

FACTORS AFFECTING EFL LEARNERS IN IMPROVING THEIR ABILITY

By:

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ABSTRACT

Factors affecting learners in learning English. Case study in the English education programme, Subang University. The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that prompt English learners to learn English. The study was focused on answering questions; (1) What factors influenced teens learning English? Participants in the study were 20 college students of English education in West Java. Data collection was done by questionnaire's way. The findings of this study include the following; Three major factors that triggers students to learn English, including their desire to understand English, the pattern of habits and an awareness of deficiencies.

Keywords: EFL Learners, Factors in learning English, Listening, Speaking, The pattern of habits.

ABSTRAK

Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pembelajar dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggris. Studi Kasus di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Subang. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menginvestigasi faktor-faktor yang memicu pembelajar bahasa Inggris dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini difokuskan untuk menjawab pertanyaan; (1) Apakah faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi remaja mempelajari Bahasa Inggris? Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah 20 mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Jawa Barat. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan cara kuisisioner. Temuan dari penelitian ini antara lain; Ada tiga faktor utama yang menjadi pemicu pelajar dalam mempelajari bahasa Inggris, antara lain keinginan mereka untuk memahami Bahasa Inggris, pola kebiasaan dan kesadaran akan kekurangan.

Kata kunci; Pembelajar Bahasa Inggris, Faktor dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggris, Mendengarkan, Berbicara, Pola Kebiasaan.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a kind of communication that people use to share thoughts, feelings, and information with one another. Language is another form of communication that depends on words and how they are put together to form sentences. People can expand their knowledge and learn about something by using language. According to Cameron (2001:17), it has become usual in

applied linguistics throughout the years to split language into the four abilities of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, and to add grammar, vocabulary, and phonology to each ability.

Necessities

Learning a language requires mastering its grammar, vocabulary, and other elements. The four skills listed above are crucial for improving students' ability to use English fluently. According to research, a wide range of variables affect students' average achievement levels. According to Nuthana and Yenagi (2009), Al-refaai, Abdul Rab, Saiful Islam (2013), Abo Moghli (2013), Mushtaq and Khan (2012), and Anwar (2013), these characteristics may be caused by the students themselves or linked to outside factors like instructional tactics or the learning environment. Thomas et al., who are working on the same problem, claim that "The act of studying involves a complicated interaction of many variables" (cited in Okpala, Comfort, and Richard, 2004). These variables include both those that are relevant to the pupils themselves and those that are related to their immediate environment. According to Ichado (1998), a student's home environment has a significant impact on how well they succeed academically in school. The study habits or techniques are mentioned by Nonis and Hudson (2010: 230) that identify the ways in which students learn, such as paying attention in class, being punctual, taking careful notes, and finishing their homework on time, reading the study material before a lecture and acting appropriately are likely to affect their performance.(p.230).

Listening

According to Stephen Krashen (1981:1), children's first and second language acquisition processes are extremely similar to those of language acquisition. Listening is one technique to acquire a language since it needs meaningful contact in the target language. In natural communication, speakers are more concerned with the messages they are delivering than with the form of their utterances. Listening is a language ability that is essential to having a successful communication because it takes up more than half of all communication time, more than any other communication activity. Focusing attention on the thing being listened to while listening to absorb the details. When considering the process of language acquisition, listening is one of the oldest human behaviors. Listening, according to Russell & Russell in Tarigan (2008:30), involves paying close attention, understanding, and appreciating what is being said. Understanding, interpreting, assessing, and responding are the stages of hearing that we need to be aware of.

Speaking

Being able to communicate verbally is a requirement for mastering a foreign language (as Indonesian is). Speaking has, according to experts, emerged as the main gauge of language proficiency. Speaking is probably the most basic human ability, and since we do it so frequently, we don't take the time to consider the steps involved. But if someone is speaking a foreign language, having a simple discussion is everything but simple, Bailey (2002). There must be some difficulties that both the teacher and the learners face when teaching speaking. These are the things that prevent them from participating in class discussions. Age and level specifically affect problems differently. Because of this, the objectives and methods for teaching speaking vary greatly, depending on the pupils, the instructor, and the overall setting of the class. Brown (2001:267). It is necessary to experiment with several methods in order to identify the activity that best suits the pupils' needs.

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Deficiencies and Habit

There are situations that are formed during listening activities. We may encounter this circumstance directly or indirectly through discussion. As a result, we should develop the practice of listening in order to learn. A habit is a routine behavior that a person engages in frequently. The term "habit learning" was first used by Hirsh to refer to a certain kind of memory or learning system in Seger & Spiering (2011). In order to increase student achievement, the habit of learning English is adopted. A habit can be practiced at home, at school, when traveling, and in other locations. It means that learning can take place everywhere and is not just done in a classroom. Many students still struggle to express themselves in English, especially both skills those are listening and speaking. They may have a large vocabulary and have learned many grammatical structures, but they can't seem to put this knowledge to use. Many people we meet as teacher educators have confirmed our observations.

