

KUTUBKHANAH

Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan
P-ISSN1693-8186 E-ISSN 2407-1633

CAUSES OF POOR ENGLISH ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A SURVEY OF EFL STUDENTS AT AN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL IN KAMPAR

Nurul Defitri¹, Bukhori²

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau

²Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau

E-mail: bukhamori@uin-suska.ac.id

Abstract

This research investigated the causes of poor English students' academic performance at one of Islamic boarding school in Kampar. The survey was used as design of the research. 46 students were selected purposively as the sample out of 184 students of second year of senior high school of an Islamic boarding school in Kampar. Questionnaire was used to collect the data and descriptive statistic was used to analyze the data. This research found that there were three factors that caused of poor English students' academic performance namely: mother tongue, unavailable qualified English teacher, and lack of facilities in learning English. Out of three factors, dominance of mother tongue and lack of facilities in learning English could be determined as the dominant factors.

Key words: Causes, Poor English Academic Performance, Boarding School

Introduction

Academic performance of students is a key feature in education (Rono, 2013) which becomes center around which the whole education system revolves (Narad & Abdullah, 2016). It can be measured from student performance through established student grade. In this regard Martinez (2007) states academic performance is the product given by the students and it is usually expressed through student grades. Student grade becomes the main indicator that shows the success of academic performance achieved by students at school. Students' academic performance can be achieved by tested what has been taught which focuses more on intellectual capacity (Ghanney & Aniagyei, 2014). Therefore, academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any educational institution (Narad & Abdullah, 2016).

As the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals (Narad & Abdullah, 2016), student academic performance is influenced by various factors, such as learning abilities affected by a new learning paradigm, which assumes that all students can and must learn at a higher level (Hansen, 2006). Some other factors become obstacles such as race and gender, which affect students' performance (Ghazvini & Khajehpour, 2011).

Different studies have been conducted which investigated students' causes of success and failure in academic performance. The success of an English student's academic

performance depends on the student's learning style and the teacher's teaching style (learning strategies). Many positive things can be achieved optimally such as a pleasant learning atmosphere, increased learning motivation and interest of students, and also increasing learning outcomes. Otherwise, according Davis (1989, p. 45) if teachers' teaching styles and students' learning styles are not inline, disappointment and frustration on both sides will be occurred. It can be a cause of poor academic performance. Besides, learning environment is also as an influential factor of poor English student's academic performance. Bauchaid, Ahmadou & Abdelkader (2018) suggested the determinant factors of successful and unsuccessful students such as personal ability, sheer luck, personal effort, task difficulty, strategy, interest/ motivation, teacher's influence, class atmosphere, peer influence, and time distribution. Moreover, Gaerlan (2016) reported that successful learning L2 was influenced by motivation/ interest, English teachers, parents and other family members.

In the same vein, students still have poor performance in learning English since students felt alienated and negative towards the target language and culture. And there are a lot of factors that affect students' learning process. Musa, Lie, and Azman (2012) found causes of limited English students' academic performance including English is regarded as a difficult subject to learn, learners learning depends on the English teachers as authorities, there is lack of support to use English in the home environment and the community, learners have insufficient or lacking of exposure to the language as there is a limited opportunity to use English outside the classrooms, students have a limitation of vocabulary proficiency as well as English reading materials are not always available, learners have an unwillingness and lack of motivation to learn English as they do not see the immediate need to use the language, lack of motivation for learning or the negative attitude towards the target language.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the causes of poor English students' academic performance are crucial to be researched. However, limited studies on this issue are found. In this regard, most of the previous research was carried out abroad, only a few were found domestically such as factors causes students low English language learning: a case study in the national university of Laos (Rany, Abidin, & Mei, 2013), the effects of poor performance in English language on the academic performance of Nigerian university students (Gbayange, 2014), ESL/EFL learners' poor performance in English: the factors (Anwar, 2017), an analysis on factors influencing students' low English learning achievement in SMKN 2 Pontianak (Chairunnisa, Apriliaswati, & Rosnija, 2017). There are only a few research that investigating the causes of poor English students' academic performance in Indonesia context. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by finding the causes of poor English students' academic performance of Islamic boarding school in Indonesia.

