



Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Primary Graders' Ability In English Skills

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh faktor sosiokultural terhadap kemampuan pembelajar bahasa, khususnya dalam konteks pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Indonesia. Berbagai latar belakang sosial masyarakat Indonesia menimbulkan kesulitan dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris karena perbedaan standar komunikasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan faktor sosial dan budaya yang mempengaruhi keterampilan berbahasa Inggris siswa kelas dasar dengan memberikan wawasan tentang konteks pendidikan di SD Smart School Jakarta. Penelitian ini menggunakan teknik deskriptif kualitatif dalam desain penelitian studi kasus. Penelitian ini melibatkan dua guru Bahasa Inggris dan siswa kelas 5 yang terdiri dari 56 siswa. Melalui analisis data dan percakapan, penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya motivasi dalam mengatasi hambatan dalam berbicara dan menulis. Lingkungan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris yang inklusif dengan menerapkan berbagai metodologi sangat menguntungkan bagi siswa. Selain itu, partisipasi aktif orang tua diidentifikasi sebagai elemen penting dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbahasa Inggris siswa sekolah dasar. Hasil penelitian menekankan pentingnya motivasi, lingkungan belajar yang mendukung, dan bantuan orang tua dalam memperoleh kemahiran berbahasa Inggris.

ABSTRACT

This research investigated sociocultural factors' influence on language learners' abilities, specifically in the context of English education in Indonesia. The various social backgrounds of Indonesians posed difficulties in English instruction due to differences in communication standards. The research aimed to determine social and cultural factors that impacted the English language skills of primary-grade students by providing insights into the educational context at SD Smart School Jakarta. It employed a descriptive qualitative technique within a case study research design. The research comprised two English teachers and grades 5 consisting of 56 students. Through data analysis and engaging in conversations, the study highlighted the crucial significance of motivation in overcoming obstacles in both speaking and writing. An inclusive English learning environment incorporating various methodologies was advantageous for students. Moreover, the active participation of parents was identified as a crucial element in improving the English language skills of elementary school students. The results emphasized the importance of motivation, a favorable learning environment, and parental assistance in acquiring English language proficiency.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social and cultural factors significantly impact how people learn English in a place (Kakita & Palukuri, 2020). Experts said that learning is affected by various social, historical, economic, political, and cultural factors inherent to its surroundings. This is in line with the sociocultural theory. Culture influences individuals' conduct, including values, beliefs, and behavioral customs. At the same time, society denotes a collective of individuals residing in a particular region sharing the same culture (Poedjiastutie et al., 2021).

Several studies highlight the profound impact of sociocultural factors on learning English and academic performance. Previous studies (Kakita & Palukuri, 2020), (Poedjiastutie et al., 2021) discuss how learning is influenced by a community's social, historical, economic, political, and cultural context. In Murang'a South Sub County, challenges such as societal undervaluation of education, initiation rites, and early teenage issues hinder students' academic performance, with the Mungiki sect's activities exacerbating these problems (Njuguna, 2021). Research in English language teaching, particularly in non-native contexts (Ozfidan et al., 2014; Azzizah, 2015; Kakita & Palukuri, 2020), stresses the importance of cultural sensitivity

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and supportive learning environments for improving speaking skills. In students' PISA results demonstrated the critical role of parental education and involvement in children's reading skills across different sociocultural settings. These studies underscore the need for educational strategies that consider sociocultural factors to enhance learning outcomes (Vázquez-Cano et al., 2020).

Above all, the researcher is interested in exploring sociocultural factors that support primary graduates with sufficient English skills entitled "Sociocultural Factors Influencing Primary Graders' Ability in English Skills."

2. METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to gather and analyze non-numerical data, aiming to understand a particular phenomenon comprehensively (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Descriptive qualitative research focuses on capturing the complex and nuanced nature of data by examining the perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of individuals or groups. Typical methods in this approach include conducting interviews, making observations, and analyzing documents or audiovisual materials. The data collected is then subjected to a thorough analysis process that includes coding, categorization, and thematic analysis to reveal patterns, themes, and relationships within the information (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This methodology is well-suited for exploratory investigations, case analyses, and ethnographic research, providing a detailed and intricate portrayal of the study subject (Merriam, 2009).

