



Language Input, Learning Environment, and Motivation of Successful Indonesian EFL

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ABSTRAK

Pemerolehan bahasa kedua adalah proses mempelajari bahasa kedua setelah bahasa pertama seseorang terbentuk. Keberhasilan pembelajar bahasa kedua dipengaruhi oleh banyak faktor. Tiga faktor signifikan pemerolehan bahasa kedua adalah input, lingkungan belajar, dan motivasi. Penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tiga komponen penting pemerolehan bahasa kedua dari dua mahasiswa EFL (English as a Foreign Language) pada level strata satu yang sukses, sebagaimana dibuktikan dengan skor TOIEC dan transkrip akademik yang menunjukkan pencapaian Bahasa Inggris yang luar biasa. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa input bahasa kedua partisipan berasal dari dalam dan luar kelas. Lingkungan belajar yang dialami peserta mencakup ketiga jenis lingkungan belajar: fisik, psikologis, dan akademik. Selain itu, kedua partisipan memiliki motivasi instrumental, diikuti motivasi intrinsik dan ekstrinsik.

ABSTRACT

Second language acquisition is the process of learning the second language after an individual's first language has been established. The successful second language learner is affected by many factors. Three significant Second Language Acquisition (SLA) factors are Language Input, Learning environment, and motivation. This descriptive qualitative research aims to analyze the three significant components of SLA of two successful EFL undergraduate students, as evidenced by their advanced TOIEC scores and academic transcript demonstrating great achievement in English. This research shows that the language inputs of the two participants come from both inside and outside the classroom. The learning environment experienced by the participants included all three types of SLA learning environments: physical, psychological, and academic. Moreover, both participants have instrumental motivation, followed by intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak, understand and be fluent in more than one language grants individuals more opportunities, considering how language universally influences every aspect of life. The language one acquires without much conscious effort is called the first language (L1) or the mother tongue. On the other hand, the language after establishing the first language is called the second language (L2). In acquiring a second language, one needs more conscious efforts to obtain knowledge of the target language. In learning and acquiring L2, every person has significantly different circumstances. Many factors influence the process and the success of second language acquisition. This study focuses on three essential features of second language acquisition, i.e., language input, learning environment, and motivation of L2 learners.

Input is an essential factor affecting the achievement and development of second language acquisition. Input is all the language features exposed to the learner by reading, listening, and observing. However, not all exposure provides benefits in second language acquisition, the comprehensive input is required (Maharsi, 2016). Comprehensible input means understanding the message, what is written, or what is said rather than how it is written or said (Krashen, 2002). Learners exposed to more comprehensible input have a high percentage of success in the target language. There are three types of language input: Interactionally modified, pre-modified, and unmodified input (Ellis, 2008). Interactionally modified is the language input learners acquire from their peers who are also not native speakers of the target language. Then, Pre-modified or simplified input is the input learner gets from the teacher or other competent learners in which the grammar and lexical used are simple with the purpose of the comprehension process. In addition, the unmodified input is the complex input where the lexical, grammar, and word choices are not simple.

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Another reliable factor that influences second language acquisition is the learning environment. As stated before, language is universal; many factors, such as cultural, natural, and social factors, form it. In L1, individuals have the exact environment to acquire the language. However, in the L2 context, the learning environment is widely expanded. (Kiatkheeree, 2018) expressed that the learning environment is an essential aspect in booster students' development in language learning and positively affects the level of language proficiency. The learning environment is categorized into three broad aspects: physical environments such as the classroom, home, or a room for students who joined the online class or homeschooling, and any material building where the students learn, a psychological environment including attitude and interaction with others, and the last one is the academic environment which includes the learning strategy and appropriate assessment. This statement is also supported by (Nugroho et al., 2020), who declared that the three types of learning environments influence the success of students' language acquisition.

