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# The Effect of Microsystem Environment Toward the Students' English Achievement in *Pesantren*-Based Junior High School

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**Abstract**

This study aims to examine the effect of the microsystem environment on students' English achievement in a pesantren-based junior high school setting. The microsystem, as part of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, includes the students' immediate environments such as family, peers, teachers, and school infrastructure, which are considered crucial in shaping their academic performance. Using a quantitative correlational design, data were collected from 151 junior high school students in two pesantren-based schools through a validated questionnaire and their English exam scores. The analysis was conducted using simple linear regression. The findings reveal that the microsystem environment has a significant and positive effect on students' English achievement ($R^2 = 0.152$, $p < 0.01$), this indicates that 15.2% of the variation in students' English achievement is explained by their microsystem environment. The regression coefficient indicates that a more supportive and engaging microsystem is associated with higher English proficiency among students. These findings suggest the need for pesantren-based schools to enhance supportive and engaging environments to optimize students' academic success, particularly in English language learning.

**Keywords**: microsystem, English achievement, *pesantren*-based school, ecological theory.

## A. INTRODUCTION

The English language is a global lingua franca, serving as a bridge that connects people from diverse cultural, linguistic, and geographical backgrounds. With over 1.3 billion speakers worldwide, English is not only one of the most widely spoken languages but also an essential tool for international communication, business, education, and diplomacy. English proficiency is considered crucial for academic and professional success, particularly in countries where English

is taught as a foreign language, such as Indonesia. Despite its importance, many students still face challenges in achieving satisfactory English proficiency, especially in school contexts where exposure to English outside the classroom is limited.

One of the key factors influencing students' English achievement is the environment in which they learn. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how different environmental layers shape human development and academic outcomes. Among the five systems identified by the theory, the **microsystem**—which consists of immediate and direct interactions with family, peers, teachers, and school facilities—plays the most fundamental role in influencing students' academic success (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Popa et al., 2020; Zaatari, 2022). A supportive microsystem fosters motivation, confidence, and active participation, while an unsupportive one may lead to disengagement and low achievement.

In the context of *pesantren*-based schools (Islamic boarding schools), the microsystem takes on a unique form. Students live in dormitories and spend most of their time within the school environment, making their daily interactions with peers, teachers, and school infrastructure central to their learning experiences. Unlike in regular schools, students in *pesantren* have limited direct interaction with their parents, as they live apart from their families. However, parental involvement still exists through regular communication with dormitory guardians (*mushrif*), who update parents on their children's well-being, academic progress, and behavior. This indirect parental engagement remains an important component of the students' microsystem.

At the same time, English learning in *pesantren* faces particular challenges. English is taught as a compulsory subject in the classroom, but it is not actively used in daily dormitory life. The students use Javanese or Bahasa in their daily communication. This limited exposure often results in students struggling to practice English beyond formal lessons. Furthermore, some students develop negative attitudes toward English, perceiving it as difficult or irrelevant to their daily lives, which may further hinder achievement.

Despite these challenges, the microsystem in *pesantren* schools has the potential to play a decisive role in supporting English learning. Teachers' encouragement, peer collaboration, adequate school facilities, and consistent parental monitoring through *mushrif* communication all contribute to building a supportive environment that enhances students' academic outcomes (Rong et al., 2017; Djidu & Retnawati, 2021; Eliezer & Marantika, 2022).

Given these circumstances, it is essential to investigate how the microsystem environment influences students' English achievement in *pesantren*-based schools. Such an inquiry not only provides empirical evidence on the role of immediate environments in language learning but also offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers to design effective interventions that align with the unique educational setting of *pesantren*.

## B. RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the profile of students' English achievement in pesantren-based junior high schools?
2. How does the microsystem environment (family, peers, teachers, and school facilities) affect students' English achievement?
3. Is there a significant influence of the microsystem environment (family, peers, teachers, and school facilities) on students' English achievement?

