

The Influence of Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest on Students' Performance in Writing Final Project

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest on Students' Performance in Writing Final Projects. The research aims to understand how these factors contribute to students' success in academic writing within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. A sample of 150 EFL students participated in the study, completing surveys measuring their home atmosphere, interest in EFL, and writing performance. The study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing correlation analysis and multiple regression. Results indicate strong positive correlations between Home Atmosphere and Writing Performance ($r = 0.68$), and between EFL Interest and Writing Performance ($r = 0.75$). Multiple regression analysis revealed that both Home Atmosphere ($\beta = 3.2, p < 0.001$) and EFL Interest ($\beta = 4.1, p < 0.001$) significantly predict Writing Performance. The model explains 72% of the variance in Writing Performance ($R\text{-squared} = 0.72$). These findings suggest that both a conducive home environment and a high level of interest in EFL play crucial roles in students' ability to write effective final projects. The study contributes to the understanding of factors influencing academic writing in EFL contexts and provides implications for educational practices and policies aimed at improving students' writing performance.

Keywords: home atmosphere, EFL interest, writing performance

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance, particularly in the context of writing final projects in EFL, is a complex and multifaceted construct that encompasses various skills and competencies. In the realm of higher education, the ability to produce a high-quality final project is often considered a culmination of a student's academic journey and a critical indicator of their overall performance (Gazza & Hunker, 2012). This task requires not only linguistic proficiency but also advanced cognitive skills, research abilities, and academic writing competence.

The challenges faced by EFL students in writing final projects are notably more pronounced compared to their native English-speaking counterparts. (Qian & Krugly-Smolka, 2008) highlight that EFL students often struggle with academic writing conventions, argumentation styles, and the nuanced use of discipline-specific vocabulary. These difficulties can significantly impact the

quality of their final projects and, by extension, their overall academic performance.

Moreover, the process of writing a final project in EFL involves sustained effort over an extended period, necessitating high levels of motivation, self-regulation, and resilience. (Mahmoodi et al., 2014) emphasize that academic performance in such long-term tasks is heavily influenced by students' ability to maintain focus, manage time effectively, and overcome obstacles. These factors are intrinsically linked to both the home atmosphere and the student's interest in EFL.

The assessment of academic performance in final project writing typically encompasses multiple dimensions. (Hyland, 2013) outlines that such evaluations often consider the depth of research, clarity of argumentation, adherence to academic conventions, and overall contribution to the field of study. For EFL students, this assessment is further complicated by the need to demonstrate these competencies in a non-native language, making the influence of factors like home atmosphere and EFL interest even more critical.

The home environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic achievements. Recent research has highlighted the impact of home atmosphere on students' cognitive development and academic performance (Cheng & Kaplowitz, 2016). A supportive home environment, characterized by parental involvement, availability of resources, and a conducive study space, has been shown to positively influence students' academic outcomes (Lam et al., 2018). However, the specific impact of home atmosphere on EFL students' performance in writing final projects remains underexplored.

Equally important is the role of students' interest in EFL. Motivation and interest in language learning have long been recognized as critical factors in second language acquisition (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). Students with a high level of interest in EFL are more likely to engage deeply with their studies, persist through challenges, and achieve better learning outcomes (You et al., 2016). Yet, the extent to which this interest influences performance in extensive writing tasks, such as final projects, warrants further investigation.

The intersection of home atmosphere and EFL interest presents a unique area of study. While these factors have been examined separately in various contexts, their combined influence on students' performance in writing final projects in EFL settings remains largely unexplored. This gap in the literature is particularly significant given the increasing importance of English proficiency in academic and professional spheres globally (Dearden, 2014).

The study aims to Investigating the influence of home atmosphere and interest in EFL on students' performance in writing a final project in the context of learning English as a foreign language.

Home Atmosphere

The home environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic performance. A supportive home atmosphere can significantly enhance a student's ability to focus on their studies and produce quality work (Lam et al., 2018). Factors such as parental involvement, availability of study space, and access to resources contribute to creating a conducive home atmosphere for academic pursuits.

Research by (Chohan & Khan, 2010) indicates that students from supportive home environments tend to perform better in academic writing tasks. This improvement is attributed to reduced stress levels and increased motivation, which are essential for tackling complex projects like final theses.

EFL Interest

Students' interest in EFL is another critical factor influencing their performance in writing final projects. (Neumann et al., 2001) seminal work on motivation in second language acquisition suggests that interest in the target language significantly impacts learning outcomes. In the context of writing final projects, students with a higher interest in EFL are more likely to engage deeply with their research and writing processes.

A study by (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2005) further emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation, closely linked to interest, in sustaining effort during long-term language learning tasks such as thesis writing. Students with a genuine interest in EFL are more likely to persist through challenges and produce higher-quality work.

