

Exploring English Clubs in Two Different Regions: Does English Achievement Matter?

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Abstract

This study aims to know if there is a significant difference in achievement in English clubs between Group A from an urban area and Group B from a suburban area and find out whether motivation influences the learning achievement of both groups. This study is categorized as a quantitative study. The data were collected from a test and questionnaire. The students' interviews were conducted as the preliminary data. The number of participants were 10 students from Group A and 10 students from Group B and they were members of English clubs in two different schools in different regions. From the findings, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in achievement scores between Group A and Group B. The difference in school location, academic atmosphere, and method of club selection did not affect students' achievement. Besides, students' motivation does not influence students' achievement in both groups. For the next research, it is suggested to involve more participants and include other factors that may contribute to students' achievement in English clubs.

Keywords: English clubs; students' achievement; students' motivation.

A. Introduction

English as a foreign language is important to learn for some reasons. With approximately 400 million speakers worldwide, English is crucial to learn because 1) it serves as a global lingua franca, 2) it functions as the language of academic discourse, 3) it provides us access to any media both online and printed, 4) it is helpful during travel and

exploration, 5) it is beneficial for those who want to work in the realm of international business and commerce, and 6) it is the predominant language of Hollywood (Ilyosovna, 2020). Moreover, students who learn English starting from elementary school to senior high school obtain benefits in pursuing their higher education and career.

Because of the importance of learning English, English is not only provided in intracurricular classes but also extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities need to be paid attention to because they are offered in many schools, especially in big cities and students could join them based on their interests. The extracurricular activity focusing on English is commonly named English Club, English Language Club, English Conversation Club, or English-Speaking Club. In this study, we use the name “English club” as it is the most common one.

English club as one of the extracurricular activities offers many benefits to students. According to Fitriany et al. (2021), one strategy to improve students' speaking ability is by having an English club. English clubs and English days could serve as excellent role models of English for students (Getie, 2020). Learning activities that are interactive need to be considered especially in English club activities (Ngadimun et al., 2019). To improve the teaching and learning process in the English language so it results in good learning

outcomes, school club activities are recommended (Akintola, 2022). Well-planned activities in English clubs can motivate and generate positive attitudes among students (Khorsheed et al., 2019). According to Cheng (2019), the English club has three important roles namely 1) improving students' English language proficiency, 2) enhancing students' basic English literacy skills, and 3) integrating teaching resources. Furthermore, the activities in the English clubs such as competitions, games, debates, conferences, and workshops enhance language competency and have a favorable effect on other learning outcomes like motivation to learn, self-assurance, communication abilities, social skills, and awareness of the target language's culture (Amara, 2021). To sum up, joining English clubs is beneficial because it could result in good learning outcomes, provide interactive learning activities, motivate and generate positive attitudes among students, improve students' English proficiency, and raise English culture awareness.

Many schools in urban areas offer English clubs to facilitate students who are interested in English. Schools in urban areas may have more demands in mastering English than in suburban areas. The fact shows that the principal of a public school in an urban area in East Java supports an English program and provides an academic atmosphere in which students and teachers are encouraged to speak English in daily activities at school. Even some simple instructions at school are delivered in English. The English teachers there need to introduce one English word each day and give 3 to 5 examples of the word in sentences. Then the English word and its examples in sentences are shared via WhatsApp application to students in all classes.

Compared to schools in urban areas, schools in suburban areas have different characteristics. A school located in a suburban area in East Java provides some classes of interest such as English, Natural Science, Math, literacy, and tahfidz classes. They are provided after school hours and the instructions in the classrooms are delivered in Bahasa Indonesia, except

in English classes where English is mostly used. There is no other special program yet focusing on English.

Based on the preliminary study, it is known that students in a school in an urban area have different kinds of motivation compared to students in a suburban area in joining English clubs. Some interviews with English club members in a school in an urban area showed that 70% of students join the English club because their parents or teachers asked them to do so. Therefore, the encouragement comes from surroundings or we can call it external motivation. The students in a suburban area, on the other hand, are free to choose the class after school based on their interests. Around 80% of the English club members choose the English club because of their willingness. It can be stated that the encouragement comes from the students themselves, or we can call it internal motivation.

There are some previous studies related to English clubs. Rahayu and Basri (2021) did a study related to the English club but they focused on the mother-tongue interference that occurred in the activity of the English

club meeting. Another interesting study was conducted by Sirajuddin and Yahrif (2020) and they aimed to find out students' learner identity and differences in English club meetings. Another study by Jayanti et al. (2022) aimed to know students' perceptions of an English-speaking club in a vocational high school. From the aforementioned statements, it can be seen that the school location, academic atmosphere, method of selection, and students' motivation regarding the English club were not discussed yet. It is interesting to know if these differences may influence the English achievement of students and this study intends to figure it out.

