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Research Article

The Role of Motivation and Aptitude towards Students' English Learning Achievement

Laily Syarifah^{*1}, Farra Syarliza Setiawan², Noor Rachmawaty³, Syamdianita⁴, Weningtyas Prameswari⁵, Susilo⁶

^{1,2,3,4,5,6} Mulawarman University, Jl. Kuaro, Gn. Kelua, Kec. Samarinda Ulu, Kota Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur 75119, Indonesia

KEYWORDS

Aptitude;
 English Learning Achievement;
 Motivation

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate and measure the role of aptitude and motivation on Indonesia EFL students' English learning achievement and to examine which factor has a higher influence on Indonesia EFL students' English learning achievement. A random sampling were determined with a total of 111 students of a Public Vocational High School participated in this study. A 34-item questionnaire of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery or AMTB (Gardner, 2004) adapted by Imsa-Ard (2020) was used to identify students' motivation in learning English. Multiple regression analysis was performed to analyse the correlation between motivation and language aptitude towards English Learning Achievement. Students' motivation aspects, specifically personal and educational showed significant correlation to their English Learning achievement ($p=0.004$, $p = 0.001 < 0.01$). Meanwhile, for emotional, professional, and parental aspects, there are no significant correlation ($p = 0.01$, $p= 0.071$, and 0.061 , respectively). Students' language aptitude showed significant correlation to their English learning achievement ($p=0.000 < 0.01$). Aptitude has a higher influence in students' English learning achievement than motivation ($r = 0.451 > 0.315$). Larger scale of participants is suggested in the future studies to measure students' motivation and aptitude in English learning achievement.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR(S):

E-mail:
 lailysy07@gmail.com*

INTRODUCTION

As English is also taught in Indonesia since earlier age, many students still lacking when they are asked to communicate in English due to structure and planning requirements (Derakhshan et al., 2016). Psychological factors and cognitive ability play an important role in order for students to enhance their second language acquisition. Students' who have high motivation and intelligence

usually have higher learning achievement than those who do not have them (Dörnyei, 2013).

Individual differences for language learning have been investigated for many years in second language acquisition studies. Individual differences are the distinctive qualities that distinguish language learners from one another. These qualities can include motivation, anxiety, aptitude, learning styles, and cognitive capacities, all of which can influence the language learning process (Isakovna & Maftuna, 2023; Viet, 2021). The most reliable indicators of language

learning success are aptitude and motivation, which together produce multiple correlations with language achievement (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Ellis, 2004; Kondo, 2020).

English Learning achievement refers to various aspects, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and is frequently measured through standardized tests or assessments. Language learning strategies are what learners do to learn language and relate to learners' characteristics, learning styles, and learning achievement. (Suwaranak, 2012 in Hayati, 2015). Ampa & Akib (2019) suggested recognizing the achievements of student as important because it allows educators to reflect on their learning and plan appropriate next steps. Furthermore, they must recognize the full range of accomplishments and assist students in understanding the skills they possess. As a result, assessing learning achievement is necessary because it benefits both students and educators.

1. Motivation on English learning achievement

Success in the learning process is largely dependent on motivation (Purnama, Rahayu, Yugafiati, 2019). Motivation can be broadly classified into two categories: instrumental and integrative motivation. Motivation is the learner's desire or drive to acquire the language. Whereas instrumental motivation relates to the learner's drive to accomplish a particular objective, like passing a language exam or landing a job, integrative motivation is the learner's desire to integrate with the target language community. Studies have repeatedly shown that instrumental motivation is not as good a predictor of language acquisition performance as integrative motivation (Dörnyei, 2013). Feng et al. (2013) conducted research about the relationship between motivation and learning achievement in EFL, with gender as the variable. This study examined the motivation as well as achievement in learning English among different genders attending vocational college. A measure of learning achievement in this study includes this semester's and last semester's final scores, as well as self-assessment. The first two ratings are evaluated by the instructor, while the third is evaluated by the students themselves. However, students' learning achievements differ depending on gender. Female students outperform male students in terms of achievement. Enabling students to achieve is the key to increasing students' learning motivation during the learning process. Learning motivations and learning outcomes are both influenced by one another.

Li & Zheng (2017) conducted research on the use of eSchoolbag to examine students' learning motivation and English learning achievement. Through a longitudinal observation and analysis, this study investigated the impact of students' academic motivations on their English learning achievement in the eSchoolbag-based learning

environment. It is said that when using eSchoolbag to learn English, students' academic motivation had a positive effect on their learning achievement. However, the reasoning behind this fact may be more important in the future for understanding effective teaching and learning. As a result, the study looked into why some students had significantly higher academic motivation than others, resulting in better learning performance.

