of a National Computer-Based Exam in 2019.

**Table 1. National English Exam Achievement in Academic Year of 2018/2019**

No.	Name of State Vocational Schools	Subject English
1	SMK Negeri 2 Palembang	46.20
2	SMK Negeri 3 Palembang	45.15
3	SMK Negeri 1 Palembang	44.79
4	SMK Negeri 6 Palembang	44.72
5	SMK Negeri 8 Palembang	40.37
6	SMK Negeri Sumatera Selatan	39.37
7	**SMK Negeri 4 Palembang**	**37.93**
8	SMK Negeri 5 Palembang	37.68
9	SMK Negeri 7 Palembang	34.73

Source: Pusat Penilaian Pendidikan, 2019

Among nine state vocational schools, SMKN 4 Palembang was in the seventh position for English achievement with the average score of M=37.93 or moderately low. It was considered that English still seemed difficult for students of SMK Negeri 4 Palembang. As stated by Khan (2005:86) SES does not only influence and determine the attitudes, interest and motivation of students in learning. Instead, it is also an important factor in English achievement. Sirin (2005) states that information about students' SES should be collected from parents, as they are the authoritative source on their own socioeconomic status. With regards to the problems concerning students' low scores, their parents' SES and the students' attitude,

the researcher aims to find out whether or not: (1) there is a significant correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and students' English achievement, (2) there is a significant correlation between students' attitude and their English achievement, (3) there is a significant correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and students' language learning attitude; and (4) there are significant contributions of parents' socioeconomic status and, students' attitude simultaneously toward students' English achievement. Figure 1 illustrates the framework for the study.
Adapted from Statistika untuk Penelitian by
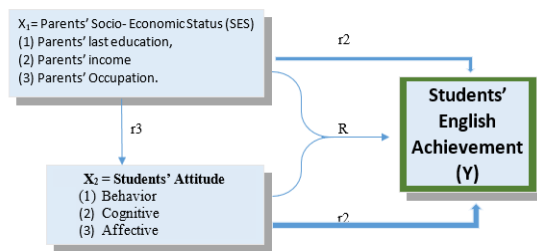
Sugiyono (2012)
Figure 1. A Paradigm of Multiple Correlation with two Independent Variables and One Dependent variable

METHOD

The writer used a correlational method to analyze the association between the independent variables and the dependent variable and it was conducted at State Vocational School 4 of Palembang (*SMK Negeri 4*) in academic year 2019/2020. From 579 students as the population, the writer just took 20%, 119 students as the sample by using stratified random sampling. In collecting data, the writer gathered the data by using primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from questionnaires, while the secondary data were obtained from document. There were two types of questionnaires, namely the SES questionnaire and students' language learning attitude. The documents used for data in the study were results of students' test scores. The following sections provides the descriptions of the questionnaires and documents.

Questionnaires
Students' Attitude Questionnaire

The first questionnaire was parents' SES questionnaires which consisted of 10 question items. It was prepared with reference to the existing theoretical foundation and the

development of research variables from Van Damme, Liu, Vanhee, & Pustjens's (2010) in Koban (2016). Items in the instruments were about as follows; 1. parents' educational level (items #1 and 2); parents' types of work (items # 3 and 4); parents' monthly income (items #5, 6 and 7); type of occupied home (items #8); transportation facilities or vehicles (items #9) and Availability of learning facilities (items #10). A high score reflects a high level of SES, whereas a low score indicates a low level of SES. The score for the choice is ranging from 1 to 4 (a=1, b=2, c=3, d=4). Then, the writer multiplied students' score with 2.5. The highest score was 100 while the lowest score would be 25.

