

The Significant of Parents' Income toward Students' Ability in Learning English

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Abstract. This research was done to know the study of parents' income toward students' ability in learning English. The purpose of this research is to find out the influence of parents' income toward students' ability in learning English. Family's income is one of the students' backgrounds that effect the students' success in learning English at college. The test and questionares were used as an intrument to collect the data and information. The population of this study was the students at pre-internasional at accounting programe of Economic faculty of Malikussaleh university was taken as the sample for this study. The data collected was analyzed by using the statiscal procedures. The anova analysis was used to test the hyothesis that the students who are coming from better ecomic family income will have higher capabilty in the English than those who come from lower economic family income. This finding revealed that the students from lower family income have the equal abilty in learning English with the students from middle or higher family income one.

Keywords: Family income · Abilty · Learning english

1 Background of the Study

Teaching method and students' backgrounds are the factors that effect the students' success or failure. Students at any universities in Indonesia are coming from diffrent backgrounds. They are different in many ways; their family's status, their culture and the language they used at home. Meanwhile, the status of a family is usually associated with family's income, parent's educational level, parent's occupation and social status. Family's income is one of the students' backgrounds that effect the students' success in learning English. Students differ by the time they spend to study and to work depending on the family's financial status and attention of parents toward education. Parents face major challenges to provide optimal care and education for their children. The children are more likely to succeed academically if their parents support their learning actively. However, the challenges are felt among poor families that they have to struggle in providing the basic needs to rise up their family members.

The students with lower family income often lack of the financial, social and education support than the student with higher family income. Those who come from low-income family have to help their parents working part time to earn money to

support their life. Contrary, the students who come from better economic status do not necessary to do it. Their parents can provide them with learning needs at home such as good English readers, textbooks, exercise book, and other material related to the subject at school. They can also send their children to the English courses and or give a private tutor at home to reinforce their children work done for the school. Valdez (2001) stated in his essay that: at home, parents' engagement in their children's learning to strengthen children capabilities for intellectual growth and allows them to make sense out of everyday activities, thereby deepening their understanding of mathematics, science, and technology.

It is generally believed that the students from high and middle class family income status are better expose to learning environment at home because of the availability of extra learning facilities. In contrast, the student from low family income do not have such learning facilities, so the opportunity to get better of educational grade may not be very easy. In addition, Parker (1999:4) wrote that low income parents is associated with a higher level of frustration and aggravation with their children, and these children are more likely to have poor verbal development and exhibit higher levels of distractibility and hostility in the classroom. His statement is supported by Dahl (2005) by saying that "in particular, children growing up in poor families are likely to have adverse home environment or face other challenges which would continue to affect their development even if family income were to increase substantially".

Related to the above problems, some finding, however, are different in the field. There are some students who succeed in their study even though they are coming from low economic family status. Beside the economic status, many other factors also influence the students' success in their study; they are motivation, learning strategy and learning process. It can be seen from what Ryan et al (2006:4) found: children individual's characteristics often emerge as important predictor of school success. The evidence suggest that various individual characteristics, namely general self esteem, educational aspiration can improve their language proficiency. Every student has potential to become a successful learner and achieve the success of learning English task when obtaining the knowledge, depends on them how to integrate the learning strategy.

2 Operational Definition

This study attempts to investigate the influences of parent's economic status in students' English learning process. Since English learning is not separated from learning process, the learning process itself will be described as follows.

Learning is change in human disposition or capability, which can be retain, and which is not simply ascribable to the process of growth Gagne (196:5). The kind of change that called learning is change in behavior, and the inference of learning is made by comparing what behavior can be exhibit after such treatment. Meanwhile, in Wikipedia (2006) learning is explained as the process of gaining understanding that leads to the modification of attitudes and behavior through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values, through study and experience.

English learning process depends on the students' environment especially their family, in this case family's income. According to Granzow (1999:208) income is money that received, especially as pay for work, or as interest on savings.

3 Theoretical Rationale

Students' parent economic situation-the ability to pay fees, rent and support their children while studying is primary determinant of ability to access education. While access to education is determined by others factors, financial one is significant. Karolyn (1998:15) stated that early education programs have larger effects for economically disadvantaged populations, primarily because these children come from homes with lower quality learning environments. Definitions of at-risk students vary among educators. According to Costello (1996:2):

Students are placed 'at-risk' when they experience a significant mismatch between their circumstances and needs, and the capacity or willingness of the school to accept, accommodate, and respond to them in a manner that supports and enables their maximum social, emotional, and intellectual growth and development.

The condition of low family income is always lack of food and clothes. The parents are very busy to fulfill their basic needs, so that they have no time to encourage their children to learn. They can not provide their children with learning facilities. The result is their children lazy to learn especially English because of lack learning facilities and encouragement. According to Ogwu (2004:24) the high socio-economic status parents are able to provide their young children with high quality child care books and toys to encourage them in their various learning activities at home.

