

FACTORS AFFECTING TOEIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE FIRST SEMESTER STUDENTS OF INFORMATICS ENGINEERING

Marginingsih and Syaifudin Makmun

Computer Science Faculty-Duta Bangsa University Surakarta and Hospitality Study Program-Indonusa Surakarta Polytecnic.

Email: marginingsih@udb.ac.id, makmun Syaifudin@poltekindonusa.ac.id

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to conduct case study on the factors affecting TOEIC pre-test grades of the students of Informatics Engineering in Duta Bangsa University in the academic year of 2019/2020. The respondents are 10 students. The data were obtained by interviewing, questionnaire and collecting the documents from the students TOEIC grades. The data were in the forms of interview transcripts and documents. Then grounded theory was used to analyse the data. The result showed that in terms of internal factors, all of the students have interest in English because they like watching Film from YouTube or cinema with or without subtitle so they motivate to learn English. While from the external factors in terms of family background, six students come from educated family. They encourage their children in learning process. While, four students have parents who works as entrepreneur. They learn English by themselves not because their parents ask them to do. Two students said they won English competition at school. One student said the school really improve his English lesson. Three students have their own community at school. They can sometimes share, chat and talk in English. While the rest of students did not mention explicitly if school give impact on their English.

Keywords: *Internal factors; external factors; improve*

Introduction

One way to know the English skills of the student is to provide them with an English skill test. The test scores show the level of students' English skills. Using that result will make it easier for the teacher to set up the goals and class start of the lesson. Testing English for International Communication is one of the English proficiency tests frequently used by college students.

TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) becomes a standard for measuring English proficiency in the working industry. At present, TOEIC has been used in 14,000+ companies, government institutions and English learning programs in more than 160 countries. Every year more than 7 million people take the test. (International Test Canter, 2020). That means this skill test is indispensable for students and anyone who wants to get a job in the international workplace or industry. By taking TOEIC, students will have a wider opportunity to work or continue their study overseas.

Factors affecting on learning achievement consisting internal or external factors. Sitorus (2016) concluded that there are positive and significant influences between internal and external factors on learning achievement in introducing the economy and business of class XI students of Private Vocational School P.Siantar in the academic year 2015/2016.

Internal factors consist of interest, motivation and emotional quotient (EQ) that comes from within student in improving learning achievement. According to (Slameto, 2013), interest is a feeling of preference and a sense of interest to do something voluntarily. A student's interest will be influential great for the learning process, if the student's interest in a subject is high, enthusiasm and attention to participate in learning in the classroom will also be high. Moreover, (Liu et al., 2016) define interest is a kind of emotion arousal status, and it is a tendency that the people know things or love some activities. If a person focuses on a thing for a long time under a certain orientation, it means that this person becomes interested in such thing. Interest can be a motivation to guide student act to the direction. Hilgard (Katili, 2013) said interest is tendency to pay attention, enjoy some activities or contents. Interest is also a powerful motivational process that energizes learning and guides academic and career trajectories (Renninger & Hidi, 2015). In general, interest is approached predominantly from individualist cognitive perspectives. While motivation means a complex statement in an organism that directs behavior towards a goal (Purwanto, 2017). While Desy et.all (2015) in the study showed that the students with high achievement (67.90%) have more motivation than the students with low achievement (64.96%).

According to (Risfayanti, Sofian, & Husin, 2015) in the research shows that the dominant external factors are teacher factor and classroom interaction factor. While (Slameto, 2013) external factors include the way parents educate, relationships between family members, the atmosphere of the house, teaching methods, teacher relations with students, student relations with students, the state of the building, friends hanging out and school time. Learning resources are one of the external factors that affect student learning achievement.

From the experts' statements above, it can be concluded that external factors are factors that can affect learning outcomes from outside students, including: family environment, school environment, community environment, social and non-social environment, facilities and infrastructure, as well as teachers and teaching methods.