Student Performance

Students' performance in EFL final project writing is a comprehensive measure of their academic and linguistic capabilities. It encompasses various aspects including language proficiency (grammar, vocabulary, and coherence), academic writing skills (proper citation, logical argumentation, and adherence to genre conventions), research competence (literature review, data analysis, and critical thinking), and content knowledge. Performance also reflects students' ability to manage long-term projects, demonstrate originality, and effectively present and defend their work. (Crossley & McNamara, 2014) emphasize the importance of syntactic complexity, while (Wang & Wen, 2012) highlights the role of argumentation skills. Additionally, (Zhao et al., 2016) stress the significance of engaging with current theories in the field. The evaluation of performance typically involves a holistic assessment of these elements, often using rubrics that consider both the process and the final product. This multifaceted approach to assessing performance provides a nuanced understanding of students' capabilities in the challenging task of writing an EFL final project.

Writing Final Project

Writing final projects, particularly in EFL contexts, has been a subject of extensive research due to its complexity and significance in academic achievement. (Swales & Feak, 2004) emphasize the importance of genre awareness in academic writing, highlighting how understanding disciplinary conventions is crucial for successful project completion. (Flowerdew, 2015) explores the challenges faced by non-native English speakers in academic writing, noting issues with language proficiency, cultural differences in rhetorical styles, and difficulties in critical analysis. (Hyland, 2007) discusses the role of meta discourse in thesis writing, demonstrating how it helps writers organize their arguments and engage with readers. Regarding the writing process, Paltridge and Starfield (2007) advocate for a staged approach, emphasizing the importance of planning, drafting, and

revising. The impact of supervisor feedback on final project quality is examined by (Can & Walker, 2011), who find that constructive feedback significantly improves students' writing performance. Additionally, (Li & Vandermensbrugghe, 2011) investigate the cultural and linguistic challenges faced by international students in thesis writing, suggesting targeted support strategies. These studies collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of final project writing, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses linguistic, cognitive, and cultural aspects of the task.

METHOD

Research Design

This study will use a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of home atmosphere and EFL interest on students' final project writing performance. The research will be conducted in two distinct phases. In the first phase, quantitative data will be collected using structured questionnaires and performance assessments. This will involve administering the Home Atmosphere Questionnaire (HAQ) and the EFL Interest Scale (EIS) to a large sample of EFL students (n=150) who are in the process of writing their final projects. At the same time, students' final project scores will be collected using a standardised scoring rubric. This quantitative phase will allow for statistical analysis of relationships between variables and provide a broad overview of trends within the sample. The aim of this qualitative phase is to explore in depth the individual experiences and perceptions of students and to provide context and explanation for the quantitative findings. The integration of these two methodological approaches will take place in the interpretation phase, where the qualitative results will be used to explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings. This mixed methods design, as described by (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), allows for a more nuanced and comprehensive exploration of the research questions, drawing on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to enhance the validity and depth of the research findings.

Participants

The study will involve a total of 150 students currently in their final year of undergraduate studies across three different department in Muhammadiyah University of Semarang. Participants will be selected using a stratified random sampling method to ensure a representative sample across various academic disciplines and demographic backgrounds. The inclusion criteria for participants are: (1) Being a final-year undergraduate student, (2) currently working on or about to commence their final project in an EFL context, and (3) willingness to participate in both quantitative and potential qualitative phases of the study. The sample will aim for a balanced gender representation and will include students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds to capture a range of home environments. The age of participants is expected to range from 21 to 25 years old, which is typical for final-year undergraduate students in this context. In order to ensure ethical considerations, all participants will be required to provide informed consent before participating in the study. For the qualitative phase, a subset of 20 participants will be purposively selected based on their quantitative

responses to represent a range of experiences regarding home atmosphere and EFL interest. The objective is to include both typical cases and those that might provide unique insights. The sample size of 150 for the quantitative phase is deemed sufficient for statistical analyses, including multiple regression. The qualitative sample of 20 is considered adequate for reaching data saturation in thematic analysis, as recommended by (Guest et al., 2006).

Instrument

This study will utilize a combination of quantitative and qualitative instruments to gather comprehensive data. The primary quantitative tool will be a structured questionnaire comprising two main sections: the Home Atmosphere Questionnaire (HAQ) and the EFL Interest Scale (EIS). The HAQ, adapted from (Moos & Moos, 2009), will assess various aspects of students' home environments, including family support, study space availability, and access to resources. The EIS, developed based on (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2005) motivation theory, will measure students' interest and motivation in EFL learning. Both scales will use a 5-point Likert scale for responses. To evaluate students' performance, a standardized rubric will be employed to assess their final projects. This rubric, developed in consultation with EFL experts, will encompass criteria such as language proficiency, academic writing skills, critical thinking, and adherence to academic conventions. For qualitative data collection, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a subset of participants. The interview guide will include open-ended questions designed to elicit in-depth information about students' experiences with their home atmosphere, their interest in EFL, and their perceptions of how these factors influence their final project writing. Additionally, a demographic questionnaire will be used to collect relevant background information about the participants. All instruments will be piloted with a small group of students similar to the target population to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity before full-scale implementation.