The research by Al-Wossabi (2022) used methodology included a thorough review and synthesis of influential second language acquisition (SLA) work on aptitude and motivation. It stated that considering teachers' practices and their impact on learners' motivation and aptitude in second language acquisition is important. This research sought to investigate the impact of teachers' classroom practices on motivating students to engage in effective learning and improving their ability to acquire and apply L2 knowledge. An analysis of research findings on aptitude and motivation, as well as their practical and pedagogical relevance to L2 learning achievement are also included. The findings imply that motivation is a key factor in language learning, influencing learners' effort, responsibility, and success. Intrinsic motivation has been shown to lead to better outcomes, and teachers' communicative practices and feedback can impact students' motivation.

2. Aptitude on English proficiency

Language aptitude refers to the ability to learn languages naturally or intrinsically. In order to successfully acquire, comprehend, and use languages, a person must possess a variety of cognitive and learning skills. The research on aptitude has been supported by Kartini & Farah (2021) as they reported that aptitude has its correlation to English proficiency. Language aptitude refers to the ability to learn languages naturally or intrinsically. In order to successfully acquire, comprehend, and use languages, a person must possess a variety of cognitive and learning skills.

She gathered information from 65 eighth-semester English majors at the UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia, faculty of teacher training English department. She did this by giving the students a paper-and-pencil version of the TOEFL exam as well as a series of LLAMA tests that assessed their knowledge of phonetic (implicit) memory, grammatical inference, vocabulary acquisition, and sound-symbol correspondence. The data was then processed with SPSS version 21 to determine the correlation between each variable. Pearson correlation was used to determine the correlation between implicit and explicit scores from LLAMA and the TOEFL. It indicated that explicit language aptitude is a stronger predictor of language proficiency than implicit language aptitude, as evidenced by the significant correlation found between explicit language aptitude and TOEFL scores. The study suggests

that language aptitude tests could be used to categorize students for TOEFL preparation classes.

It is understood that aptitude and motivation has impacts in English learning achievement. Teachers' practices and their influence on learners, specifically motivation needs to be carried to show better outcomes. As for this study, the researchers would like to find more about how aptitude and motivation can show an outcome that is as good in English learning achievement. This study aims to investigate and measure the role of aptitude and motivation in Indonesia EFL students' English learning Achievement and to examine which has a higher influence in Indonesia EFL students' English learning achievement.

METHOD

This study used quantitative correlation design between motivation and aptitude towards English learning achievement. Participants of the study were 11th grade students' of a public vocational high school in Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur, Indonesia. A total of 111 students from four different majors participated in this study with random sampling. To identify students' motivation in learning English, a 34-item questionnaire of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery or AMTB (Gardner, 2004) adapted by (Imsa-ard, 2020) was used in this study. The questionnaire consist of five parts such as personal aspect, emotional aspect, educational aspect, professional aspect, and parental aspect. 25-items of Modern Language Aptitude Test or MLAT (Carroll & Sapon, 1959) was also used to measure students' aptitude of learning language. The score of the English final semester exam was used to assess their English Learning Achievement (ELA).

1. Data Collection Procedure

First, participants were asked to answer a 34-item questionnaire of AMTB with four Likert scales which are 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree, for negative questions, the Likert scale was reversed to make the counting easier. After participants answered the questionnaire, they were asked to answer 25-items of MLAT which has five different parts such as number learning, phonetic script, spelling cues, words in sentences, and paired associates. Each part has a different time limit. When answering, the students were supervised by the researcher to avoid misunderstanding.

2. Data Analyses

Multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the correlation between students' motivation and language aptitude towards English learning achievement. The maximum score of the 34-items questionnaire of AMTB is 136 and minimum score is 34. For 25-items of MLAT, the point of each question is 2 therefore the maximum score is

50. Final semester exam has 50 questions with 2 points in each question resulting in 100 as the maximum score. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 25 tool. The effect size chart by Cohen (1988) was also used to see how the independent variables, in this study, motivation and attitude influenced the dependent variable, English Learning Achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To find the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the researchers have done multiple regression analysis between English Learning Achievement score (Y) and Motivation score (X1) and Language Aptitude score (X2).

