Factors Affecting Students in the Kampung Bahasa Program at Public Vocational High School 1 of Boyolangu During Covid Pandemic

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Abstract. The Kampung Bahasa Program at vocational high schools are developed to get students used to English speaking at the school. Unfortunately, the number of students interested in joining the program decreased significantly during the pandemic. This research tried to identify main factors influencing students interest in the Kampung Bahasa Program at Public Vocational High School 1 of Boyolangu during covid pandemic. This was descriptive research using a qualitative approach. The data in this research were collected using some techniques including interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analyzed by interactive technique. The result of the research showed that internal factors affecting students in the Kampung Bahasa Program were the physiological factor which caused most students to be afraid of being infected with covid and the psychological factor that explained students’ need for English communication, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, their shyness in English communication. The external factors included familial support, socio-economic backgrounds of students’ family which allowed them to pay the tuition, the role of the English teacher of the tenth grade, and the fact that many fellow students joined the program. In addition, students’ interest in the program was also influenced by the socio-demographic factors.

Keywords: Kampung Bahasa Program, internal factors, external factors, socio-demographic factors

INTRODUCTION

English language is the most widely used language in the world (Gusrayani, 2017). As a means of global communication, English should be mastered and practiced in both verbal and written communication. Handayani (2016) stated that English mastery constitutes the basic educational provision to be competitive in the global era, at least at the level of ASEAN. English needs to be taught to succeeding generations from elementary schools to higher education. In the global era, humans are allowed to open communication across countries, and those who master foreign languages can grasp this golden opportunity. Foreign languages play an important role and are a basic requirement for career progression because those with mastery of English language will be fully appreciated in the industrial world, which allows them to work for multinational companies.

Richard (2002) said that most students learning world languages, including English, focus on mastering speaking skills. However, it should be underlined that speaking skills do not only stress on extensive vocabularies, but they also require the respect for grammatical rules. One of the language skills, speaking serves such a significant role in social life that all people have to sharpen their speaking skills.

Thomnbury (2006) said that ability to speak is an integral part of being humans. In other words, it is the quality which humans possess in such a natural process that they cannot explain how they first acquired the ability, which causes whoever wants to learn to speak in foreign languages to undertake a learning process again. In reality, English language has become an academic subject taught in Indonesian schools, from elementary schools to the level of higher education. Sudarsana (2017) stated that mastery of foreign language will help individuals to easily gain knowledge given that reference books containing the latest information about a wealth of knowledge are available in foreign languages. It is advisable that English learning stress on practices and exercise (trial and error), so that students are actively involved in the learning process and in turn feel free to express their opinion about reality. Basically, English skills includes some skills like listening, writing, speaking, and reading. According
to Gan (2013), people speak to express what are in their mind like ideas, thoughs, or feelings and let everyone know them.

Most Indonesian students are familiar with English, although this does not necessarily mean that they have no difficulty learning the language. Many factors operate to hinder their mastery of English. The difficulty is caused not only by the subject taught (external factors) but also by personal reasons (internal factors) (Hidayati, 2014). According to Krashen (2003), given that English is a foreign language, psychological factors like shyness, fear of making mistakes, disconfidence, nervousness and other negative feelings potentially undermine someone’s effort to master it. Such negative feeling is what is called ‘language anxiety’ (Hidayati, 2014).

The term Kampung Bahasa or an English course usually refers to non-formal educational institutions, but Public Vocational High School (PVHS) 1 of Boyolangu has managed to develop the Kampung Bahasa in a formal educational institution. The program is developed in collaboration with Training Center of Sydne Club and village community neighboring PVHS 1 of Boyolangu.

According to Donal and Niati (2018), Kampung Bahasa is a place where students can learn and practice English to polish their English skills. The Kampung Bahasa program has a series of agendas, English learning media, and a set of rules formulated for successful English learning. The establishment of the program was inspired by the existence of Kampung Inggris in Pare, Kediri, East Java. Taking into consideration the success and rapid development of Kampung Inggris in Pare and immense public enthusiasm for short courses in the small town, the researcher tried to adopt the same learning method and implement it in more limited scope easier for the researcher to reach and manage, namely a school-based Kampung Bahasa.