Informatics engineering students were obliged to take the TOEIC test held by college in the first semester. The result indicates varying levels of English language skills from low to middle and top scores. The top scores were unpredictable which the scores were more than expected. Never did the teacher think the students score would be that great. The teacher needs to consider how students work.

The authors are interested in investigating the factors in this research, including internal and external factors of the students who were given top scores in the test. Students who got top scores are chosen because they can be adopted to support students in the middle and low score by knowing the factors behind their performance in taking

TOEIC exam. This research becomes significant since the teacher has to improve the English proficiency of all students and the outcome of this research will enable the teacher to teach and inspire the students to get a better score.

Research Method

The research study is a qualitative research in the form of a case study. According to (Stephani, 2015), case study is in-depth studies of a phenomenon, like a person, group, or situation. It is about studying the phenomenon in detail, analysing cases and presentation about interpretations. It can provide a deeper understanding of a complex topic or assist a person in gaining experience about a certain historical. The phenomenon means the achievement of pre-test TOEIC grade which is over 500 from first semester students Informatics Engineering of Duta Bangsa University of 2019/2020 academic year. Second, conducting this study enables the researcher to get the detail information about the internal and external factors that affect students' grade. This study was conducted in Informatics Engineering Study Program of Computer Science Faculty of Duta Bangsa University Jl. Bhayangkara No. 55 Surakarta. The respondents of this study were 10 college students of the first semester. The respondents were chosen based on the purpose of this study. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In this study, the data were collected in the form of qualitative data. It means that the data are the description of the reality the factors affecting students' grade. In gaining the data, the writer used interview, questionnaire and document. Stake (2010: 95) argues that interview enables the researcher to obtain the unique information from many people and to find out things. In this research, the writer conducted interviews to know how the students' responses, internal factors such as interest and motivation and external factor such as family, school environment and society (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). The writer interviewed the students when they were in break between classes and via online during COVID19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the documents are written information which is in the form of important materials which support the data collected from the interview and students' TOEIC grades. This study is aimed to extend from the ideas of the research questions to the production of the report on results in the form of description and explanation of the social phenomenon investigated; it focuses on the use of grounded theory in analysing the data as in line with (Charmaz, 2014) that grounded theory is focused on inductive strategies for data analysis. It starts with abstract concepts and to explain and understand data. The journey of theory development in grounded theory approach starts and ends with the data.

Research Finding and Discussion

A. Research Finding

1. Internal factor and external factor

It deals with the students' interest, motivation, family environment, school environment and society in learning English. Here are the result of interview from students. The complete description from PRS's explanation can be seen below.

“My father graduated from Gajah Mada University majoring Farming. Then he worked in UK for two years. When I was kid, my father played Beatles and Oasis song so I listened to that song often. When I was at the third grade of elementary school, I watched Harry Potter film with subtitle at the cinema. I also watched Harry Potter series 1 to 7 at home in DVD player. I took English course when I was at the fifth and sixth grade. When I was at junior high school, I won spelling bee competition as runner up. Then when I was at senior high school, I have friends who have the same hobby. We like watching video game series “Assassin Creed”. One game needs 10-20 hours to finish. I watch it at the weekends. When I and my friends met at school, we talked about the game” (Essays, 2018).

- a. The following is CJW's explanation:

“My grandmother was from Philippines. My mother studied in elementary school in Australia. I am interested in learning English because when I was a kid, my mother's friend from Australia came to my house. She spoke English with my mother and my grandmother. Since that time, I want to be like her who can speak English. The first sentence I asked to my mother's friend is: Do you like tea? When I was in elementary school, I watched Harry Potter Series 1 – 7 a lot. I repeated the pronunciation from the scene of the film because I like British English. I think British English is cool but my grandmother often corrected my pronunciation. When I was in junior high school, I kept practicing my English with my classmates (4 people). Then, when I was in senior high school, I often spoke English with only one of my friends because the school environment gave negative judgment for someone who speaks English. They said “sok gaya”. However, I had church community who had the same hobby. We chatted in English and when we met in church, we spoke bilingual language. I also like watching thriller and detective movies from youtube”.

