

English Performance of the Students of the English Department from Different Educational Backgrounds

Sakinah Aprilia Dewi*, Ali Saukah, Utari Praba Astuti

^a Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Negeri Malang

*sakinah.apriliah@gmail.com**

*Corresponding author

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: This study aimed to compare school program attended by students in Senior High School based on the score of the English performance. The data collected were in form of participants' individual score of Placement test. The data representing 309 participants divided in to three groups; natural science, social science and language program. English performance score obtained from placement test of intensive course program was analysed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) The result shows that Students with language program backgrounds outscore students with a social science program but not better than students with natural science program.

INTRODUCTION

Research worldwide in English as Foreign Language indicated that students' performance has a diverse level. For instance in Turkey (Alagözülü, 2016), China (Kong & Wei, 2019), Taiwan (Chih-Hao, 2019), Vietnam (Ngoc Truong & Wang, 2019), Thailand (Panyawong-Ngam et al., 2015), Iran (Abdolahzadeh & Rajae Nia, 2014), Korea (Fayzrakhmanova, 2016) and Indonesia (Lamb, 2012). Those studies concluded that many factors influence students' English performance. Factors such as Language Learning Strategies (Tragant & Victori †, 2012), attitude (Zeinivand et al., 2015), Language stress and anxiety (Hashemi, 2011), Personality traits (Dewaele, 2012), Gender (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013), Learning style (Wong & Nunan, 2011), self-efficacy (Yilmaz, 2010), have been proposed to account for the significant variation of English performance. Further, some researchers pointed out that academic discipline contributes to differences in language learning outcomes since it relates to language exposure and learning strategies (Kasim et al., 2019). Andriani (2010) added that students' achievement in higher education is influenced by students' prior knowledge during their senior high school (Andriani, 2010).

Students are specialized into three programs in class X at senior high school. Social sciences differ from natural science as well as language program in terms of their inputs and outputs.. For students in the language program, it focuses on learning about human beings, culture, and language as the product of the culture. Natural science program emphasizes the scientific method that prioritizes logic such as Chemistry, Physics, and Biology, while social science focuses more on social science such as history, accounting, and others. Moreover, the language program learns various languages such as Indonesia, English, other foreign languages, and anthropology. Dividing the students into three programs provide them with different experience during the teaching-learning process so that they are expected to be ready in the following higher education. However, Natural and social science programs still provide English as a compulsory subject

Research on students' different majors or programs has been conducted in various student groups. Previously, a comparison of academic- and vocational-Track High school students was analyzed to observe the students' Foreign Language anxiety and motivation in Taiwan (Liu & Chen, 2015). They found that students in the academic-track had higher extrinsic motivation and overall learning motivation than those from vocational-track.

In the Indonesian context, a notable study related to students' differences based on school programs is a study conducted by Ras (2017), which examined the relationship between language learning strategies used by autonomous learners of senior high schools based on the academic major. It compared language learning strategies employed by natural science students, social science students and language science students. The number of the population was more or less 4000 students from senior high schools in Dumai, Bengkalis, and Selat Panjang and 400 students were chosen randomly as the sample. This study employed mix-method design which the quantitative data are collected by using Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) from Oxford (1089) and the qualitative data were collected through interviewing 60 selected students taken from the sample. One-Way ANOVA was used to determine the

differences in language learning strategies usage based on academic major and type of school. The findings showed that there were different language learning strategies among the students based on academic majors. The results elaborated that Language science students used more strategies compare to natural and social science students (Ras, 2017).

Kasim, Muslem, & Mustafa (2019) conducted research to find whether the differences in learning outcomes were statistically significant between students from natural science majors and students from social science majors at the university level. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was administered to 179 students from four state universities in Aceh. The results revealed that students of natural sciences performed better in listening to a short academic talk, while social science students had a better general comprehension of non-discipline specific academic texts. This study focused on comparing major attended by students in the university level (Kasim et al., 2019).