In line with the above explanation, practical problem were also found in one of Islamic boarding school located in Kampar, Indonesia. This school uses the Ministry of Religion and Islamic Boarding School Curriculum in its teaching and learning process where English is one of the subjects taught by the English teacher and every morning students are also given new English vocabulary to learn and memorize. Based on the school's vision and mission, which is

to increase knowledge of Arabic and English, this school has rules for speaking Arabic or English on a predetermined day. However, the students were only enthusiastic about Arabic. They did not pay attention to English at all. In this case, English is considered a difficult language to learn and uninteresting subject. In addition, from the results of interview with one of the English teachers, the researchers found that the school has foreign language rules (Arabic and English) on the appointed day and the students are also taught by qualified English teacher. Thus, school expected that the students were successful in English. However, in reality the students' academic performance in English is very poor. Therefore it is necessary to explain the causes of poor English academic performance.

Method

The design of this research was survey. Questionnaire was chosen as the instrument of this research adopted from Sa'ad and Usman (2014). Population of this research was 184 students of the ninth grade in one of Islamic Boarding School in Kampar. They were in academic year 2021/2022 consisting of seven classes. The researcher took 66 students from IX B as the sample. This sample was taken by purposive sampling technique. The data of this research were analyzed by using a Guttman Scale in the form of a series of opinion statements (yes/no). If they agree with certain statements, then it is assumed also to agree with the previous statement and disagree with the statement afterwards, and for the respondent's answers can be made the highest score is one (1) and the lowest is zero (0).

Result and Discussion

Based on the result of analysis it was found that there were three factors causing poor English students' academic performance in English subject at an Islamic Boarding School Kampar, Indonesia. The factors comprised mother tongue, qualified English teacher and facilities in learning English. Meanwhile qualified English teacher was categorized as less influential factor. This finding is presented in detail in the following section:

a. Mother Tongue

From the analysis of students' responds toward two items of questionnaire, it can be concluded that students' mother tongue was the cause of their problems in learning English.

Table 1. Students' Respond toward Mother Tongue

No Item	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Do you prefer to speak English language than your mother tongue at school?	7 (15,2%)	39 (84,8%)
2	Does mother tongue cause problem to you in learning English language?	32 (69,6%)	14 (30,4%)

The table shows that students have a negative view of mother tongue as the cause of their poor English, it can be seen from the first item there are 39 students representing 84.8% who answered *No* when asked "*do you prefer to speak English language than your*

mother tongue?." Meanwhile only 7 students representing 15.2% said *Yes* to the first item. In other words, students are not interested in using English at school. They prefer to speak their mother tongue at school. So it can be as one of the factors causing the poor academic performance in English subject at this Islamic boarding school.

For the second item, it can be seen that there were 32 students representing 69.6% who answered *Yes* when asked "*does mother tongue cause problems to you in learning English?*". Meanwhile only 14 students representing 30.4% said *No* in the second item. Students clearly answered that their mother tongue was the cause of their problems in learning English. In other words mother tongue make difficult for students to use English at an Islamic Boarding School in Kampar. From the data, it can be concluded that mother tongue is very influential on the low level of student academic performance in English subject.

b. Qualified English Teacher

From the analysis of students' responds toward two items of questionnaire, it can be concluded that available qualified English teacher were not the cause of their problems in learning English.

Table 2. Students' Respond toward Qualified English Teacher

No. Item	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)
4	Are there available qualified English language teachers in your school?	34 (73,9%)	12 (26,1%)
5	Are proper teaching methods used in teaching English language in your school?	23 (50,0%)	23 (50,0%)

Students have a positive view of available qualified English teachers. It does not became a cause of their poor English. The table shows that there are 34 students representing 73,9 % who answered *Yes* when asked "*Are there available qualified English language teachers in your school?*." Meanwhile only 12 students representing 15.2% said *No* . The available qualified English teacher was not be the cause of students' poor English academic performance in the school.