## C. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model, the **microsystem** represents the closest environment where individuals engage in direct and daily interactions. It is regarded as the most immediate, intense, and influential level of the ecological systems that shape human development (Popa et al., 2020). This system includes family, peers, school, and other significant social settings. Children, for instance, interact with parents at home, teachers at school, and peers in playgrounds or classrooms (Manning, 2017; Zaatari, 2022). Understanding the distinctive features of the microsystem is the initial step in analyzing its impact on development (Popa et al., 2020). A child's growth is influenced both by the social agents within this system and by the child's own active participation.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasizes that the microsystem is not a passive context but one where individuals play an active role in shaping and maintaining interactions. Each experience contributes to building interpersonal relationships and developmental outcomes (Navarro & Tudge, 2023). The microsystem exerts a profound influence, particularly from early childhood through adolescence. Within this system, three main determinants—family, peers, and school—have been identified as crucial in shaping academic, social, and emotional development.

1. **Family**. Serving as the primary agent of socialization, the family strongly affects physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional growth (Susilo, 2020). It provides the cultural framework for values, attachments, and patterns of interaction. Parenting styles, family experiences, and household dynamics significantly determine developmental outcomes (Chandrasekaran et al., 2017). Since parents are children's first educators, the family acts as the fundamental subsystem and the initial foundation of personality development.
2. **Peers**. Peer groups—including friends, classmates, and playmates—represent another influential aspect of the microsystem. Research indicates that peer influence shapes not only social development but also behavioral outcomes, including the risk of deviance (Chandrasekaran et al., 2017; Giletta et al., 2021). Peer relationships foster cooperation, social interaction, and skill development (Liu, 2023). Quality of friendships, peer acceptance, and peer pressure all play roles in shaping learning experiences. Positive peer relationships have been shown to directly improve academic performance, with studies reporting a significant correlation ($r = 0.373$, $p < 0.01$) between peer relationships and academic achievement among junior high school students (Nexus, 2023; Liu, 2023; Yaxin, 2024). As students grow, the role of peers becomes increasingly critical in cognitive, social, and emotional development, creating a supportive learning atmosphere that enhances motivation, confidence, and academic outcomes.
3. **School**. Schools constitute another central aspect of the microsystem by shaping the teaching and learning process. They function not only as facilities for acquiring knowledge but also as environments that prepare students for social interaction and lifelong learning (Pulimeno et al., 2020). Effective schooling depends on adequate infrastructure, quality teaching, and the strength of teacher-student relationships. Without sufficient facilities, both teaching and learning processes may be hindered (Hardiana et al., 2023). Particularly during adolescence, schools exert a major impact on development, influencing social interaction, cognitive growth, and academic success (Indah et al., 2024). Extracurricular activities, classroom climate, and instructional quality all contribute significantly to developmental outcomes.

In summary, the environment—including family, peers, and schools—has a substantial role in shaping students' values, motivation, and learning achievements. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory highlights how these immediate contexts provide both opportunities and

constraints, with growth emerging through continuous interactions between the students and their surroundings.

## D. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a **quantitative correlational design** to examine the effect of the microsystem environment on students' English achievement in *pesantren*-based schools. The population comprised 188 junior high school students from two schools in Salatiga, and a purposive sample of 151 students (63 male and 88 female) was selected. This design was considered appropriate because it allowed the researcher to measure the degree to which the microsystem environment predicts students' English performance.

Two instruments were used for data collection. The Microsystem Environment Questionnaire, developed based on Bronfenbrenner's theory, measured four key components: family, peers, teachers, and school facilities. It employed a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating stronger support, and showed high reliability with Cronbach's Alpha above 0.80. The second instrument was students' English exam scores, which reflected their achievement across vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing skills.