Historically, the Kampung Bahasa was established on October 28th, 2019. Kampung Bahasa or also referred to as Esemkita Language Center is a positive effort to develop the community’s mastery of foreign languages on the rational and theoretical basis of the fact that there are many formal educational institutions near PVHS 1 Boyolangu (PVHS 2 of Boyolangu, PVHS 3 of Boyolangu, Public Senior High School of Boyolangu, Religion Public Senior High School 1 and 2 of Tulungagung, Religion Public Junior High School Tulungagung, Private VHS Sore, and Private VHS Siang among others) which can be considered to be the achievable target of the implementation and development of the program. Besides, mastery of foreign languages has become a critical need in the millenial era. The Kampung Bahasa Program aims to provide migrants with mastery of foreign languages (English, Japanese, German, and Korean, among others), create an environment in which people speak foreign languages, boost the economy of the community living the neiboring villages of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu by opening up job opportunities for them through renting rooms for learning, providing lodges for trainees coming from other cities, conducting catering business to fill students’ need for food, and developing a language tourism village.

The Kampung Bahasa program is conducted at PVHS 1 of Boyolangu, Tulungagung, in collaboration of the school with the school’s neighbors. The learning activities are performed three times a week within six months. The program tries to create a relaxed, friendly atmosphere for learning process not to place a heavy burden on the shoulders of trainees. In the first month, trainees are trained to grow in confidence to speak in front of many people. They are assigned to tell their daily activities in front of their fellow trainees. In the end of the first month, the learning activities are conducted in the town square where they are assigned to give a brief speech on particular topics. The training in the second month is focused on mastering grammatical rules which are practiced and implemented in a speech on daily activities. In addition to applying grammatical rules, the training in the third and fourth month is also focused on making conversation with fellow trainees. In the fifth month, trainees are given some practice exercises to assess the degree of trainees’ understanding about materials they have received, while the training in the sixth month is focused on trainees’ applying grammatical construction
in speech texts, generating debates and making a presentation about their belongings. In the end of the last month, trainees are given a written test.

Getie (2020) stated that tenth-graders tend to display a positive attitude towards EFL learning. There are some social factors (native English speakers, friends of the same age, and students’ parents) that will positively affect students’ attitudes. On the other hand, some other factors related to education settings like English teachers, learning atmosphere including classrooms, seat arrangement, and learning environment produce negative effects on students’. However, students display a positive attitude towards the English textbook for the tenth grade, which means that the learning materials for foreign languages gain unconditional acceptance of students. Meanwhile, the result of the research by Riswandi (2008) shows that the existence of English courses is supported by 3 factors, namely ways of thinking, economic factors and religious factors. Therefore, it can be concluded that the existence of Kampung Bahasa or English courses depends on some factors which include social factors, education settings, way of thinking, economic factors, and religious factors.

The research by Mahmoudi (2015) founded that decisive factors in English learning include internal factors which are students’ cognitive and affective domains and external factors in the form of schools’ environment and activities. Moreover, Setiana (2017) mentioned that the internal factors affecting students’ motivation for cooking training at IONs of Yogyakarta included potentials (100%), intelligence (97%), students’ interests (94%), students’ dreams/ aspiration (84%), students’ need (81%), basic skills (74%), and students’ physical state and stamina (52%). Meanwhile, the external factors behind students’ involvement in the cooking training at IONs of Yogyakarta included teachers (100%), administrative staff and the schedule of the cooking training (97%), facilities (94%), classmates (87%), learning media (84%), family (74%), the location of the training (68%), civil people/neighbors/friends of the same age (29%), and weather (10%).

According to Wibowo (2015), English Camp makes a major contribution (almost 80%) to catching students’ interests in learning English, and this automatically sharpens their English skills. Ngadimun (2019) said that English Club supports the process of English learning, especially to improve students’ speaking skills. The fact that most students got very good scores especially for speaking skills and only few of them got good scores validates this claim and conclusion.

The results of some previous research make it possible to conclude that English camp or Kampung Bahasa contributes to improving students’ speaking skills and that some factors influence students’ interests in joining the Kampung Bahasa Program. In the beginning, all of the tenth-grade students of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu joined the Kampung Bahasa Program, but the outbreak of COVID-19 caused the number of students joining the program to decrease from 450 to 200 students.

The problem of the decreasing number of students joining the program encouraged the researcher to conduct research to identify some factors influencing students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu during covid pandemic. It was expected that all students of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu became motivated to join the program so that they can improve their English skills because vocational students are prepared to be skilled workforce with good skills in their own competencies and good English skills. Some neighbors of the schools also wanted to learn to speak English to support the implementation of the Kampung Bahasa Program. Besides, the program will in turn help bolster the economy of village community near PVHS 1 of Boyolangu. This research was aimed at identifying internal, external, and socio-demographic factors causing students to join the Kampung Bahasa Program of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu during covid pandemic.