Hayati & Sujadi (2018) examined the differences in learning skills between students of class X science and class X Social in MAN 1 Pekanbaru. This research used a quantitative approach with comparative methods. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire for learning skills which was adapted from the item AUM statement PTSDL Format-2 for high school. Then, data were analyzed using descriptive techniques and t-tests. Furthermore, the result of this study concluded that: 1) the learning skills of students in Sciences class were in the medium category of 71.58%; 2) the learning skills of students in social class were in the medium category which was 69.12%, and 3) there were significant differences in learning skills between science and social students of MAN 1 Pekanbaru (Hayati & Sujadi, 2018). This finding supported study conducted by Setyawan (2010) who reported that students majoring in Social Sciences have lower self-esteem than students majoring in Natural Sciences (Setyawan, 2010)

Jumainah (2016) described the eleventh-grade students' ability in speed reading. This research employed descriptive quantitative which involving 217 students of natural and social science in SMA Negeri Banjarmasin. By using a cluster random sampling technique was determined that 32 students from Science A-class and 73 students from Social A class as the participants. The reading test was administered to examine students' ability in speed reading and reading comprehension. The study elaborated that natural science students and social science students had a slight difference in the result of speed reading and reading comprehension. Natural science students included in moderate categories in speed reading and reading comprehension, and social science students included in low categories in speed reading and reading comprehension (Jumainah, 2017).

Muliawati (2017) investigated the different achievements in reading comprehension between science and social science students at a senior high school in Banda Aceh. It was also aimed at finding factors that influenced their achievements by using a comparative study involving 40-second grade (year 11) students of the school. The instruments used for this study were a reading comprehension test and a questionnaire searching for answers about language attitude, intelligence, and motivation of the students towards the English subject. The result from the t-test was 3.67 which were higher than the t-table of 2.042 at the level of significance of 0.05. This indicated that the levels of students' achievement in reading comprehension in the two programs were quite different (Muliawati, 2017).

The differences among natural science, social science and language science program toward their academic performance in Indonesia is a quite popular topic among researchers. For example, difference in academic confidence between natural and social science students (Shaukat & Bashir, 2016), difference in L1 fast reading ability between natural science and social science students (Jumainah, 2017), level of interest to academic streams and need of achievement (Sari, 2010), difference academic motivation between natural science and social science (Gunadi & Gunawan, 2014; Rukmana, 2014) and difference teaching L1 reading strategies between natural science and social science (Admiraal et al., 2018). Those studies focus on investigating the difference school programs in L1 context.

Accordingly, the influences of educational background in students achievement in university-level have been studied in various academic majors such as, Math Education major (Andriani, 2010), Health Science school (Lesmana & Febrianti, 2016), Communication studies (Sulistiowati, 2013), Geography Education (Mawarni, 2017) and accounting program (Anggraeni, 2018). Those previous studies have similarities namely investigating whether students' academic performance in the major they attend in university is affected by program attended by students in senior high school which considered in line with the major they attend in university.

Studies related to this topic focusing on English as Foreign Language just conducted by Ras (2017) and Muliawati (2017). Both studies involved students in Senior High School as the participants who particularly have different attitude and motivation toward English. Scarce studies involve English as Foreign Language university students as the participants related to their previous school program. Therefore, those reasons stimulate the researcher to study further whether students' educational background could affect and made a difference in their English performance

Based on the background stated previously, the researcher formulated the research problems as follows: Is there any statistically significant difference in the English Performance of English Department students based on their previous Senior High School program? To identify which educational backgrounds achieve better in English performance, the hypothesis of this study was formulated as follows: there is a significant difference between students of the English Department who come from the Natural Science program, Social Science program, and Language program against student's English performance.

METHOD

To answer the research problems, the researcher administers ex-post facto design. In this design, there is not any manipulation or treatment done for independent variables. The groups of independent variables are already existed and experienced by students (Ary et al., 2010). This study described students' English performance based on students' educational backgrounds. Students' educational background already exists and occurs in the population without any treatment or manipulation. The educational backgrounds in this study described as senior secondary school program students attended namely natural science, social science and language program

Population and Sample

This study emphasizes whether there is a relation between English performance and the English curriculum of senior secondary school. Therefore, this study targets fresh graduate students of high secondary schools who enroll and accepted as freshmen students in the state university of Malang as the population. Since this study attempts to compare which educational backgrounds have better English performance, it needs English performance score to be measured. However, English performance score which can be accessed only from the English Department through placement test score in the intensive course program. Therefore, the accessible population of this study is English department students which include English Language Teaching and English Language Literature Program academic year 2016 – 2018.

A total of 538 students enrolled in the English Department of the State University of Malang academic year 2016, 2017, and 2018 involved in this study. In the 2016 academic year, there were 188 students enrolled in the English Department, 178 students enrolled in 2017 and 172 students enrolled in 2018. The questionnaire was distributed to all students from the academic year 2016-2018 through an online Google form broadcasted via Whatsaap application. Students who filled the questionnaire were recruited as the participants of this study. Accordingly, this questionnaire only recorded a total of 427 responses. From 428 responses, 6 responses are excluded from the data because they were not part of the English Department. 17 responses were double recorded so those responses are deleted from data. It is worthwhile to mention that 75.28 % (405 samples) of the freshmen of 2016 – 2018 academic year respond to the questionnaire

From 405 responses remained 45 responses answered from Vocational High School and 50 responses reply that they experienced school transfer. Furthermore, only 310 responds were accounted for in this study. These 310 responses calculated all scores from each group member of independent variable because the English Department students have various levels of English performance and the students graduated from the different educational backgrounds in which the schools are spread out from various provinces in Indonesia.