For the fifth item, students were balanced in answering *Yes* and *No* in terms of the use proper teaching methods in the school. In other words students are taught by appropriate teaching method, so that, it can be said the English can be categorized into qualified teachers in this school. Therefore, this is not a factor causing the poor academic performance of English subject. It can be seen from students' response to the fifth item. The table shows that there were 23 students representing 50.0% who answered *Yes* when asked "*Are proper teaching methods used in teaching English language in your school?*" and 23 students representing 50% said *No*.. It means that some students realized that the teacher used the right method in teaching English in schools, but some other students realized that the teacher did not use proper teaching methods in teaching English language.

From the data, it can be concluded that available English teacher cannot be said to be the cause of the poor English students' academic performance at this Islamic boarding school, but it is undeniable that there are some students who say that there is no proper teaching methods used in teaching English in their school.

c. Facilitate in Learning English

From the analysis of students' responds toward two items of questionnaire in terms of facilities of language, it can be concluded that the facilities that were not available for students in learning English. It was the causes of their problems in learning English.

Table 3. Students' Respond toward Facilitate in English Language

No. Item	Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)
3	Are there available instructional media/materials and facilities for teaching English language in your school?	21 (45,7%)	25 (54,3%)
6	Is there language laboratory for teaching English language in your school?	0 (0%)	46 (100%)

The table shows that students have a negative view of facilities for learning English in the school as the cause of their poor English. It can be seen from the third item in which there are 25 students representing 54,3% who answered *No* when they were asked "*Are there available instructional media/materials and facilities for teaching English language in your school?*" Meanwhile, only 21 students representing 45.7% said *Yes* to the availability of existing facilities at the school. In other words, the lack of availability of media/materials and facilities at the school causes the students' English academic performance to be low in the school.

For the sixth item, students clearly answered that there was no language laboratory for teaching English language in the school. It was the cause of their problems in learning English, it can be seen from students response to the sixth item in which there were 0 students representing 0% who answered *Yes* when asked "*Is there language laboratory for teaching English language in your school?*". Meanwhile all or 46 students representing 100% said *No* not available laboratory language at the school. It makes students not enthusiastic to learn English and difficult use English in this school. From the data, it can be concluded that facilities for learning English was very influential in determining poor level of academic performance of English subject. The lack of facilities in this schools caused delaying in the continuity of the English learning process in schools and also made students' enthusiasm in learning English is poor.

Based on the above result above, it can be pointed that there are two main factors that causes of poor English students' academic performance of English students in this Islamic Boarding School. The factors are mother tongue and lack of facilities in learning English. These two factors became the dominant factors that caused the low English of the students.

Both of these factors have the same high percentage in the causes of the poor English students' academic performance. It can be seen in the table below.

Table 4. Students' Poor English Academic Performance

No	Students' Poor English Academic Performance	F	Percentage
1	Mother tongue	71	$\frac{71}{92} \times 100$ = 77,17%
2	Qualified English teacher	35	$\frac{35}{92} \times 100$ = 38,04%
3	Facilitate in learning English	71	$\frac{71}{92} \times 100$ = 77,17%

There are two dominant factors that cause poor English students' academic performance. The first factor is the mother tongue. It is based on 77.17% student responses to the two items of questionnaire on the mother tongue. They said that the mother tongue was the main cause of their poor in English. In other words, there were 71 students' responds who said that their mother tongue made them difficult to learn English. The second factor is unavailable facilities in learning English. It can be seen in the table 4 in which there were 77.17% students' responds to the two items for the facilities in learning. In other words, they realized that the facilities for learning English at the school were insufficient or incomplete. In other words, 71 students' responds realized that this school was lack of media/materials and facilities for learning English and they also said that there was no language laboratory to learn English.

Meanwhile, qualified English teachers are not as the dominant factor causing the poor students' academic performance of English in this school. It can be seen from students' responds toward two items. Only 35 of the 92 students' responds of questionnaire (38,04%) realized that there was an unavailability of a qualified English teacher at the school and appropriate teaching method used by the teachers. In other words, qualified English teacher as low category as the cause of the poor academic performance of English subject.