- b. The detail responses from NIA are as follows:

“Well, I have uncle. One graduated from English Department of Sebelas Maret University and the other graduated from English Department of Muhammadiyah University Surakarta. I learned English with my uncles before I entered school. When I was in elementary, I didn't really learn English because I played with my friends a lot. However, when I was in

junior high, I learned English by myself. I like superhero film, skyp and cowboy. I watched those films with subtitle from You-tube. I repeated the pronunciation. If I found the difficult word, I translated it. I could watch 2 or 3 film /day. When I was in senior high, I watched comedy film and mime with caption in it. I am also gamers. I have many friends from abroad such USA, Africa, and Israel. I often chat in English with them. I study English for fun not because of my parents to do so.

- c. MRGF's responses are as follows:

My mother is an official government in IAIN Surakarta as administrator. My father is also an official government. I like studying English since I was 7 Years old. I usually ask the meaning of a words toward my father when I play video games. So my father influences me most in learning English. I joined English Club when I was Junior High school. When I was at Senior High School, we have to choose one from 5 choices of school organization. I like watching film with subtitle, because if the subtitle is in indonesia I can learn a new word, and if the subtitle is in English, I can more understand about the pronunciation of a word I like World war 2 film and action that has a lot of movement. I like playing online games. To improve my English, I watch YouTube and spell a word. However, I never won any English competition.

- d. MA's responses are as follows:

My mother is a housewife and my father is an entrepreneur. I like English since junior high school. I like games in English so I have to learn English to understand the story line. My parents do not ask me to study English. The one who influences me most to study English is PewDiePie. He's a YouTuber and he's from Sweden. I took English course during junior high school. I practiced speaking English more when I was in Senior High school because there is a story telling competition. I joined Junior of Red Cross organization because during the ceremony I can choose a shady place, maintain my own health and help others. To improve my English, I watch film in you tube or cinema with subtitle because there are times when the pronunciation is not clear so I read it in subtitles. If there are words that i don't understand, i just search it on Google translate. The film that I like most is marvel, for example the avenger. I like playing online games. I have never won any English competition because I am lack confidence and nervous when I speak English

- e. MVW' s responses are as follows:

My mother is staff in law department Slamet Riyadi University. My father is technician. I like studying since Elementary school because I like playing games much and most of the games are in English. My parents are not asked me to learn English. However, my sister influences in learning English because she joined English course. So, I was going to compare our

knowledge in English. I never take English course because I think studied at school already waste a lot of my fun time. I like watching film from you-tube or cinema. Sometimes I used English Indonesian subtitle but more often used English subtitle so I can learn English too. I like movies a lot because of the storyline. To improve my English, I often practice in real life, watch more film or play game. I never participate in any English competition.

- f. The detail responses from VLP are as follows:

My father is priest and my mother is a teacher. My mother teaches in Salam Kudus Kindergarten. Before my mother teaches, she learns and practices dancing and singing from USA and English' video. I often imitate my mother doing that. Since that time, I like English by accident. When I was at junior high school, I watched film with subtitle from TV and laptop. I like watching horror film. Every time there is new film, I and my friends watch it. We usually promise to meet in any place. I like "Hanger Game series" too. However, I never took English course.

- g. The responses from YH are as follows:

"My parents are merchants. They do not teach me English. I learn English from school and Film with subtitle. I studied elementary school in Pangudi luhur. The English teacher teaches using interesting media so I began to like English. Then I continued Junior High School in Bintang Laut. In this school, there is strict regulation in studying English. The students must speak English on Friday and Saturday with all the teachers. The English teacher also uses media which is make students eager to learn. One of them is watching "Sherlock Holmes". The teacher play the film and then students are asked to answer the questions. There is always I remember that if the students make even one letter miss in writing, they must rewrite it 100 times. When I was in SMA 3 Surakarta, I have my own community who share and talk everything in English. I also join OSIS as administrator. I designed and arranged website. There is also Drama at school as one of the requirements for graduation. One team consist of 5 members and has to make their own story. To improve my English, I watch Film with subtitle from gadget. I learn how to pronounce the word and the meaning. Now I make anime and promote in on website. I have clients from USA. If they are interested in my work, they contact me for confirmation. I never take English course".