The last important aspect of second language acquisition is motivation. Self Determination Theory (SDT) is one of the main ideas on language acquisition motivation. SDT introduces behavior regulation to account for motivational orientations to complete a behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intrinsically driven people behave out of enjoyment, pleasure, or satisfaction (Lucas et al., 2010). Intrinsic motivation is the most self-directed conduct (Black & Deci, 2000). Extrinsically motivated people act for rewards or to avoid punishment. Here, extrinsic influences control action performance. Extrinsically motivated people act without volition or with limited volition (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Lucas et al., 2010). The extrinsically motivated performance lacks self-determination.

Most second language acquisition studies agree that the three variables above help EFL learners learn (Nugroho et al., 2020). Moreover, most scholars and researchers in the area of second language acquisition justify that the three variables above significantly contribute to developing EFL learners' language acquisition. A study conducted by (Zainil, 2019), taking into account language input, concluded that the nature of input evidently plays a critical role in language learning. This study is in line with (Rijoly, 2017) study, which revealed the significant role of input and, most notably, comprehensible input in language acquisition and learning. Further, about the learning environment, a study by (Ruolin, 2019) investigated the vital influence of the environment on children's second language acquisition in the context of globalization. Also, (Seven, 2020) found that motivational factors make the learner more receptive to new information. (Alizadeh, 2016) supports this, in her study, indicated that motivation has a very important role in successfully learning English as a foreign or second language.

In light of these prior findings, the current study explores all three variables in second language acquisition: language input, learning environment, and motivational orientations as experienced by a successful EFL learner. Nevertheless, research on the three variables in second language learning is still limited, particularly in the instance of a successful Indonesian EFL learner. As a result, the current study intends to fill a gap in the literature and make a practical contribution to it by studying the linguistic input, learning environment, and motivation of a successful Indonesian EFL learner. As a result, the findings of this study can serve as a model for other EFL learners looking to improve their English skills. This study also clarifies how EFL teachers should help their students become successful learners. As a result, the following key objectives guide this study: (1) identifying the features of language input experienced by a successful EFL learner; (2) investigating the learning environment experienced by a successful EFL learner; and (3) revealing how a successful EFL learner maintains her motivation in learning a foreign language.

2. METHODS

This is descriptive qualitative research. This study analyzed the input, learning environment, and motivation of three English students of Widya Kartika University, Surabaya, with the highest TOEIC test score in batch 17, and exceptional academic achievement in the subject of English that was manifested on the academic transcript.

(Friedman, 2012) stated that data elicitation, such as interviews and open-ended questionnaires, are frequently used in data collection by scholars in SLA research. Therefore, in this research, the data were collected using the semi-structure interview method. The researchers utilized the interview method since it allowed the researchers to keep the interview topics on track and elicit much information from the participants. All the participants are asked the same questions in English and following the same order. The

interview started with the questions of input, then followed by the learning environment and motivation questions

The data were then analyzed by conducting some procedures. First, since the primary data were in the form of audio recording, it was initially transliterated into written data through a transcription process. Second, the data were coded by referring to the coding process, as (Creswell, 2005) recommended. The first stage of the coding process was reading the transcription consisting of several pages to simplify into smaller segments to highlight new information related to this study's topic. Afterward, the codes were provided to the underlined utterances, which considerably matched the topic discussion. Following this, redundant codes were identified and categorized them into fewer codes. Finally, the codes were reduced again to create themes appropriate to this study's objectives.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researchers will elucidate the result and findings of the three research questions about the language input, the learning environment, and the motivation of the two good TOEIC score students. The information or statement from the participant would be quoted to support and clarify the findings

The Participant L2 Input

In the first interview section, Participant A claimed that her L2 input is from interacting with the native speakers of her target language on media social such as Twitter. Other than that she is also reading novels, watching TV series, and reading books provided by the teacher, and the teachers' input. Therefore, the input of participant A is from inside the classroom and outside the classroom as well.

From social media, which is Twitter, where I chat with native speakers both written and spoken, another input is from novels, tv-series, books provided by lecturers and lecturers themselves in the class.

In addition, in answering the question "If the input is from the classroom and outside the classroom, which one do you think influenced more in improving your L2?" Participant A stated that the input she gets inside and outside the classroom both influence her L2 development.

Both are very helpful. because in class I get direct practice using L2 in reading, listening, speaking, and writing with the lecturer, while outside the class, I learn to make me easier to practice and adapt to L2.