METHODS
This was descriptive research with the qualitative approach. The research subjects included the leader of the Kampung Bahasa Program, three English teachers, five mentors, 10 trainees of the program, and 3 civil people. This research was conducted in two locations: PVHS 1 of Boyolangu,
RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Based on the result of the research, this parts gives explanations about (1) internal factors influencing students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program, (2) external factors influencing students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program, and (3) socio-demographic factors influencing students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program. The explanations will be given in detail as follows. The findings of the research show that (1) the internal factors influencing students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu during covid pandemic included physiological and psychological factors; (2) the external factors included factors related to students’ familial support and background and academic settings of the school; and (3) socio-demographic factors were related to the first time when students began leaning English and their academic achievements.

Internal Factors Influencing Students’ Interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program

Physiological factors
Physiological factors deal with health condition of students when joining the activities of the Kampung Bahasa Program during covid pandemic. From the research, it was known that (1) about 80% of the students were frantic with worries over the spread of COVID-19 while they were attending face-to-face learning sessions, and (2) in fact, 100% of the students were in good condition and full of spirit because the face-to-face session were provided twice a week.

The physiological factors showed that most students joining the Kampung Bahasa Program also had worries about the spread of COVID-19, but they attended the learning sessions in a good condition and they were full of spirit during the sessions. Pihak sekolah melalui ketua kampung bahasa berupaya on behalf of the principal of the school, the leader of the program tried to continue the learning program during the pandemic and at the same time ensure that all students keep in a good condition; therefore, the learning program was conducted online and offline. For offline sessions, students of a class were divided into two groups, and the session was provided twice, instead of three times as it was before the pandemic, a week. Moreover, given that learning activities of the Kampung Bahasa Program were conducted in the house of neighbors of the school, the leader of the program ordered them to obey the health protocols during the learning processes.

Psychological Factors
Walgito (2010) explained that human behaviors in everyday life are influenced and shaped by three components, namely perceptual, emotional and attitudinal components. Those components cover interests, basic competencies, intelligence, needs, dreams, self perception, pride, self-confidence, fear for communication, worries about tests, and fear of negative evaluation. From the research it was known that (1) 90% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program joined the program for their own interest and willingness; (2) 90% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program had basic skills or good academic achievement in English subject; (3) 80% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program had good speaking skills – this was proved by the fact that of the four English skills, their speaking skills got the highest score; (4) 60% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program had great intelligence and has liked English since they were in elementary schools. Some of the have got good score for English subject since they were in junior high schools (20%), and some have got good score for English subject since joining the Kampung Bahasa Program (20%); (5) 100% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program believed that mastery of English skills is necessary; (6) 80% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program dreamt of studying or working abroad; (7) 80% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program
felt nervous and even inferior when they first joined the program because they saw many of their fellow students speak English fluently; (8) 80% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program had better speaking skills than their classmates; (9) 70% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program demonstrated great confidence when speaking in front of many people, both in or outside the class of the Kampung Bahasa Program; (10) 100% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program felt afraid of failure, worried, nervous and tense when facing practical examination; and (11) 80% of students of the Kampung Bahasa Program were afraid of earning bad grades and being deemed to be incapable if making mistakes when giving a presentation in front of many people.

The most fundamental component of the psychological factors were students’ needs and fears for communication. This means that students of the Kampung Bahasa Program accepted the mastery of English skills as a necessity because it would help them not only to have a good score for English subject at the school but also to have a strong bargaining power after graduation; however, they always felt nervous everytime they had to give a presentation about an object in front of many people. Other components of the psychological factors were interests, basic competencies, fear of negative evaluation, potentials, dreams, self-perception, pride, worries about tests, self-confidence, and intelligence.

External Factors Influencing Students’ Interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program

Family

Family can perform influential role in students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program. Parental consent and support by being responsible for financial administration costs of the program, increasing children’ motivation and creating comfortable atmosphere for children to learn properly at home are highly instrumental in streamlining students’ learning process. Besides, it is also important for other close relations to express their support based on their experience. It was known from the research that 100% of students’ parents motivated and supported their children to join the Kampung Bahasa Program; 60% of students’ close relations like uncles and aunts suggested students to join the Kampung Bahasa Program; 100% of the students had no objection that they had to pay the tuition of particular price for the program although the pandemic of COVID-19 also affected the economy of students’ parents, most of whom were traders (80%), not civil servants; and 70% of students lived in a house with pleasant atmosphere for them learn and practice English.