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the dominant factors for the low level of English at Anshor Al Sunnah Boarding School are the dominance of mother tongue and lack of facilities in learning English. The high influence of the mother tongue will make the students less willing to use English in their daily life in school and it causes the students' English mastery process to be increasingly unprocessed. Lack of facilities at school caused students not enthusiastic to learn English. Lack of facilities also came out as an important factor causing improper English language instruction. Poorly equipped learning environments result in improper teaching and poor student achievement in language classrooms. If there is no English language labor, students will find it difficult to focus on learning English. Therefore, complete facilitate for learning English is very crucial.

Generally, the finding of this study supports the previous research finding conducted by

Anwar (2017). They found that so many factors for the ESL/EFL learners' poor performance in English like learners' psychological factors, teachers' factors, the factors related to teaching procedures, teaching and learning environment, syllabus and curriculum. However, this finding contrasts to the previous research conducted by Letompa (2014). He found that high levels of absenteeism, late arrival for lessons, poor classroom management, lack of motivation and lack of commitment and perseverance were pervasive and common factors among both learners and educators and affect the teaching and learning of English in primary schools.

This finding also supports the previous research finding conducted by Sa'ad and Usman (2014). They found that the causes of poor performance in English language among senior secondary school students in Dutse metropolis of Jigawa state include dominance of mother tongue, inadequate teachers of English language, inadequate facilities and instructional media/materials. However, this finding also contrasts to the previous research finding conducted by Anwar (2017). They found that three research questions to find out the factors that were responsible for the ESL/EFL learners' poor performance in English. The affective factors are learners' psychological factors, teachers' factors, factors related to teaching procedures, teaching and learning environment, syllabus and curriculum.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that there are three factors caused students poor academic performance in English subject as proposed by theory. They include mother tongue, qualified English teacher, and facilities in learning English. From three causes, mother tongue and facilities in learning English are the most dominant factors causing poor English students' academic performance at an Islamic Boarding School in Kampar Indonesia. Meanwhile qualified English teacher was not included in the dominant factor in influencing students' academic performance in the school.

References

- Anwar, M. (2017). ESL/EFL Learners' Poor Performance in English: The Factors. *Journal of Asian and African Social Science and Humanities*.
- Bouchaib, B., Ahmadou, B., & Abdelkader, S., (2018). High School Students' Attributions of Success in English Language Learning. *International Journal of Instruction April 2018*. Vol.11, No.2. pp. 89-102
- Chairunnisa, Apriliawati, R., & Rosnija, E. (2017). An Analysis On Factors Influencing Students' Low English Learning Achievement. *Jurnal pendidikan dan Pembelajaran khatulistiwa*.
- Ghanney, R. A., & Aniagyei, D. F. (2014). An investigation into the poor academic performance of students. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*.
- Gaerlan, M. J. (2016). Learning in a L2: An analysis of less successful Filipino ESL learners' experiences through Consensual Qualitative Research. Paper presented at the DLSU Research Congress De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines, March 7-9, 2016.

- Ghazvini, S. D., & Khajehpour, M. (2011). Gender differences in factors affecting academic performance of high school students. *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences*.
- Martinez-Otero, V. (2007). *Los adolescentes ante el estudio. Causas y consecuencias del rendimiento académico*. Madrid: Fundamentos.
- Musa, N. C., Lie, K. Y., & Azman, H. (2012). Exploring English Language Learning and Teaching in Malaysia. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*.
- Narad, A., & Abdullah, B. (2016). Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students: Influence of Parental Encouragement and School Environment. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*.
- Nghambi, G. H. (2014). Factors contributing to poor academic performance in certificate of secondary education examination for community secondary schools in Urambo District, Tabora, Tanzania. Tanzania: University of Tanzani.
- Rany, S., Abidin, M. Z., & Mei, L. L. (2013). Factors Causes Students Low English Language Learning: A Case Study in National University of Laos. *International Journal of English Language Education*.
- Rono, R. (2013). Factors Affecting Pupils' Performance in Public Primary Schools at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Examination (Kcpe) in Emgwen Division, Nandi Certificate of Primary Education Examination (Kcpe) in Emgwen Division, Nandi.
- Sa'ad, T. U., & Usman, R. (2014). The Causes of Poor Performance In English Language among Senior Secondary School Students IN Dutse Metropolis of Jigawa State, Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*.