It is expected that this study will contribute to knowledge related to Community Language Learning (CLL). Besides, the result of this study could be beneficial 1) for teachers as an evaluation of the future activities of the English clubs in these two schools and 2) for school leaders to determine the regulations related to English clubs. Therefore, the research questions were formulated as follows.

- 1) Is there a significant difference in students' achievement between

Group A from an urban area and Group B from a suburban area?

- 2) How does the students' motivation influence the students' achievement in both groups?

B. Research Methods

This study is categorized as a quantitative study because it includes numerical data collected and analyzed through statistical procedures (Nassaji, 2017). The preliminary data were obtained by conducting the interviews and used to support the study. To answer the first research question, an English test was conducted. The test was conducted in the quiz in Google Forms. Since the test was used to know students' English learning achievement, the material focused on understanding reading text and structure. The students had to choose the correct answer by selecting one of four options. The test scores were analyzed by using the SPSS program with the Mann-Whitney test. To answer the second research question, a questionnaire was given to students. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the means for

each student. The data from students' scores and motivation are then analyzed using the SPSS program with Pearson Product Moment.

The participants were students who joined the English club in two public junior high schools in the 2022-2023 academic year. The participants were selected based on convenient sampling. In this study, the English club members from a school in an urban area would be mentioned as Group A while the English club members of a school in a suburban area would be addressed as Group B. There were 10 students in Group A and 10 students in Group B. The students in Group A were in the eighth grade while the students in Group B consisted of seventh and eighth graders.

C. Results and Discussion

The Result of Students' Interviews as Preliminary Data.

There were three questions delivered in the interview, namely: (1) Do you choose the English club yourself, or do your teachers/parents choose it for you?, (2) Are you happy joining the English club so far?, (3)

Do you feel the results obtained in joining English club are good? Table 1 displays the result of the interview of the first question. The student's responses to the first question are divided into 3 categories, namely: (1) My teacher or parents chose it for me, (2) I chose it myself, (3) My parents chose it and I want to join.

No	Category	Group A	Group B
1	My teacher or parents chose it for me.	7/10	2/10
2	I chose it myself.	1/10	8/10
3	My parents chose it and I want to join.	2/10	0/10

Based on the result presented in Table 1, it shows that 70% of the students in group A joined the English club because their teacher or parents chose it for them. However, two students, AKW and RA, argued that although the teacher selected it for them, they wanted to join the English club and felt enjoyable after joining the club. According to Swatevacharkul (2021), students' motivation could be developed from successful engagement in the language learning process. This result is also supported by the student's

attendance record which showed that AKW attended all meetings except one meeting (absent) while RA was only absent twice starting from August to November 2022. Other students like FIN, GRA, and DAO attended 11, 12, and 13 meetings respectively of 16 meetings. It shows that the spirit of most students in Group A can be categorized as high.

Compared to the results in Group A, 80% of the students in Group B chose the English club because of their willingness. Even though most students in Group B joined the English club because they wanted it themselves, only some of them attended the meeting diligently. According to the attendance record, TK and MSPS attended 9 of 14 meetings while RFA and ANK only attended 1 of 14 meetings. From the interview, it was known that RFA had a private course at the same time as the club while ANK said that no one could pick her up if she joined the club. Therefore, they rarely came even though they were interested in joining the English club. Other students such as MA, FFH, and TW only attended 4, 5, and 6 of 14

meetings. They were absent more than 50% of

the entire meeting. These results were quite surprising because the students who choose their club usually tend to be diligent in coming and prioritizing it. Some students said that it was due to family matters, and others said it was because of many projects or assignments from school.

Referring to the second question of the interview, the student's responses are divided into 2 categories namely positive (very happy, happy, and quite happy) and negative (so-so). Table 2 presents the result of the second question of the interview.

Based on the result in Table 2, 90% of students in group A gave positive results. It means most of them are happy to join the English club so far. There was only one student, MRNA, who stated that he felt indifferent about joining the club and it was followed by his attendance which he only came to the club three times in four months. He only came when his best friends came. Even when he came, he seldom paid

attention to the teacher's explanation. It shows that he does not have internal motivation at all to join the English club.

The result of group B shows that 100% of the students gave positive responses towards the English club. It means everyone in Group B felt happy in joining the English club so far. Although some students were absent in several meetings because of some reasons as stated in the aforementioned paragraph, FFH stated that she enjoyed the class and CFS thought that the English club was a calming and fun place, there was an exciting different learning in every meeting, and the teacher and friends were so friendly and active. It is suitable to the result of Hamadameen's and Najim's (2020) study, "English club enables students to practice English in an informal, relaxed environment."

Talking about the third question of the interview, students' responses are divided into 2 categories namely positive (good, quite good, better) and negative (not good yet). Table 3 presents the result briefly.

No	Category	Group A	Group B
1	Positive	10/10	8/10
2	Negative	0/10	2/10

Talking about whether the students feel their obtained result is good or not, Table 3 shows that all students in Group A felt they were already good. Similar to Group A, 80% of the students in Group B thought they were already good. The students' responses to this question will be compared to the result of students' achievement.