Data were analyzed using simple linear regression with the formula

$$Y = a+bX$$

where Y represents English achievement and X represents the microsystem environment score. The analysis, conducted using SPSS version 26, tested the significance of the regression coefficient with a threshold of $p < 0.05$. Prior checks confirmed that regression assumptions such as normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were met, ensuring the validity of the statistical findings.

## E. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the two variables. The students' microsystem environment (X) ranged from 45 to 95, with a mean score of 72.30 (SD = 10.25), indicating a generally supportive environment across family, peers, teachers, and school facilities. Meanwhile, students' English achievement (Y) ranged from 40 to 80, with a mean of 62.15 (SD = 8.45). This

suggests that students' English proficiency was in the moderate range, with some variation between lower- and higher-achieving students.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

| Variable | Min | Max | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Microsystem Environment (X)** | 45 | 95 | 72.30 | 10.25 |
| **English Achievement (Y)** | 40 | 80 | 62.15 | 8.45 |

Table 2 shows the results of the simple linear regression analysis. The regression coefficient for the microsystem environment was positive and statistically significant ($B = 0.37$, $p < .001$). This means that for every one-point increase in the microsystem environment score, students' English achievement increased by 0.37 points. The constant value was 35.27, producing the regression equation:

$$Y=35.27+0.37X$$

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

| Predictor | B | SE | Beta | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant (a)** | 35.27 | 3.42 | – | 10.31 | .000 |
| **Microsystem Environment (X)** | 0.37 | 0.07 | 0.35 | 4.98 | .000 |

**Model Summary:** $R = .354$, $R^2 = .125$, $F(1,149) = 24.80$, $p < .001$

The findings demonstrate that the microsystem environment significantly contributes to students' English achievement in *pesantren*-based schools. Although the explanatory power is modest (12.5%), the result highlights that students who experience more supportive relationships with family, peers, teachers, and better school facilities are more likely to achieve higher proficiency in English.

This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes the critical role of the immediate environment in shaping a child's development and learning outcomes. In the *pesantren* context, students spend most of their time in dormitories and

classrooms, where parental involvement is indirect, often mediated through communication with dormitory guardians (*mushrif*). Despite these limitations, the family component of the microsystem still plays an essential role by maintaining communication regarding health, discipline, and academic progress.

Moreover, peers and teachers in the *pesantren* act as direct influencers on students' learning motivation and attitudes toward English. Previous studies have shown that peer encouragement and teacher support significantly improve engagement and reduce language anxiety, which is consistent with the current findings (Crawford, 2020). Similarly, adequate school facilities such as libraries, language labs, and conducive classrooms provide opportunities for better practice, even though English is not actively used in the dormitory environment.

Taken together, the study underscores the importance of strengthening the microsystem in *pesantren* schools. Enhancing teacher-student relationships, peer collaboration, and school resources, alongside effective parental communication through dormitory systems, may create a more holistic support system. Such interventions can foster positive attitudes toward English and ultimately improve achievement, even in contexts where exposure to English outside the classroom remains limited.

## F. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of the microsystem environment on students' English achievement in *pesantren*-based junior high schools in Salatiga. The findings revealed that the microsystem, consisting of family, peers, teachers, and school facilities, significantly influences students' English performance. Among the four dimensions, teachers were perceived as the most supportive factor, followed by peers, school facilities, and family. The regression analysis demonstrated that the microsystem environment explained 12.5% of the variance in English achievement, with higher scores in the microsystem associated with better English outcomes.

These results highlight the critical role of the microsystem in supporting language learning in *pesantren* contexts, where students live in dormitories and have limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Teachers' guidance, peer collaboration, and adequate school facilities emerged as strong predictors of student success, while parental involvement continues to play an indirect yet important role through communication with room guardians (*mushrif*).

Therefore, it is essential for pesantren-based schools to strengthen supportive microsystem components by encouraging more active teacher-student engagement, promoting peer collaboration, and improving learning facilities. Such efforts will create a more conducive environment that enhances students' motivation and achievement in English.

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