The data showed that students’ parents played their role in motivating their children to join the program by providing financial support and relaxed atmosphere for their children to study comfortably and other close relations also helped increase students’ motivation based on their previous experience. In this case, the support and motivation of students’ parents and their disposition to pay the tuition were the most significant factors to be taken into account because parents were the ones who were responsible for their childrens’ financial needs and had full authority to give them parental consent for joining the program. Although they suffered general decrease in income during covid pandemic, they always tried to pay the tuition either by paying it in installment or paying it when their children earned the course certificate from the Kampung Bahasa Program. Nevertheless, positive and calm atmosphere in the house conducive for practicing English and the support from such relations as uncles and aunts were also instrumental in maintaining students’ motivation in the Kampung Bahasa Program.

Academic Settings of the Schools

The factor of academic settings is related to teachers (the leader of the Kampung Bahasa Program, English teachers of the tenth grade, and mentors of the program), classmates, learning media, facilities, place and time. The research found some facts. First, 100% of students’ decision to join the Kampung Bahasa Program was driven by the involvement of the English teacher teaching them in the tenth grade.
in the program. The teacher had to explain that mastery of English skills was necessary because many book references were written in English; likewise, the industrial world also required employees to speak in foreign languages, at least to speak English. In addition, they had also stressed that unlike the one at schools, English learning in the Kampung Bahasa Program was designed to put greater emphasis on English skill practices. Moreover, to measure students’ basic English skills, the teacher was assigned to organize a brainstorming session to ask them simple questions phrased in some sentences written in different verb tenses. Subsequently, those students were asked to make a video on which they presented an essay on “Introduction about self in English” they wrote themselves. Besides, to make students committed to joining the Kampung Bahasa Program, the teacher reminded those students that they should actively engage in learning activities in the Kampung Bahasa Program; otherwise, the teacher would summon those students rarely attending the class to ask them what problem they had and to find good solution to the problem.

In addition to the English teacher, the leader of the program also contributed to maintaining students’ motivation to attend class sessions in the Kampung Bahasa Program despite the COVID pandemic. In order to keep those students in good health, the leader made some efforts, including: (a) informing students about the establishment of online learning sessions; (b) providing offline learning sessions twice a week; (c) asking the permission of neighbors of the school to continue the program by obeying the health protocols. As for the effort of drawing students’ intention to join the Kampung Bahasa Program, the leader stressed that the program will (a) use learning methods and systems different from the ones used in formal institutions; (b) put more emphasis on practical English skills (speaking, listening, writing, reading, and vocabulary); and (c) go through gradual learning processes (continuity). The leader did not make selection for those who wanted to join the program, so that all tenth-grade students had equal opportunities to enroll in the program. In order to make students committed to joining all the learning activities in the Kampung Bahasa Program, the leader ensured that (a) the program focused on developing skills necessarily required in the academic and industrial world; (b) those students with mastery of English skills had greater chances to get a job; (c) those students with mastery of English skills to study or work abroad with higher levels of salaries.

Second, 70% of students joined the Kampung Bahasa Program because they were invited by their fellow students having joined the program. Third, 100% of students felt so happy that they can understand the tutor’s explanation well. In addition to teaching, those tutors were also asked (a) to interact with students to know the reason why they joined the program – most of them joined the program to get better academic achievement at school and prepare their future career; (b) to help those students adapt to the new condition. In the beginning, most students felt shy to socialize with other students. To overcome this problem, the tutors divided the students into some groups for conversation practices, and they mentioned some names of those students in examples when giving an explanation; (c) to remind these students of the importance of mastery of English skills in their life in the academic world and in their effort to build up their future career because those with good English skills would have a bargaining power to gain higher salaries.

Fourth, 100% of the learning media used included whiteboards, visual media like pictures and videos presented via smartphones or Android. Fifth, 90% of the facility for learning activities were adequate. Sixth, 100% of the rooms where learning activities were conducted were comfortable and calm. Seventh, 100% of the learning schedule of the Kampung Bahasa Program was effective.

Listed by their importance, the factors of academic settings of the school were the involvement of the English teacher of the tenth-grade, the number of students joining the program, the tutors who gave understandable explanation, the learning media including whiteboards, visual media like pictures and videos presented via smartphones or Android, adequate facilities, comfortable, calm rooms for learning, and effective schedule.
Socio-demographic Factors Influencing Students’ Interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program

The first Time Students Learned English

70% of those students joining the program began to learn English when they were in kindergarten in which they learned English seriously in the sense that they learned English vocabularies, repeating them and using them in speaking and writing practices.