A case study research design is chosen as the methodological framework for this research. The case study approach is a qualitative research design that involves an in-depth exploration and analysis of a specific issue or phenomenon within its real-life context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The primary objective is to comprehensively understand the intricacies and dynamics of the case study research. This approach allows the researcher to employ diverse data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. The data collected through these methods is meticulously analyzed through coding, categorization, and thematic analysis (Yin, 2017), to uncover patterns, themes, and relationships within the dataset. The case study design is particularly advantageous for gaining a profound understanding of a unique or complex case, exploring phenomena in their natural settings, and examining the interplay of various factors within a specific context (Merriam, 2009).

For data collection, the study utilized two primary techniques: questionnaires and interviews. As a qualitative research tool, the questionnaire is designed to gather information from participants through open-ended questions that encourage detailed and descriptive responses in the participants' own words. These questions are carefully crafted to elicit participants' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of the research topic (Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, this study employed close-ended questions to gather structured, quantifiable data, providing a systematic approach to collecting responses that are easy to quantify and interpret (Bryman, 2016). Questionnaires were conducted on 56 students fifth graders at SD Smart School Jakarta.

In addition to questionnaires, interviews were conducted with the two English teachers at SD Smart School Jakarta. An interview is a formal or semi-formal dialogue between the researcher and the participant to obtain insights into the research query. The interactive nature of interviews allows for in-depth exploration of participants' views, making them a valuable method in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, individual interviews with English teachers were explicitly chosen to explore the impact of social and cultural factors on primary students' English language skills and to understand the teaching methods employed in this context.

The data analysis for this research was conducted using narrative analysis, a method commonly employed in qualitative research to analyze the stories and experiences shared by participants. Narrative analysis involves examining narratives to identify themes within the text, focusing on the content as the primary aspect of analysis (Butina, 2015). The process begins with selecting, concentrating, and transforming raw data, followed by descriptive interpretation of the survey and interview findings. The results are then presented in a narrative format, integrating findings from both the surveys and interviews. This comprehensive analysis of narratives not only uncovers the depth within participants' stories but also enhances understanding of the complexities and nuances inherent in their experiences, thereby advancing the overall objectives of the study.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The investigation into various factors affecting students' English abilities reveals that several elements play a crucial role in their language development. By analyzing the data from student questionnaires and teacher interviews, we can rank these factors based on their impact on students' English

proficiency are: 1) motivation, 2) speaking performance condition, 3) culture at classroom, and 4) parents learning environment.

Motivation is the most significant factor influencing students' English ability. The high levels of motivation observed in the student questionnaire (76.79% showing high motivation) and the teachers' emphasis on creating engaging and enjoyable learning experiences underscore the importance of motivation in language acquisition. T1 and T2 highlight that motivated students are more likely to engage with English and improve their proficiency through fun activities and personal support. Effective motivation strategies are central to successful English learning and overall student performance.

Speaking performance conditions significantly influence students' English ability. The questionnaire shows that 83.93% of students view speaking English as important, which aligns with T2's emphasis on regular English use for developing proficiency. T1 supports a balanced approach but acknowledges the importance of speaking conditions in creating opportunities for language practice. A structured yet immersive approach to speaking, as discussed, enhances students' ability to use English effectively both in and out of the classroom.

Classroom culture is also a key factor in students' English abilities. The questionnaire reveals that most students (83.93%) find English class enjoyable, indicating that a positive classroom environment supports their learning. T1's approach to making English fun and T2's focus on interactive and supportive classroom practices contribute to a culture that promotes regular use of English. A positive and engaging classroom culture helps maintain student interest and supports language learning.

The parents' learning environment influences students' English abilities but is less direct than motivation, speaking conditions, and classroom culture. The questionnaire shows that 71.43% of students receive help from their parents. At the same time, T1 and T2 emphasize that parental involvement, such as providing resources and support, is beneficial. Although parental support is crucial, its impact is often mediated through other factors like motivation and the effectiveness of classroom learning.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, motivation is the most influential factor in students' English ability. Most students (76.79%) are highly motivated to learn English, and 87.27% see it as important for their future. Teachers agree that fun activities and personal support are essential for motivating students. Speaking performance conditions come next, with 83.93% of students believing that speaking English is essential for learning. Teachers stress that regular practice and English use in the classroom are crucial for improving language skills. Classroom culture is the third most important factor, as 83.93% of students find English class enjoyable, which helps their learning experience. Teachers create this positive environment through engaging activities and interactive lessons. Lastly, parents' learning environment has the most negligible direct impact. However, it is still significant, with 71.43% of students receiving help from their parents. While parental support is beneficial, it is less influential than motivation and classroom conditions. These findings highlight the importance of motivation as the strongest factor affecting English ability, followed by speaking conditions, classroom culture, and parental involvement.

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