The Result of the Students' Achievement

After joining the English club for almost one semester, the test was given to students in Group A and Group B. The scores were analyzed by using the SPSS program and the descriptive statistics were presented in Table 4. Table 4 shows that the mean scores of the students in Group A and Group B are 52.4 and 54 respectively and these are below 75 (minimum completeness criteria). This result could encourage the teacher to dig more deeply into overcoming the misconception that occurred and see what the next lesson

would be. By considering this is a group comparison, the number of participants is small (less than 30), and the data taken were from samples that were not interrelated, the data then were analyzed by using the SPSS program with the Mann-Whitney test (Creswell, 2012). The result is presented in Table 5.

Table 4. The descriptive statistics of students' scores in Group A and Group B

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Group A	10	42	66	52.40	8.527
Group B	10	32	90	54.00	17.179
Valid N (listwise)	10				

Table 5. The statistics result of the mann-whitney test

	Score A and B
Mann-Whitney U	48.000
Wilcoxon W	103.000
Z	-.152
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.879
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.912 ^b

Table 5 shows that Asymp. Sig = .879 and it is greater than .05. The result revealed no significant

difference in students' achievement between Group A (Md = 52, n = 10) and Group B (Md = 52, n = 10), $U = 48,000$, $z = -.152$, $p = .879$, $r = .034$. This result is surprising because it was expected that there was a difference between these two groups. Moreover, it can be stated that the differences in the academic atmosphere, school location, and method of selection do not affect English test results.

The result of the students' English achievement did not match with their opinions obtained from the interview about their English ability. It can be seen that the student's achievement scores did not reach the expected result (the minimum score is 75). It could be because there is a misconception. According to a study conducted by Machová and Ehler (2021), the students understood the general idea but had difficulty integrating the knowledge into a deeper understanding and it resulted in misconceptions. This misconception is "a part of learning process and can be corrected by explanation and regular practice (Mishra, 2020)."

The Result of the Students' Questionnaire

There are 16 items in the questionnaire adapted and translated from Butler (2015). The students as respondents filled out the questionnaire by scoring 1 – 4 for each statement. The result of students' motivation is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The result of students' motivation

Group A	Group B
86	86
88	91
75	77
89	81
98	84
88	83
73	84
91	86
86	78
78	73

It can be seen in Table 6 that students' motivation to learn English is mostly high. According to Quadir (2021), some teaching factors affect students' motivation such as teachers' instructional styles and teaching methods, private tutoring, teachers' personality and behavior, teachers' competence and classroom management, and teachers' attitude

and commitment. Moreover, the learning environment and the learning objectives were two other factors affecting students' motivation (Senjahari et al., 2021).

After getting the results of the students' questionnaire, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test was conducted for the data from students' motivation and students' achievement of Group A and Group B to know whether the data were normally distributed or not. The result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The result of normality test

		Motivation	Achievement
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	,088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,711
	N	20	20
Achievement	Pearson Correlation	,088	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,711	
	N	20	20

Table 7 shows that Sig. of both variables is greater than .05 and it means the data are normally distributed. After the normality test, the linearity test was also conducted. The purpose of the linearity test is to find out whether the distribution of data on variables is linear or not. The

result of linearity is presented in Table 8

Table 8. The result of linearity test

	Sig	Note
Deviation from linearity	.943	Linear

Table 8 shows that the Sig. deviation from linearity is .943 and it is greater than .05 so there is a linear relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. After conducting normality and linearity tests, the data were analyzed by using the SPSS program with the Product Moment test to answer the second research question. The result is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. The result of product moment test

Table 9 shows that r count is

		Motivation	Achievement
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	,088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,711
	N	20	20
Achievement	Pearson Correlation	,088	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,711	
	N	20	20

.088 which is less than r table (.444). It can be concluded that students' motivation does not influence

students' achievement. This result is in line with the study result of Lena et al. (2022) which revealed that neither interest nor motivation had an impact on students' learning outcomes. However, this is opposite to the study result of Dwinalida and Setiaji (2022) who explained that there was a significant relationship between students' motivation and their English learning achievement. The different results may be caused by the different types of motivation that were investigated in the studies.

D. Conclusion

This study has paid attention to knowing if there is a difference in students' achievement in English clubs in two schools in two different regions. To summarize the findings, there was no significant difference in achievement scores between Group A and Group B. The different school locations, academic atmosphere, and method of selection in joining English clubs did not have an impact on students' achievement. Besides, students' motivation does not influence students' achievement.

The study is not without its limitations. First, this study only focused on the students of English clubs in two schools so the findings could not be generalized. Second, the test given in this study was only an English achievement test that focused on reading text and structure. Third, other variables may affect the students' English achievement and explain why the mean scores are quite low. For future research, it is suggested to conduct oral or speaking tests and open-ended questionnaires. Besides, involving more students as participants from different schools in urban and suburban areas is recommended as well.

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