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is a measurement of the level of knowledge learned or skills developed in a particular academic subject which is usually determined through an examination (Suryabrata, 2011). Only 50% of all students got good achievement in English subject.

Socio-demographic factors influencing students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program at PVHS 1 of Boyolangu during the pandemic of COVID-19 included the first time those students leaned English and their academic achievement. The first time to learn English refers to the first experience in which ones were introduced to English vocabularies, repeated and used them in speaking and writing. 70% of those students joining the program began to learn English when they were in kindergarten in which they were taught English vocabularies about things in the surroundings, English numbers and English songs. They managed to understand the lesson because they asked to repeat it. Practice makes perfect. Gradually, almost imperceptibly, they focused on their basic listening and speaking. As a result, only 50% of students got good score for English subject. There are four skills in English subject, namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing, but not all students could master all of the skills very well. In a process of learning English, those students who dare to speak English are considered to be smart students because to speak English needs at least mastery of English vocabularies, grammar, and pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

For the purpose of drawing and increasing the interest of students of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu in joining the Kampung Bahasa Program, there were some factors which should be taken into account.

The first was the internal factor which includes physiological and psychological factors. The data on physiological factors showed that most students joining the Kampung Bahasa Program had worries over the spread of COVID-19; however, they were still in good health and attended the class session eagerly. In this respect, the school along with those people whose houses were rented to be the classrooms tried to make some efforts in addition to obeying the health protocols to reduce students’ worries during the implementation of the program. The efforts made included the use of blended learning methods (between online and offline learning). The offline class session was conducted by dividing students of a class into two groups and those sessions were provided twice, instead of three times, a week. Besides, given that the learning activities were conducted in civil people’s houses, the school asked permission to continue the program while still following the health protocols during the program by routinely cleaning up the rooms, periodically spraying disinfectant, and asking the people to remind students to regularly wash their hands or applying hand sanitizers, wearing face masks, and obeying the policy of social distancing.

Meanwhile, psychological factors highly influential during the learning process were students’ need and fear for communication. The english teacher of the tenth grade should have actively encouraged students to join the program by explaining that English skills are needed not only to get good scores for English subjects but also to help those students after graduation to easily get jobs with high levels of salaries. He should also have assigned students to speak English during English class.

The second factor to be considered was the external factor, namely the factor of family and the academic settings of the school. As for the factor of family, the willingness of students’ parents to pay the tuition was the most influential factor because parents were the ones who fulfilled students’ financial
needs and had full authority to permit them to join the program. In this regard, it is important to socialize the urgency of the Kampung Bahasa Program in the scheduled meeting with students’ parents. As the one that is in charge of the management of the program, the school has allowed students’ parents who suffer a decrease in income during the pandemic of COVID-19 to pay the tuition when their children gained the course certificate from the program. Meanwhile, the factor related to the school and its academic settings included teachers (the leader of the program, the English teacher of the tenth grade, and English tutors of the program), classmates, learning media, facilities, place, and time. Listed by their importance, the factors of academic settings of the school were the involvement of the English teacher of the tenth-grade, the number of students joining the program, the tutors who gave understandable explanation, the learning media including whiteboards, visual media like pictures and videos presented via smartphones or Android, adequate facilities, comfortable, calm rooms for learning, and effective schedule. Therefore, it is important for teachers to remind and support their students to follow all the activities of the program, monitor students’ attendance to their classes and ask the reason why they skip their class.

The third and the last factor which influenced students’ interests in the Kampung Bahasa Program of PVHS 1 of Boyolangu during the pandemic of COVID-19 was the socio-demographic factor which included the first time students learned English and academic achievement. It was known from the research that 70% of those students began to learn English when they were in kindergarten in which they were taught English vocabularies about things in the surroundings, English numbers and songs. This means that those students learn English after they learn their mothers’ language, so that they had strong memory of English vocabularies because they had practiced English many times. This means that those students has had basic English skills good enough to force them to practice English speaking, and the school can reimplement the program of Day to help students reduce their nervousness.

As for academic achievement, only 50% of students got good score for English subject. There are four skills in English subject, namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing, but not all students could master all of the skills very well. In a process of learning English, those students who dare to speak English are considered to be smart students because to speak English needs at least mastery of English vocabularies, grammar, and pronunciation.

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