Data Collection and Analysis

In each of the beginning of the first semester in each academic year, all students were tested before entering the Intensive Course program to decide which class each student belongs to. The test was administered by the Board of Intensive Course Program. This study used the score of Placement test in Intensive Course Program to estimate students' English performance. The data of the result of placement test score were obtained from Person in Charge of Intensive Course program.

After obtaining the placement test score, an online educational background questionnaire was distributed to the students via Google form. The questionnaire was broadcasted via Whatsapp messenger by providing a brief explanation about the purpose of the study, the criteria of participant needed to make sure those only English department students who complete the questionnaire and the link of Google form which direct the students to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed from 27 November 2019 until 14 January 2020. As the questionnaire was broadcasted via Whatsapp messenger, it was easiest to spread to a group of English department students in each academic year so that 428 responses were successfully recorded.

After that, the students' responses in Google form were exported to Microsoft excel. It eases to match the name of the respondents and the score obtained from placement test. Then, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were calculated using SPSS 16. One way Analysis of Variance conducted to measure the significant difference among the subgroup and Post hoc test using Tukey HSD test was utilized to investigate which pair of subgroup has the difference.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Amongst 310 students who took part as samples in the current study, 56.45 % (175 students) programmed Natural science, 30.32 % (94 students) programmed Social science, and 12.90% (40 students) programmed Language. One sample mentioned programming Religion so that this sample was denied from the data set. Therefore, only 309 samples were analyzed in this category.

Table 1 Descriptives of School Program

School_Program	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
English_Score Natural Science	175	12	86	48.65	12.938	.978
Social Science	94	13	73	44.02	13.496	1.392
Language	40	27	75	53.48	11.871	1.877

Table 1 summarizes the mean, variance, standard deviation, the minimum and maximum score for the Natural science, Social science, and Language groups. The mean score for the Natural science group is 48.65 (SD = 12.938). The mean score for the Social science group was 44.02 (SD = 13.496). The mean score for the Language group was 53.48 (SD = 12.71). It portrays students with Language program backgrounds have the highest mean score among other programs followed by natural science group. The Social science group has the lowest mean score among other but the score of Standard Deviation is the highest which indicates that the score of that group spread out over a wider range than those from Natural science and Language groups.

Statistical Assumption Test

The first assumption is the assumption of independence. It is used to determine that between two or more categorical variables have not any relationship. In this study, each group member of the independent variables is not related to each other. Students with a natural science background are impossible to include social science in the same time. Therefore, the assumption of independence was validated.

Table 2. Tests of Normality

School_Program	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
English_Score Natural Science	.055	175	.200*	.997	175	.973
Social Science	.053	94	.200*	.988	94	.565
Language	.114	40	.200*	.965	40	.247

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

The second assumption is the assumption of normality. As can be seen from Table 2, the result of the Normality test shows that significant value (p-value) for the three programs obtain 0.200 which is exactly the same. This p-value is higher than 0.05 which indicates that the assumption of normality is validated.

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity of Variances

English_Score

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.524	2	306	.593

As shown in Table 3.1.3, a significant difference (p-value) obtained from the Levene statistic test is 0.593 which is higher than 0.05. It points out that it confirms the assumption of Homogeneity of Variance. Due to the three statistical assumptions are validated, the Analysis of Variance Test is performed. The results of the ANOVA test are shown in Table 4.

Comparative Analysis

Table 4. ANOVA Test for School Programs

English_Score	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2754.325	2	1377.162	8.173	.000
Within Groups	51559.967	306	168.497		
Total	54314.291	308			

From the table above, it obtained that the significance difference (p-value) is 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. It means that Null Hypotheses (H₀) is failed to accept. It indicates that there is a significant difference in English performance scores across school programs. To decide which group has a better English performance score, post hoc tests are conducted. This test identifies which particular difference lies between pairs of group means; Natural science and Social science, as well as natural science and language, are statistically significant. The results obtained from the Tukey HSD are set out in Table 5.