Other study habits that might have an impact on students' performance are listed by other researchers. Researchers Chan, Yum, Rocky, Jegede, and Taplin (1999) examined the variables and study practices that affect university students who perform poorly and those who perform well. Their analysis turned up some discrepancies. In the study habits of students that impact their academic performance, such as the study environment, the characteristics of the organization, the amount of time spent studying, such a reading aloud or doing silent study techniques. Many advantages are claimed by other researchers of effective study methods. For instance, Rooney and Lipume (1992), Reed 1996, and Apps 1982 (cited noted in Bajwa, Gujjar, Shaheen, and Ramzan (2011): 176) are good study habits that endure have numerous benefits, including lowering test anxiety and improving students' aptitude and performance and grow confident in his abilities.

METHOD

The descriptive qualitative method of analysis is used in this study. Bogdan and Taylor (in Moleong, 2006:4) define the qualitative method as a research process that yields descriptive data from individuals or attitudes that can be examined, both verbally and in writing. Since the researcher wants to look into a recent phenomenon that occurred in the study area, qualitative research was used for this study. Any single piece of data collected using any data collection technique will be analyzed using the qualitative method's steps and presented qualitatively. In other words, this study employs the descriptive method. In collecting this data, the researcher asked 10 questions to 20 college students at the University of Subang to answer the questionnaire that had been given previously. The data were analyzed to find the research's answer after the data collection procedures were finished. The researcher used a variety of data analysis techniques, including reading all responses, sorting the data, organizing and analyzing the data, and further analyzing the data to determine the results.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Data collection was obtained through a formulated questionnaire based on theories and expert opinions and filled in by respondents who then processed into an information. Respondents involved in data collection as many as 20 college students of English education in West Java. The questionnaire was distributed through online media, Google forms. Based on the results of the questionnaire, it will be processed using a Likert scale and the following is an example of a research proposal.

A. RESPONDENT DATA

These are 5 students 4th semester, 7 students 2nd semester and 8 students 6th semester. Measurements were made on the students using a Likert scale with score assessment score 4 = Yes, score 3 = constantly, score 2 = occasionally, and score 1 = No.

B. INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondents can provide answers by crossing (X) on one of the available answer choices. Only one answer is possible for each question. In each question there are five alternative answers that refer to the Likert scale technique, namely:

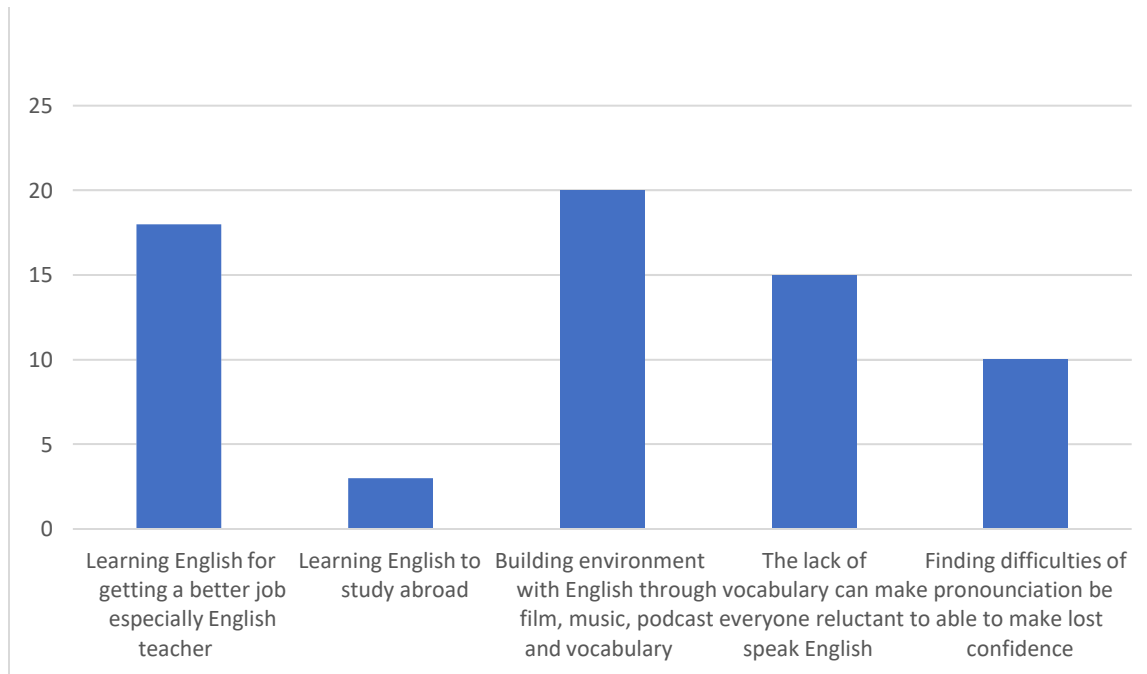
1. Yes = 4
2. Constantly = 3
3. Occasionally = 2
4. No = 1

The respondent's data and all information provided will be kept confidential, therefore, it is requested to fill out the questionnaire as truthfully and objectively as possible.