Crinic and Lamberty (1994:94) believed that, segregating the nature of social-economic class, ethnicity and race may well reduce the variety often enriching experiences thought to be pre-requisite for creating readiness to learn among children social class.

Economic status of the family therefore can refer to such a position in relationship to the social and economic position of parents occupying various positions among groups in the society. These positions are looked in relationship toward education achievement.

4 Socio-economic Status

The another research done by Lubienski (2006) found that socio-economic status influences students' achievement; students from higher socio-economic families tend to get higher achievement compared to students with lower socio-economic status. First of all, the research found that the gaps appeared to be more closely tied to socio-economic status than race, because students with high socio-economic status tend to have better access to computers, and learning tools such as calculators, books, dictionaries etc. Teachers can provide better inputs for students to improve their learning achievement.

Culturally disadvantaged students may not receive an adequate education due to limited experiences with what the teacher is saying. These school experiences that reinforce inadequacy hinder self-esteem and provide little motivation as to what real world provides (Bakken, 2002:5). Furthermore, Bakken(2002:7) added that:

“Many students who do not have easy access to better learning situation believe learning English is mostly memorizing subject which adds to their low achievement. However, students move away from this belief as they study more and deeper. The longer they remain in school, the farther below the average grade level they fall, finally drop out, become delinquent, and perhaps join the mass of unemployed youth”.

The children at the bottom of the socio-economic scale generally achieve far below the normal levels. Several factors are suggested as factors why students fail to meet the standard requirements. At times, young people see no relationship between the day-to-day activities of the school and the opportunities are open to them in the future.

Lubienski (2006:71) said, “by providing fair learning opportunities to different population will help narrow the achievement gap. Existing economic power in the community showed strong influence”. Furthermore, he found that nearly 50% of the variance in test passing rates was determined by the demographic opportunity structure such as financial capital, human capital (level of parents' education), cultural capital (status and expectancy), and geographic capital (level of urban influence), rather than the opportunity structure provided within schools (economic opportunity structure). As English (2002:34) wrote that, demographic opportunity structure is largely influenced by economic opportunity structure and other capitals, and it has strong impact on students' achievement rate.

5 Social Class Classifications

According to Adler (1993:45) social economic status is traditionally measured by education, income, and occupation. By using these criteria, the social classification is grouped.

Numerous designations have been developed to categorize different levels of social class continuum. The three most popular designations are:

1. Three subgroups: upper class, middle class, and lower class
2. Five subgroups: upper class, upper-middle class, lower-middle class, upper-working class, and lower-working class.
3. Six subgroups: upper-upper class, lower upper class, upper middle class, lower-middle class, upper-lower class and lower-lower class.

These subgroups are considered only as broad label. They cannot account for variety of pattern to be found within each class level or do justice to an individual who is categorized as being at specific class level. They suffice only to point out main group differences in life styles as they relate to such factors as home background, race, education, income, and occupational status.

The calculation of a social has been controversy. According to Anderson(1995:26), the eventual classification is divided into three different social groups namely labeled as 'high', 'middle' and 'low'. The indicators of social class are residential area and

parents' own represent social indices in their own right, while the employed/unemployed distinction is used as a slight modification of the occupational index.

6 Parental Influence

Heller and Fantuzzo (1993:22) discuss how parents are the earliest and most lasting influence that their children have in their lives. They explained that until the age of 18, children only spend 13% of their waking hours in school and 87% of their time with families.

According to Sandra (2001:32), families play a meaningful role in children's education success and interface at family and school is an element that must be accounted for when examining children's school performance: that is, parents and teachers are educators, but not all education is schooling. Parents play a key role in improving the understanding and school achievement of their children. However, schools need to play a key role in developing ideas, which will encourage greater parent participation and involvement in their children's lives. Furthermore, Heller and Fantuzzo (1993:30) note that teachers who include parent participation in their classroom on a regular basis will have two results:

1. Parents feel more positive about their contributions and abilities within themselves, and
2. Students show improvement in the areas of academic achievement and attitudes.

Benjamin (1993:44) revealed that one of the most important factors that influence a child's achievement in school, particularly reading level, is the level of the parents' education. It found that the average level of proficiency is lower for students with parents that did not graduate from high school. It was found that more highly educated parents succeed greater in providing their children with the cognitive skills that promote achievement in school. Martin (1990) said that parents who are not as highly educated have a tendency to be more isolated and fear commitment and responsibility when it comes to involvement in their child's academic life.

7 Parents' Occupation Influence

Most of people in Indonesia work in agricultural field, especially who live in the countryside and some are public servant in the government office. The farmers are still using traditional system in cultivating their farm namely using the workers in their work. The result is many farmer live under poverty. Therefore, many parents ask their children to work in the farmland to help them. The problem becomes more complex if the parents ask their children to work during the school time. The students achievement in school is becoming lower especially in English. Low parents' income, as contextual factor to aid understanding performance.