In line with Participant A, Participant B said she also gets her L2 input from both inside and outside the classroom. She gets it mostly from media such as listening to music, watching movies, or watching videos on YouTube. In Participant B, almost all her L2 inputs are in visual form, while Participant A's language input includes the written form. However, both of them agree that the lecturer also gave them essential input on L2. In the researchers' opinion, this is because the participants are English students; therefore, they are constantly exposed to the L2 input mostly from their lecturer in the classes or learning sessions.

I acquire my second language input mostly from media such as music, movies, or even videos on YouTube. The lecturers also play essential roles too, they gave prior knowledge so I can understand theoretically

In addition, Participant B has a different opinion on which input influences more in her L2
In my opinion, the outside classroom activities affect more in improving second language skills, it simply because the theory that we have from classroom activities are actually nothing without practice.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that the participants' second language inputs generally come from both inside and outside the formal context, in this case, the classroom. Moreover, the types of input both participants are exposed to are all the input types, i.e., interactionally input, pre-modified or simplified input, and unmodified or baseline input. The interactional input from the discussion activity, the pre-modified or simplified input from the teacher in the class, which the teacher uses to help the comprehension process of the subject explained and the participants' second language acquisition process. In addition, the unmodified or baseline input is the input that is not simplified or from a native speaker, such as educational book the participant gets from the lecturer, novels, movies, tv-series, and input the participant get when talking with the native speaker. Input matters in the second language acquisition process, and it is all the exposure to the target language around learners by listening and reading. From the participants' answers,

the input they get is mostly from music, tv series, movies, books employed by the teachers, and the teachers themselves help the participant to get the L2 input. As has been stated by (Maharsi, 2016), the amount of input and how often it is exposed to the learner, if it is not followed by sufficient interaction, will be useless in the second language acquisition process. Participant B's answer related to the importance of input and interaction, *"It simply because the theory that we have from classroom activities are actually nothing without practice."* She acknowledges the importance of the input she gets and how to make it into comprehend one. The study by (Baroto, 2017) claimed that the participant's English teacher does not seem to become the best source of his L2 input. Therefore, it is in contrast with this present study, where the participant stated that the input from the teacher in class is constructive and essential and also can be directly used to practice basic language skills. However, this difference in result is understandable because of the difference in the learning environment and teachers of the participants in the study

The Participant Learning Environment

The second section of the result concerns the L2 learning environment of the participant. According to the answer of participant A, she explains more about her experiences in the academic environment and psychological environment.

face-to-face and online learning through assessment (projects, essays, tests), resources (books and articles), discussions, and activities that required L2.

The academic environment relates to the classes, learning strategy, and appropriate assessment. Participant A's academic environment is related to the projects, essays, and tests given by the teacher. Another learning environment participant A experienced is the psychological environment which is the attitude and interaction in the L2 learning process. In the interview section, she mentioned that she has a discussion and activities outside the classroom that require L2. She said,

By discussion and activities that require L2, I mean when chatting and speaking with my friends who are the native speaker of English on Twitter, both written and spoken activity.

Participant B believes that the learning environment she experienced is from all three types of learning environments. In her case, in the psychological environment where the learner interacts with others, she interacts with her classmates, who are also native speakers of Bahasa Indonesia. However, she affirms that they try to speak all English and will use Bahasa Indonesia if they find it difficult to convey their intention in English.

I guess all three learning environments. From the physical environment, the class is quiet, and it is supported in making the learning process more comfortable. The academic environment would be from the process of learning, the lecturers provide interesting visual material and also the topics given by the lecturer are interesting too, and the last psychological environment mostly from the interaction with my classmate. We try to communicate in English as much as we can until we cannot convey our intention in English anymore, then we use Bahasa Indonesia.

The physical environment of the participant can be categorized as a positive learning environment since she said it was quiet and comfortable during the learning activity. According to (Kiatkheeree, 2018), the physical environment is considered one key component to create a positive learning environment. Therefore, Promoting and motivating learners in their language learning process is needed by maintaining and providing an appropriate learning environment.