- h. The responses from DTC are as follows:

My mother is housewife. My father works in a car paint shop at home I like studying English since a long time ago. Actually, my parents do not ask me to study English. Game and Movie influence me in studying English because I have to understand what is meant in the game or movie. I never took English course. When I was at school. I did not have community to

practice speaking English. I just joined school organization related to hobby. I like watching film in you tube or cinema with subtitle, because sometime the sound is unclear. I like action, Sci-fi (little bit). The film is about hacking and gaming, sometime romance. I like playing online games. To improve your English, I Play video game, watch movie, listen to music. I never won any English competition

- i. The responses from HWNS are as follows:

My mother is midwifery. My father is a nurse in a hospital. I don't really like English lessons. My parents especially my mother ask me to study English. I was inspired by movies and games in learning English. I have once taken an English course in high school. I did not join any organization since at school because I just want to enjoy my time at home. I like to use subtitles when I watch movies so the story is easier to understand. I don't have a favourite movie. I like playing online game. To improve my English, I watch a lot of movies and play a lot of games. I've never won any English competition, because I have never entered an English competition.

2. The students TOEIC Pre-test Grade

Table 1
The results of student's TOEIC pre-test

No.	Name	Listening	Reading	score
1	PRS	495	405	900
2	NIA	485	400	885
3	CJW	490	365	855
4	MRGF	420	405	825
5	HWNS	450	310	760
6	MVW	360	330	690
7	YH	385	280	665
8	MA	390	255	645
9	DTC	360	250	610
10	VJP	345	265	610

B. Discussion

1. Internal factor

The result of the data analysis from the interview transcript and the document show that the all respondents have both factors; internal and external. Their TOEIC achievements were influenced by both factors until they make good scores in this English proficiency test. What makes different is sometimes they have different kind of factors included in both internal and external. Internal factors of learning achievement include interest, motivation, confidence, self-esteem, and attitude. All the respondents have an interest toward English so they are motivated in learning and practicing English. Menurut (Satria & Zahraa, 2018) conducts research The Factors Affecting TOEIC Passing Grades in

TOEIC Intensive Course for Third Year Students. The result showed that internal factor had an effect on student's learning achievement. Then (Wibowo, 2018) concluded in the research there is any correlations students' motivation toward their English achievement. Motivation has significant correlation toward their English achievement. Moreover, academic achievement and motivation have correlation significantly (Sikhwari, 2014).

Students 1 did not clearly explain that he likes English but from the explanation that he was motivated to watch English movie, joined a competition showed that he is interested in English. The student 2 said "*I like British English. I think British English is cool*" while student 3 explained that he started learning English before school and learn by him-self when he was at junior high school. Student 4, 5, 6 and 9 showed their interest by telling that they had started loving English from certain times in the past. Student 4 started loving English since seven years old, student 5 started loving since in the junior high school, student 6 started loving English since elementary school and student 9 mentioned that he like English since a long time ago. Student 7 did not explain when he started liking English but he told that he like English. Student 8 showed his interest through some activities like practicing English, making English anime, etc. it is a bit different from student 10 that clearly informed "*I don't really like English lesson. My parent especially my mother asks me to study English*". From this statement showed that he has a small interest toward English. Even though it is not big interest but still he has an interest toward English.

2. External factor

The result from interview and questionnaire showed that external factors that influence learning achievement such as family background, teachers and how to teach them, tools used in teaching and learning, teacher relations with students, student relations with students. It is in line with (Oladebinu Tokunbo Olufemi, 2018) in the study concludes that parental background, school factors, and teachers' factors have serious influence on students' academic performance. From the family background, the parents or family of 6 students graduated from university and work in office. While the parents of 3 students work as entrepreneur. One student has family who comes from abroad so he often speaks English at home.