Heidenrick as quoted by Natzke (2002:4) says that economically disadvantaged children have difficulty in the school system because of family circumstances. At

times, the family environment limits students' perceptual, conceptual, and linguistic experience in their early years, poorly preparing them for school. In addition, Knapp (1990:58) says that, disadvantaged students often see less purpose in skills-based learning task than advantaged students because of frequent disparities between school and home. Therefore, poverty children are more likely to fall behind and never move past repetitive practice of basic skills.

Many students suffer deprivation in terms of economic needs, personal development, and quality of their education. The students are deprived in these are due to low-income levels, increasing tensions between their study and their work in supporting their parents. Students have no choice but working to support their parent's income.

It is difficult for students from lower family income to successfully compete in school in order to obtain better qualification skill. Low levels of income and indebtedness can have serious consequences for personal of students. Students from lower family income are at risk of developing low self-esteem due to their lack of financial means and inability to fully in social activities.

Competing study and work demands are a major source of stress for students. Students from lower family income worry about meeting coursework deadline and working enough shift to cover their living expenses. As the result, students are prevented from maximizing their education levels due to financial and time pressures. Students often deprive themselves of sleep have significant impacts on the mental and physical well being of the students. Financial hardship has effected on students' ability to focus on their study. Work commitment often interferes with a student, ability to attend the classes and to complete assessment task and study.

8 Parents' Education Influence

According to Drazen (1992:11), in a study measuring student achievement and its relationship to family socioeconomic standing, the level of parent's education is a factor that directly affects student achievement. Parents are the first responsible person toward their children education. Parents have to raise, protect, and educate for their children, which is not so easy to be implemented. It is supported by Zappala (2002:17) who states that students who had a parents with niversity qualification achieved higher levels of academic performance than students who did not have a parent(s) with university qualification.

The duty of parents is provide educational environment at home. It can directly be linked with the educational level of the parents. Although the parents send their children to formal school, their parents affect the students' achievement at school.. clay (1998) found that most children talk and act like their parents and do things they see done in their home. Each parent has different way of treating their children in supporting and encouraging their children in learning. The ability of parents to successfully support their children' achievement largely relates to their ability to affordable childcare at home.

Good educated parents can help developing academic and social competencies at home by encouraging good study habit and helping their children with homework assignment. Benefit of parents' involvement can be academic, social and emotional.

Additionally, when parents convey high academic expectation to their children, the children have high expectation for themselves. Parents of high achieving students are more likely, however, to participate in school governance and school activities than are parents of average or struggling students and parental involvement both at home and at school is correlated positively to the educational level of the parent. (Miller,2001:13).

9 Students from Low Family Income

Low-income families have been labeled in different ways, it was labeled with children with poor families, low-economic status and student at risk. According to Castello (1996:2), children are being placed "at risk" when they experience a significant mismatch between their circumstance and need. Many children are the victims of this condition, which they cannot control. Where they live, how they are raised, and the amount of money their family has impacts the extent to which they can learn.

The condition of low family income is always lack of food and clothes. The parents are very busy to fulfill their basic needs, so that they have no enough time to encourage their children to learn. They can not provide their children with learning facilities. The result is that their children are lazy to learn especially English because of lack learning facilities and encouragement. Taylor (2003:17) said that economic distress including insufficient resources to meet family needs and unemployment is related to parental depression, pessimism about the future and marital problem. Such parental distress affects child-rearing practices negatively.

Base on the quotation above, it can be seen that the children from low family income cannot fully concentrate to their study. They focus not only on their study but also on their daily life. In addition, the children from lower family status have lower or less the opportunity to develop their language performance than the children from middle or higher family's status. The differences may be caused by the way of their parents thinking, especially their mother in communicating with their children. The child's language evolves through labeling of his environment, that is, his description and reaction to audiovisual stimulation.

10 Research Methodology

A case study approach supported with quantitative data collection is adopted for this research. This research is done by giving a test and questionnaires for the pre-international students at accounting program of Economics and business faculty, Malikussaleh university. The test was given in order to get the students' score, which is associated with the students' background in finding out if there is a relationship between the students background, in this case, their parent income, toward their ability in learning English. In the same time, the questionnaire was distributed to the students in order to get their background parents such as what their parents' job is, how much money their parents earned per month and so on. Hereafter, the data collected is analyzed by using the recommended statistical procedure.

11 Conclusion

The result from this research showed that parents' income has no significant influence on students' ability in learning English from the pre- international students of Accounting major at Economic and business faculty, Malikussaleh university. The result of the test shows the equal ability in answering the questions given by writer. From the Annova analysis above, the value of F count is 2.19 and F table is for 5% error is 3.33 and for 1% error is 5.52. It means that the value of F count is smaller than the value of F table ($2.19 < 3.33 < 5.52$). in view of the fact that the value of F count is smaller than the value of table for 5% and 1% error, therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and H_a is rejected.

As a result, the present study confirms that students performed the equal ability in learning English either with higher or lower income. The parents' income of the students does not take effect to much toward their ability.

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