Table 5. Multiple Comparisons of School Program

English_Score		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
Tukey HSD					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(I) School_Program	(J) School_Program					
Natural Science	Social Science	4.624*	1.660	.016	.72	8.53
	Language	-4.829	2.275	.087	-10.19	.53
Social Science	Natural Science	-4.624*	1.660	.016	-8.53	-.72
	Language	-9.454*	2.450	.000	-15.23	-3.68
Language	Natural Science	4.829	2.275	.087	-.53	10.19
	Social Science	9.454*	2.450	.000	3.68	15.23

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

It is apparent from the table above that there are differences of p-values for social science to both natural science and language. The mean difference between social science to both natural science and language are -4.624 and -9.454. The former one shows that the p-value is 0.016 and the latter one shows the p-value is 0.000. Both of the p-values is less than 0.05 of the significance level which indicates that students from social science program are less successful than those from natural science and language programs.

The surprising result lies on pair of natural science and language program. The results of the Tukey HSD test as shown in table 5 is that the p-value of comparative analysis of natural science and language program is 0.087 which is higher than 0.05. It indicates that there is no significant difference between students from natural science and language programs on English performance scores. It means that both groups have an equal score in English.

DISCUSSION

This study is to address which program attended by students in senior high school has better English performance. From the overview of descriptive statistics, it is showed that social science has the lowest score, followed by the natural science group and the language group has the highest score among the programs. After conducting the Tukey test, it reveals that the language group has a statistically significant difference with the social science group but surprisingly it has no statistically significant with natural science. Additionally, the social science group has statistically difference with natural science in English performance. It means that natural science has superior performance in English than social science students

Based on the descriptive statistics, it found that the natural science group score was higher than those from social. This finding is supported by Muliawati's study (2017) and Jumainah (2016) which proves that there had a slight difference in the result of English score between Social science students and natural science students with social science students who got a lower score in the test.

Due to the insignificant difference between the natural science group and language group, it infers that the different curriculum does not have any impact on students' performance. However, language students still obtain advantage from different curriculum compared with social science group. The structure of curriculum implemented for natural science, social science, and language program at the senior high school/Islamic senior high school is quite different. According to Regulation of The Minister of Education and

Culture of Republic of Indonesia Number 69 of 2013, each program is provided with 2 study hours of English subject as compulsory subjects. However, due to the specialization, the Language program is enhanced with 3 study hours of English subject in class X and 4 study hours of English subject in class XI and XII.

With a total of almost 6 study hours in a week, the language program has more study hours than other program. It may lead to language programs has a better outcome in English than other programs. It supported by (Jez & Wassmer, 2015; Ukpong & George, 2013) who asserted that instructional time is significantly effect to academic performance. Students who engaged in longer study time perform better than those who engaged in shorter study time. The longer study time may lead students to have more opportunities to learn and to expose the English language. Zoubi (2018) argued that language exposure has a positive role in language acquisition.

The instructional time allotted in the formal educational setting provides an opportunity for students to have sufficient communication and interaction with the teachers and more knowledgeable peers to perform their English using appropriate language learning strategies (Al-Zoubi, 2018; Magno, 2010). The previous studies declared that language learning strategies have a significant role in acquiring English proficiency (Fewell, 2010; Magno, 2010; Tragant & Victori †, 2012). Ras (2017) revealed in their study that language program students implement more language learning strategies than natural and social science program. Therefore, it is not surprising that the students coming from the language program at senior high school are definitely having better English scores compared to those coming from the social science program.

On the other hand, the different curriculum cannot explain the different English performances between natural science and social science despite the same time allotment and the similarity performance between natural science and language programs. Therefore, the plausible explanation may be considered as the factor of the difference and the similarity is that students related factors such as self-esteem.

Broadly speaking, people consider that the science program is composed of students who are smart and have better academic performance than students who are majoring in social science. Students majoring in social studies are considered deviant because they often violate the rules or norms that apply in school. Appreciation from the people can increase student confidence so that the self-esteem that is formed will become stronger. This was proved by Setyawan (2010) who revealed that students majoring in Natural Sciences have higher self-esteem than students majoring in Social Sciences so that natural science students have a more effective learning attitude. Self-esteem has a superior correlation with students' academic achievement (Alrabai, 2017; Satriani, 2014). Therefore, it may be the possible reason natural science students are superior to social science students in English performance.

KESIMPULAN

Referring to research question, this study concluded that there was a statistically significant difference among students from different school programs. Students with language program backgrounds outscore students with a social science program but not better than students with natural science program. The plausible reasons for the difference are that the language program students take advantage of the different curriculum implemented in the program. Conversely, Natural science students had good input in higher self-esteem than social science students so that despite same time allotment in English with social science, they have equal English performance with the language program.

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