In terms of school environment, student 1 said that he ever won English competition and has his own community who has the same hobby and sometimes talked about it in English. Students 2 said that school environment did not really support him in speaking English especially. However, he has friends from church community who often chat and speak English. Students 3, 4, 5,6,7, 9 and 10 did not clearly stated the school environment gave impact but to improve their English they watch film a lot, play games and imitate the pronunciation and learn the new vocabulary. Students 8 said that the school environment give impact to improve his English. The teacher uses interesting

media and give strict rules for the students in learning English. He also said that he has community at school that he can share and talk in English.

Conclusion

The research showed that some factors influenced students TOIEC achievement can be classified into two namely internal and external. The internal factors included interest and motivation. All of the students have interest in English because they like watching Film from You Tube or cinema with or without subtitle so they motivate to learn English. They learn by imitating their pronunciation and finding the difficult word on google translate.

The external factor included family background, school environment. From the family background, six students come from educated family. They encourage their children in learning process. They facilitate and arise comfortable atmosphere at home. Four students have parents who works as entrepreneur. The parents did not really force them to learn English. They learn by themselves.

School environment also give impact the student achievement. Two students said they won English competition at school. One student said the school really improve his English lesson. Three students has their own community at school. They can sometimes share, chat and talk in English. While the rest of students did not mention if school give impact on their English. Meanwhile one student said he has his own community outside school that he can practice his English.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Charmaz, Kathy. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. sage.
- Cresswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). Designing and conducting mixed method research. 2nd Sage. *Thousand Oaks, CA, 201*.
- Essays, UK. (2018). Internal And External Factors of Effective Learning Education Essay. Retrieved from <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/education/internal-and-external-factors-of-effective-learning-education-essay.php?vref=1>
- Katili, Elansri. (2013). a descriptive study on students' interest in learning English. *Skripsi, 1*(321408016).
- Liu, Liying, Qian, Yuan, Zhang, You, Zhao, Linqing, Jia, Liping, & Dong, Huijing. (2016). Epidemiological aspects of rotavirus and adenovirus in hospitalized children with diarrhea: a 5-year survey in Beijing. *BMC Infectious Diseases, 16*(1), 508.
- Lodico, Marguerite G., Spaulding, Dean T., & Voegtle, Katherine H. (2010). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice* (Vol. 28). John Wiley & Sons.
- Oladebinu Tokunbo Olufemi, Amos Adekunle Adediran (Ph. D. and Dr. W. O. Oyediran. (2018). Factors Affecting Students' Academic Performance in Colleges of Education in Southwest, Nigeria. *British Journal of Education, 6*(10), 43–56.
- Purwanto, M. Ngalim. (2017). *Psikologi Pendidikan. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya*.
- Renninger, K. Ann, & Hidi, Suzanne. (2015). *The power of interest for motivation and engagement*. Routledge.
- Risfayanti, Lira, Sofian, H., & Husin, Syarif. (2015). *An Analysis On External Factors Influencing Students English Learning Achievements*. Tanjungpura University.
- Satria, Ari, & Zahraa, Safra Apriani. (2018). The Factors Affect Toeic Passing Grades In Toeic Intensive Course For Third Year Students. *Inovish Journal, 3*(2), 221–229.
- Sikhwari, T. D. (2014). A study of the relationship between motivation, self-concept and academic achievement of students at a university in Limpopo Province, South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Sciences, 6*(1), 19–25.
- Slameto. (2013). *Belajar & Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Stephani. (2015). Case Studies: Case Study Definition and Steps. Retrieved from <https://www.statisticshowto.com/case-studies/>

Wibowo, Yusep Windu Ari. (2018). The Correlation Between Students' Motivation And Learning Styles Towards Students' English Achievement In The State Polytechnic Of Lampung. *Jurnal Ilmiah ESAI*, 7(2).