Table 1 Correlation between Motivation score (X1) and Aptitude score (X2) towards English Learning Achievement (Y)

		MOTIVATION	APTITUDE
Pearson correlation	ELA	0.315	0.451
Sig. (1-tailed)	ELA	0.000	0.000
N	ELA	111	111

(Source: SPSS ver. 25)

The result of the sig. value (1-tailed) between students' motivation (X1) and English learning achievement (Y) is $0.000 < 0.01$, which means there is significant correlation between those two variables. It also showed a positive relationship between both variables, when the motivation is high the English learning achievement is also high. For students' language aptitude (X2) and English learning achievement (Y), the result is $0.000 < 0.01$ which means there is significant correlation between two variables. It also showed a positive relationship, which is when their language aptitude is high their English learning achievement is also high.

Students' motivation aspects, specifically personal and educational showed significant correlation to their English Learning Achievement ($p = 0.004$, $p = 0.001 < 0.01$). Meanwhile, for emotional, professional, and parental aspects, there are no significant correlation to English Learning Achievement ($p = 0.071$, $p = 0.061$, $p = 0.412 > 0.01$). The r pearson correlation between motivation aspects, showed positive correlation except for parental aspect ($r = -0.021$). It means the higher their learning achievement, the lower their parents support. Some students were lack of their parents' encouragement to learn English even though their English learning achievement were high. Their parents think that learning English is not that important.

Table 3 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) English Learning Achievement score with Motivation score and Aptitude score.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	7354.167	2	3677.083	18.238	.000 ^b
Residual	2177.5130	108	201.622		
Total	2912.9297	110			

ANOVA

a. Dependent Variable : ELA

b. Predictors : (Constant), APTITUDE, MOTIVATION

The table above showed correlation among variables. It indicated that there is correlation among motivation and

aptitude towards students' English learning achievement as the significant value (1-tailed) is $p = 0.00 < 0.01$.

The Pearson correlation between Motivation score (X1) and English final exam score (Y) is significant at 0.315, $p < 0.01$ (1-tailed). The degree of correlation is considered weak as it is in $0.21 < r < 0.40$. Students' motivation in learning English plays an important role in their learning achievement as it is in line with previous studies (Al-Wossabi, 2022; Feng et al., 2013; Li & Zheng, 2017). The higher students' motivation in learning English, the higher their learning achievement because they were eager to learn English for their own interest and education need. This is proved with the r Pearson correlation between personal aspect ($r = 0.253$, $p < 0.01$) and educational aspect ($r = 0.301$, $p < 0.01$) towards English learning achievement.

Table 4. The Pearson correlation between Aptitude score (X2) and English exam score (Y)

		Personal	Emotional	Educational	Profesional	Paranetral
Pearson Correlation	ELA	0.253	0.141	0.301	0.148	-0.021
Sig. (1-tailed)	ELA	0.004	0.071	0.001	0.061	0.412
N	ELA	111	111	111	111	111

The Pearson correlation between Aptitude score (X2) and English exam score (Y) is significant at 0.451, $p < 0.01$ (1-tailed). The degree of correlation is considered moderate as it is in $0.41 < r < 0.60$. Students' language aptitude also plays an important role in their learning achievement in line with previous study conducted by Kartini & Farah (2021).

The effect size of motivation is $r = 0.315$ and aptitude is $r = 0.451$, it can be seen that aptitude ($0.451 > 0.315$) has a higher influence in students' English learning achievement than motivation. In the research conducted by Kondo (2020), motivation had more effect on language skill than Phonological Working Memory (PWM). On the contrary, this study showed that students' language aptitude is the best predictor of their English learning achievement.

Motivation and aptitude are individual differences in learning a second language, in this case foreign languages that have been investigated by many researchers for years and the result always comes in high scores. This study also supports previous studies that have examined the correlation between students' motivation and aptitude toward English learning achievement.

CONCLUSION

This study is aimed to examine the students' motivation and language aptitude towards their English learning achievement. The result showed that both variables were significant predictors of students' learning achievement. In addition, students' language aptitude had more effect on English learning achievement than students' motivation in learning English, it is because most students were able to use their cognitive ability in terms of memory, as well as analytical reasoning.

This study has a limitation. The study was conducted only on one grade which is 11th grade of a public vocational school that has three different grades and also only on four different majors from five different majors. Larger scale of participants is suggested in the future studies to measure students' motivation and aptitude in English learning achievement. Even though this study has limitation, the findings still contributed to the role of motivation and aptitude towards English learning achievement and highlights the importance of aptitude in particular. The authors would suggest to the future researchers to dive deeper into motivation and aptitude in English learning beyond vocational school, as well as for other users especially in the education field to apply English learning that enhance students' motivation and aptitude in order to

create a relevant learning that can be useful for future research with the similar topic.

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