Students' Attitude Questionnaire

The second was students' language learning attitude questionnaire. This ready-made questionnaire employed instrument of Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) designed by Gardner in 1985 and formerly employed in a study of Abidin, Mohammadi & Alzwari (2012) with Cronbach alpha 0.878 to show acceptable consistency of reliability. Because of the covid-9 pandemic situation, the writer asked seven students for every slot on average within twenty minutes to do it at the library, with four slots each day. There were twenty questions items which contained 15 positive items ((items #1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 20) and the rest, 5 items were negative ((items #5, 15, 16, 18,19) from three aspects; 7 items about **emotional aspect** (items # 3,4,5,10,11,14,19); 6 items about **behavioral aspect** (items # 1,6,7,12,13, 16,17) and 7 items about **cognitive aspect** (items # 2, 8, 9, 15, 18, 20). Responses to the questionnaire involved a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (Sugiyono, 2012). After distributing the questionnaires to the students, the results were calculated based on the students' responds. The maximum score was 100 while the minimum was 20. According to Kazemi et al. (2013), the formula was $\frac{option(s)\ in\ likert\ scale.k+k}{k}$, in which k was number of items. So, $\frac{5.20+20}{20} = \frac{120}{20} = 60$. If a person's attitude score was greater than 60 (>60), it meant that he/she had a positive attitude toward English learning, and less than 60 was indicative of negative attitude then.

Documentation of Students' English Achievement

In this study, the writer used the school documentation, i.e. the Subject Unit Examination or *Ujian Satuan Pelajaran (USP)* 2020. Normally, the students were tested through the National Computer-Based Examination or *Ujian Nasional Berbasis Komputer* (*UNBK 2020*). However, due the Covid-19 pandemic, the examination was not administered.

To investigate the construct validity of the questionnaire items, it was given to two experts in Teaching English as Foreign Language, i.e. a professor and a lecturer in a university. Their comments were taken into consideration to make the items of the questionnaires valid and reliable. Before using this questionnaire, a try out was held involving 29 students who weren't chosen as the sample of the research. Based on the try out result, it was determined that all items were valid. The calculation showed that all r-items were higher than r-table, 0.31 (item #1= 0.67, #2= 0.58, #3= 0.73, #4= 0.33, #5= 0.73, #6= 0.48, #7=0.76, #8= 0.48, #9= 0.42, #10= 0.48). In order to know whether the questionnaire is reliable or not, the writer calculated the data by SPSS program 22. Based on the analysis, the value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.716 which was higher than 0.69, so it meant that the instrument was reliable.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

The findings deal with Descriptive Data Analysis, Statistical Data Analyses and Result of Hypothesis Testing.

Descriptive Data Analysis

The data description of the results was from parents' socioeconomic status, students' language learning attitude and students' English achievement.

Parents' Socioeconomic Status Questionnaire

Based on the descriptive statistics of the frequency and percentage of parents' SES, the category started from low, moderate and upper. Since the total items were ten with four options, the writer calculated by multiplying the parents' total score with 2.5 points. Therefore, the highest score would be 100.

Table 3. Score Distribution of Parents' Socioeconomic Status Questionnaire

No.	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	61-75	Upper	20	16.81 %
2.	47-60	Moderate	71	59.66 %
3.	3-46	Low	21	23.53 %
		Total	119	100%

Table 3 indicated that parents with upper SES was only 16.81% of the respondents. The second category was moderate level SES which constituted 59.66% of the parents. The lower category constituted 17.65 % respondents. The mean score was 3.03 on a scale 1-4.

Table 4. Respondents' Last Educational Level Distribution

Parents	Last Educational Level				Mean
	Primary School	Elementary School	High school	College	
Father	20 (16.8%)	20 (16.80%)	68 (57.15%)	11 (9.20%)	2.59
Mother	23 (19.30%)	14 (11.80%)	69 (58.00%)	13 (10.90%)	2.60

The results shown in Table 4 indicated that most of the parents graduated from senior high school or equivalent. A percentage of 57.15% of the fathers and 58.00% of the mothers dominated this level. A percentage of 10.90% of the mothers and 9,20% of the fathers completed higher education or college. Thus, the educational level of the mothers mean score was 2.60, which was slightly higher than those of the fathers', M=2.59.