The Participant Motivation

The last section discusses the motivation of the participant in acquiring L2. In the data analysis process, the researchers discovered that Participant A is interested in using her L2, such as English, as her everyday language. She is also motivated to learn her L2 because of the job requirement, and above all, she enjoys learning it. Participant A's answer:

I'm interested in using L2 for everyday language besides my mother tongue because it's quite important for job requirements, too and learning about L2 is very exciting.

Participant A's motivation in acquiring her L2 is categorized as instrumental, intrinsic, and extrinsic. Participant A seems to be aware of the job requirement in her generation, and she said "It is quite important

for job requirements" here she is instrumentally motivated since she is looking for the advantages of the L2. The instrumental motivation is the motivation that aims for the advantages and practical values of the target language in their life rather than becoming part of the target language community. Rather than socialize with the native of the target language, she is focusing more on the practical value her L2 could give in her daily life. Another type of her motivation is intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. From her statement, "learning about L2 is very exciting." Being excited and enjoying her L2 process is categorized as intrinsic motivation since the learner learns the target language because it is enjoyable. Participant A's intrinsic motivation has a significant influence on her L2 proficiency. It keeps motivating her to look for another alternative outside the class and learn by herself outside the classroom. "While outside the class, I learn to make it easier to practice and adapt to L2". While the extrinsic motivation can be seen in her statement, "it's quite important for job requirements." Here, participant B's motivation is also driven by the external reward, which is to make it easier for her to qualify for the work requirements. Participant B's answer:

My motivation in acquiring L2 is actually comes from a realization that Languages play an important role as a tool for communication, especially English. Besides, I enjoy it a lot in my L2 learning process because it is kinda fun and challenging at the same time.

Unlike participant A, participant B's motivation in learning her L2 is because of the awareness of how important language is for communication. In her condition, she is learning her L2 English because it is an essential language supporting communication. Therefore, participant B's motivation can be categorized as instrumental motivation because she is looking for the advantages of the L2 rather than learning the language to integrate with the target language community. This finding supports (Carrió-Pastor, M. L. and Mestre, E. M. M., 2014) who claimed that instrumentally motivated students are more interested in communication than in learning the target language. In contrast with participant A, participant B views her L2 as something she must achieve for her benefit. Extrinsic motivation is the motivation of the learner to learn the target language because of the outcome and reward. However, she also stated, "I enjoy it a lot in my L2 learning process because it is kinda fun and challenging at the same time." This shows her intrinsic motivation, which is based on enjoyment. Therefore, participant B has instrumental, and both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

From both participants' answers, the researchers can conclude that participants' motivations lead them to practice their target language more and more by themselves, searching for another alternative to improve it without feeling anxiety. Both participants have a durable desire which can be proved in their good TOEIC scores. Regarding what (Zareian and Jodaei, 2015) stated before that someone who enjoys the second language acquisition process cannot be called a motivated learner solely because they like to learn the target language. Instead, motivated learners put effort into achieving their goal in the target language.

4. CONCLUSION

Second language acquisition affects by many factors. However, three main aspects significantly influence the learners' second language acquisition process and success: Language Input, Learning environment, and motivation. In this study, the researchers discovers the two participants' language input, learning environment, and motivation. The researchers found out that the participants' inputs were acquired from both inside and outside the formal context, which is the classroom, such as listening to music, reading novels and books, watching movies, and input from the participants' English teachers. The learning environment experienced by the participants also affects their second language acquisition, the physical environment, such as a quiet and comfortable classroom. The psychological environment, such as interacting with the native speakers of the target language and interacting with other learners, and the academic environment are the assignments and the interesting topics lesson that the lecturer gives. All the input and learning environment of the participants are beneficial because each has a high motivation in their second language acquisition process. Both participants are instrumentally motivated and have intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation. The participants enjoy the learning process and thrive from the reward and advantages of the second language they are learning for their life. These motivations lead them to achieve their goal in the target language, be fluent and proficient, and instead become successful second language learners, which in this study can be proved by the participants' good TOEIC scores and exceptional academic achievement.

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