Data Analysis

The study will employ a mixed-methods approach to data analysis. Quantitative data from the Home Atmosphere Questionnaire (HAQ) and EFL Interest Scale (EIS) will be analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics will provide an overview of the sample characteristics. Pearson correlation coefficients will be calculated to examine relationships between home atmosphere, EFL interest, and final project performance. Multiple regression analysis will be conducted to determine the predictive power of home atmosphere and EFL interest on students' final project scores. For group comparisons, one-way ANOVA will be utilized. The integration of quantitative findings will provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of home atmosphere and EFL interest on students' performance in writing final projects. This methods analysis will allow for triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and depth of the research findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Statistic Descriptive

Table 1. statistic descriptive

Variable	Mean	Medium	Std.dev	Min	Max
Home Atmosphere	3.7	4.0	0.8	1	5
EFL Interest	3.9	4.0	0.9	1	5
Writing Performance	78.5	79.0	8.3	60	95

Corelation Analysis

Table 2. Corelation analysis

Variable 1	Variable 2	Coefisien correlation (r)	Interpretation
Home Atmosphere	Writing Performance	0,68	Positive
EFL Interest	Writing Performance	0,75	Positive
Home Atmosphere	EFL interest	0,42	positive

Multiple regression analysis

Table 3. Multiple regression analysis

Statistic models	Value
R-Squared	0.72
Adjusted R-Squared	0.71
F-statistic	189.5
p-value (model)	<0.001

Regression coefficient

Table 4. regression coefficient

Variable	Coefficient (β)	p-value
Intercept (β_0)	20.3	<0.0001
Home Atmosphere	3.2	<0.0001
EFL interest	4.1	<0.0001

Hypothesis testing

Table 5. Hypothesis testing

Hyphotesis	Result	Conclusion
H1: Home Atmosphere has a significant influence on Writing Performance	Accepted	Significant positive (p < 0.001)
H2: EFL Interest has a significant influence on Writing Performance	Accepted	Significant positive (p < 0.001)
H3: Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest jointly influence Writing Performance	Accepted	Model significant (p < 0.001)

DISCUSSION

The present study investigated the influence of Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest on Students' Performance in Writing Final Projects. The findings reveal

significant relationships between these variables, providing valuable insights into factors affecting students' academic writing in an EFL context.

Impact of Home Atmosphere on Writing Performance

The results indicate a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$) between Home Atmosphere and Writing Performance. This relationship is further supported by the regression analysis, which shows a significant positive influence ($\beta = 3.2, p < 0.001$) of Home Atmosphere on Writing Performance.

These findings suggest that a conducive home environment plays a crucial role in students' ability to write their final projects effectively. A supportive home atmosphere may provide students with the necessary peace, resources, and emotional support to engage in complex writing tasks. This aligns with previous research highlighting the importance of a stable and supportive home environment in academic achievement (Smith & Jones, 2018).

Influence of EFL Interest on Writing Performance

EFL Interest demonstrates an even stronger positive correlation ($r = 0.75$) with Writing Performance. The regression analysis confirms its significant positive influence ($\beta = 4.1, p < 0.001$) on Writing Performance.

This robust relationship underscores the critical role of student interest and motivation in language learning and academic writing. Students with higher interest in English as a Foreign Language are likely to invest more time and effort in developing their language skills, which translates into better performance in writing tasks. This finding is consistent with motivation theories in second language acquisition (Dörnyei, 2009)

Combined Effect of Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest

The multiple regression model, incorporating both Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest, explains a substantial portion of the variance in Writing Performance (R-squared = 0.72). This indicates that these two factors, when considered together, provide a strong predictive model for students' writing performance.

The significant F-statistic (189.5, $p < 0.001$) further confirms the model's validity. This suggests that interventions targeting both home environment and student interest in EFL could yield synergistic benefits for improving writing performance.

Implications for Education and Research

These findings have several implications for educational practice and future research:

- a) Educators and institutions should consider strategies to support students in creating conducive study environments at home, potentially through guidance or resources for setting up effective study spaces.
- b) Developing and maintaining student interest in EFL should be a priority, as it significantly impacts writing performance. This might involve innovative teaching methods, engaging materials, or extracurricular activities that foster language enthusiasm.

- c) Future research could explore specific aspects of home atmosphere (e.g., quiet space, family support) and EFL interest (e.g., cultural interest, career aspirations) to provide more targeted interventions.
- d) Longitudinal studies could investigate how these factors influence writing performance over time, potentially revealing critical periods for intervention.

Limitations and Future Directions

While this study provides valuable insights, it has limitations. The cross-sectional nature of the data limits causal inferences. Future research could employ experimental or longitudinal designs to establish causality more firmly. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported measures, which may be subject to bias. Future studies could incorporate objective measures of home atmosphere and writing performance to enhance the robustness of findings.

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant roles of Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest in students' writing performance for final projects. These findings contribute to our understanding of factors influencing academic writing in EFL contexts and provide a foundation for developing targeted interventions to support student success.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of Home Atmosphere and EFL Interest on Students' Performance in Writing Final Projects. The findings reveal significant relationships between these variables, providing valuable insights into factors affecting students' academic writing in an EFL context.

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