Table 5. Respondents' Occupational Type Distribution

Parents	Occupations				Mean
	Not Working	Laborer / Peasant	Entrepreneur / Trader	Civil servant/ State (Military) officials	
Father	6 (5%)	63 (52.90%)	40 (33.60%)	10 (8.40%)	2.59
Mother	91 (76.5%)	11 (9.20%)	9 (7.60%)	8 (6.70%)	2.60

Based on Respondents' Occupational Type Distribution, only 5% fathers were unemployed. A percentage of 76.5% of the mothers were housewives. The mothers' who worked were employed as laborers/peasants (9.20%), entrepreneurs/traders (7.60%), and civil servants/military officials (6.7%). Most of the fathers were laborers or peasants (52.90%). The rest were entrepreneurs or traders (33.60%) and civil servants/military officials (8.40%). With Mean score was 2.59 (fathers) and M=2.60 (mothers).

Table 6. Respondents' Monthly Income Level Distribution

Parents	Monthly Income Level				Mean
	Less than IDR 1,800,000.00	IDR 3,000,000 up to IDR 4,800,000.00	IDR 4,800,000. 00 up to IDR 7,200,000.00	Greater than IDR 7,200,000.00	
Father	91 (76.5%)	11(9.2%)	9 (7.60%)	8 (6.70%)	1.44
Mother	56 (47.1%)	37(31.10%)	24(20.2%)	2(1.7%)	1.76

Regarding Monthly Income Level, almost 50% of mothers and fathers 76.5% got income below IDR 1, 800,000.00. The mean score was 1.44 for father and mothers M= 1.76, with scale 1-4.

Table 7. Family Monthly Income Distribution

Monthly Income Level				Mean
Less than IDR 3,000,000.00	IDR 3,000,000 up to IDR 4,800,000.00	IDR 4,800,000. up to IDR 7,200,000.00	Greater than IDR 7,200,000.00	
107 (89.90%)	8 (6.70%)	2 (1.70%)	2 (1.70%)	1.15

With respect to monthly family income, most of the parents (89.90%) received monthly income of less than IDR 3,000,000.00 and the rest (6.70%) received IDR 3,000,000 up to IDR 4,800,000.00

The same percentage of 1.70% of the parents received IDR 4,800,000,00 up to IDR 7,200,000.00 or higher than IDR 7,200,000,00. The mean score for this section was 1.15.

Table 8. Respondents' Transportation Facilities Distribution

Type of vehicle				Mean
None	Bicycle	Motorcycle	Bicycle, Motorcycle and Car	
3 (2.50%)	1 (0.80%)	105 (88.20%)	10 (8.40%)	3.03

It is identified from Table 8 that 88.20% of the respondents had only a motorcycle as their transportation facility. 2.50% of the parents have no vehicle and 0.80% owned a bicycle. The other 8.40% of the parents owned more than one type of vehicle (bicycle, motorcycle, and car). The mean score was 3.03 (scale 1-4).

Table 9. Type of Home Occupied

Respondents' type of house occupied				Mean
Extended Family	Rented House	Private House	State/Company-Owned House	
22 (18.5%)	22 (8.5%)	74 (62.2%)	1(0.8%)	3.00

Table 10. Respondents' Availability of Learning Facilities

Respondents' Learning Facilities				Mean
Books and stationaries	Books, stationaries and study desks	Books, stationaries and study desks	Books, stationery, study desks, computers/laptops,	
18(15.1%)	17(14.3%)	63(52.9%)	21(17.6%)	2.73

This section, in Table 9 above presents that 62.2% of the students' families occupied their own house. 22% lived with their extended family. 8.5% of the respondents lived in a rented house. 0.80% lived in a state-owned/company-owned house provided by the parents' employer. The mean score of this category was 3.00.

The survey of availability of learning facilities revealed that most students were provided learning facilities by their parents, where there were 52.9% students owned books, stationery, study desks and computers/laptops. The mean score was 2.73 (scale 1-4).

Students' Language Learning Attitude

The result of descriptive analysis (see Table 11) revealed that the overall mean score of English Language Attitude of the respondents was 3.07 (scale 1-5). The highest mean score, M=3.39 was from behavioral aspect, the second was from cognitive aspect M=3.07 and the lowest, M=2.75, was from students' emotional aspect of attitude.