Table 1. The analysis of factors affecting efl learners in improving their ability

No.	Statement	Score				Total
		Yes	Constantly	Occasionally	No	
1.	Listening to audio learning English either through films, music, story telling, etc. through the media around you, does it have an effect on improving English language skills?	15	4	1		20
2.	The reciprocity between listening and speaking skills that occurs is it still a trigger for someone to be reluctant to communicate in English?	13		5	2	20
3.	Does realizing the lack of knowledge of English can encourage someone to continue learning and progressing?	18		1	1	20
PERCENTAGE						100%

Figure 2. The analysis of factors affecting efl learners in improving their ability



English is utilized more frequently for international communication. This circumstance makes speak English should be able to communicating clearly and understandably. As a means of achieving such that objective, whether they are native or not should be able to pronounce the in English words that make sense. According to Brazil (1994), being able to communicate one's meaning and intentions to a listener is the definition of the word "intelligibly." But in actuality, pronunciation instruction in the classroom, particularly in EFL classrooms, is still disregarded. As a result, EFL students find it challenging to understand what it means to be understandable in communication.

Researchers have looked into a number of variables that influence how people learn English. These elements inevitably have an impact on how students can improve their ability. The following list of elements are as follows;

(1) Motivation

Affective factors have grown to be a significant problem in the learning process. Some scholars are interested in conducting the research because of how this characteristic affects how well students learn. Motivation is one of the affective factors that can have a significant impact on the learning process. The same conclusions have been made by researchers Marinova-Todd, et al. (2000), Masgoret & Gardner (2003), Bernaus, et al. (2004), and Gatbonton, et al. (2005): having a personal or professional aim for learning English can impact the requirement and desire for reaching native-like pronunciation. In layman's terms, it may be claimed that someone with strong

motivation to learn a language will have a very good chance of mastering it in all areas, including pronunciation. Internal forces, enduring characteristics, groups of ideas and outcomes, and behavioral responses to stimuli have all been linked to motivation. As many researchers believe to be crucial to motivation, Pintrich and Schunk (2002) provide a comprehensive definition of motivation based on learners' attitudes and beliefs: "Motivation is the process whereby goal-directed action is triggered and sustained" (Pintrich and Schunk 2002, p 5).

Pintrich and Schunk (2002) go on to talk about motivation as a process rather than a finished good. Although motivation isn't explicitly visible during the process, we can infer it from our task selection, effort, and perseverance. Goals that promote action are also a part of motivation. The necessity of having goals is emphasized in all cognitive perspectives on motivation. The essential thing to remember is that everyone has goals in mind that they either strive to avoid or attain. Goals are not always developed in a nice way, and chances are that they will alter as a person learns more experience.

(2) Attitude

According to a study by Alliot (1995), the main factor influencing target language pronunciation was the individuals' attitude toward learning native or almost native pronunciation. One could argue that if the students paid more attention to how to pronounce the target language, they would perform better than those who didn't. The claim that "positive language attitudes let learner have positive orientation toward learning English" is backed by Karahan's argument (2007). In other words, as attitudes can affect students' success or failure in their learning, attitudes play a very important role in the process of language learning, not just in learning pronunciation.

(3) Wants and Needs

Self-efficacy, according to Pintrich and Schunk (2002), refers to the belief that one is capable of learning or acting at a given level. People who have poor self-efficacy for completing a task can try to avoid it, whereas those who have high self-efficacy are more inclined to participate. Effective students work harder and persevere longer than students who have self-doubt, especially when challenges come (Pintrich and Schunk 2002, p. 161). The results of activities, such as achievement and goal progress, as well as information from the environment, such as instructor evaluation, can all have an impact on self-efficacy. When a performance is deemed successful, self-efficacy should rise, and when a performance is deemed unsuccessful, it should fall. After numerous triumphs or failures, the occasional failure or success shouldn't have much of an influence (Schunk and Pajares 2009, p 36). According to Schunk and Pajares, seeing others succeed might boost self-efficacy and encourage people to take on the activity since they are more likely to think that if others can do it, they can too.

The majority of their demands and needs indicate that students require an English program to aid in their studies. They require the necessary materials for their research. To make it simpler for students to understand the subject, games and discussions are advised as teaching techniques. Additionally, they said that the text was relevant to their interests. They claimed that speaking and listening were challenging parts of the material.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate how upper students feel about the English language and what inspires them to learn it. The pupils in this study, which is based on a questionnaire, were discovered to be very motivated to learn English. It is noted that their primary motivations for studying English were for upcoming studies and due to the English language's status as a worldwide language and for potential future employment. In addition, The purpose of this study was to investigate how upper secondary school pupils feel about the English language and what inspires them to learn it. The study demonstrates that these students value it because they recognize English as a global language that they can use to interact with people from all over the world, such as when they travel. They primarily use their English abilities when they watch TV, browse the web, listen to music, and play video games. The importance of learning English for jobs and further study could not be confirmed. The students' positive sentiments regarding the English language may be related to their strong diagnostic test results.

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