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Attitudes towards English Language

No.	N	Aspect of Attitude	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
1.	119	Emotional aspect	1.00	5.00	2.75
2	119	Behavioral aspect	1.71	5.00	3.39
3	119	Cognitive aspect	1.00	5.00	3.07
4.	119	General Attitude towards English language	1.23	5.00	3.07

Based on Table 12, students' attitude was categorized into two levels. The data showed that 81.1% of the students had a positive attitude and only 18.49% had a negative attitude.

Table 12. Distribution of Attitude Category

No.	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	equal to or greater than 60 (≥60)	positive	97	81.51%
2.	smaller than 60 (<60)	negative	22	18.49%
		Total	**119**	**100.00%**

Students' English Achievement

As the dependent variable in this study, there were five categories of students' English achievement: excellent, good, average, poor and failed.

Table 13. Score Distribution of Students' English Achievement

Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
86 -100	Excellent	0	0%
71-65	Good	2	5.61%
56-70	Average	55	46.22%
41-55	Poor	53	44.54%
25-40	Failed	9	7.56%
	Total	119	100.00%

5.61% of students achieved good category with the score range of 71- 85. 46.22% of the students' achievement was in the average category, while 44.54% fell in the poor category. A percentage of 7.56% of the students failed the test.

Result of Hypothesis Testing

The findings in this study indicated that that the correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and English achievement was 0,595 (59.5%) or in moderately positive level. While students' attitude and English achievement was 0.622 (62.2%) or moderately positive, parents' socioeconomic status and students' attitude was 0,434 (43.4%) slightly positive, and the influence of parents' socioeconomic status (p-value =0.000) and students' attitude p-value (0.001) on English achievement were distinctly significant because both the p-values were lower than alpha level of 0.05. There were only 28 or 23.53.65 % students' parents were in lower socioeconomic status. It could be interpreted that on the average the students of SMKN 4 Palembang came from moderate socioeconomic background. Furthermore, 35.40% of students' English achievement was explained by parents' SES. It showed that parents' education had a strong positive correlation with students' English achievement. This present study verifies the results of Heckman, 2008:290 and Rothman's (2003:9) which also found a positive impact of socio-economic status on student's academic achievement.

The writer admitted that this study had several limitations. The first one was the time limitation. SES questionnaires were given to the students. There is a possibility that the research participants did not know the exact salaries of their parents as well as any other income that their families received. Thus, it might cause them to provide inaccurate information about their parents' SES. In addition, the fact that the income levels may vary from region to region and culture to culture contributes to the difficulty in measuring SES. Another possible reason is that the participants may be reluctant in revealing the exact amount of their income (Koban, 2016:101).

CONCLUSION

Students at State Vocational School 4 of Palembang mostly came from middle to low socioeconomic family backgrounds. Most of the parents' highest education level was high school and worked as laborers or peasants. It made most of them only earned their family monthly income less than IDR 3,000,000.00. The findings indicated that there was a significant correlation between parents' SES and students'. There was also a correlation between parents' SES and students' English. It meant that the higher parents' SES, the better students' attitude and English achievement were. There was also a significant correlation between the student's attitude and their English. Students' attitude was a strong predictor for their English achievement. It means that the attitude plays an important role in learning English. Students with higher attitude got better score in English learning achievement.

EFL teachers are recommended to pay more attention to students' needs and conditions. They have to create an encouraging atmosphere in English classes. They should also motivate students to learn English by implementing the appropriate methods as well as make students feel secure and joyful in learning activities. Furthermore, they should integrate up-to-date materials and supplementary resources in addition to the English text books. This can help them capture students' attention to learn English successfully. They are also recommended to teach the English curriculum as it is supposed to be taught, focusing on the communicative approach. The EFL teachers must be aware that communicative approach encourages EFL learners to collaborate and discuss their experiences and other issues regarding language learning. This approach can influence students to have better attitude, enthusiasm and motivation in acquiring the language.

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