

## Environmental Immersion in the Process of Strengthening Foreign Language Learning

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**Abstract** – Environment is where we live, where we grow and flourish. It provides us with plenty of both opportunities and challenges as well as support from others who live with us. All these chunks in life push us to learn various new things including languages. Therefore, this study aims to uncover how far these environmental factors push you in foreign language mastery by looking at some interviews and observation data from around 20 (twenty) youths half of whom have been working in some companies and the other half are students in University at an age ranging from 18-22 years old and from elementary to pre-intermediate level of English. All of them were given some questionnaires to fill up. These questionnaires led them to give answers concerning what environment they have been growing up in and how it affects their motivation and attitude towards English. The findings are showing how far the environment where they live has influenced them to learn English, to like English, and to have a positive attitude and motivation in mastering this foreign language. Some of them might not be exposed to English at an early age, therefore, they might still feel English is very foreign and weird to learn. Meanwhile, the ones exposed to English stories, etc., from an early age feel English is something they need to learn further and speak. It has become familiar to them to listen and speak English from an early age. The expected finding of this research is to help both parents and teachers of the young learners to at least give ideas on how to introduce a foreign language to the young learners starting from a very young age to have an impact when they grow older in their foreign language mastery.

**Keywords:** *Environment, Immersion, Language Learning, Foreign Language*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Beyond what we imagine, the environment turns out to have a very big influence on the development of language ability or skill in language. This research brings this topic to be investigated in more depth because in our daily life it is inseparable from the use of language and this topic also brings many benefits if it is discussed further regarding how we can master a language, especially a foreign language.

This topic can open our horizons more deeply on how the influence of the environment (the external factor) in the process of learning a language and we can also understand that this can be a way or method in the process of language learning and teaching, how these environmental factors can be considered to support practice and acquisition of new languages, especially foreign languages. Environmental factors such as the circle of friends, social media, and entertainment they get in their daily life in the digital world, work environment, and others. This environment, whether consciously or not, has an influence on the mastery of a language, especially in this case English and this is what this research wants to reveal, namely how the environment influences the mastery of foreign languages, especially English. All of these social circles are considered to be the external factors that drive someone's motivation in mastering a foreign language. Hamzah B. Uno mentioned that learning motivation is divided into two groups, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the motives that become active or functioning without the need to be stimulated by outside factors because within each individual there is already an urge to do something. While, on the other hand, extrinsic motivation is the motives that are active and functioning because of external stimuli such as circle of friends, social environment, etc. The explanation of this theory is the basis for seeing a person's immersion in a social environment (external factors) in growing their motivation to learn a foreign language.

Some past studies have actually discussed learning motivation both intrinsic and extrinsic ones. Ilham Taufiqurrochman from *Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Muhammadiyah* Surakarta has completed this study that aims to determine the factors that influence the motivation to learn English and the dominant factors that influence the motivation to learn English. This type of research is quantitative research with a vectorial approach. The results showed that there were five factors that affect the motivation to learn English, namely, social support 20.273%, and feelings in learning 35.486%, anxiety 46.070, future orientation, 52.709, and expectations of getting praise 58.988%. Of the five factors, the expectation of getting praise is the most dominant factor influencing the motivation to learn English. This study has shown that external factors have a bigger influence in moving someone to learn English. Another study has also been done by Urip Widodo from STABN Raden Wijaya stating that this study aims to explore what factors motivate students in learning English. Data is collected through a questionnaire to find out the percentage of the factors in learning English based on existing theory. In addition, interviews and observations are also done to find out other factors outside the existing theory. The research shows 13.64% of students have a very good motivation, 27.27 are good, 40.90 are moderate, and 18.19, are not enough. In addition, the factors that influence students in learning English are teachers, challenges, tests, and dreams.

Most of the past studies show that external factors have also become one of the reasons (motivation) why the students learn a foreign language. They intend to gain praise, find their dream jobs, gain social recognition, etc. This has been the reason for this study to be carried out to focus on only the influence of external factors in driving students/people to learn and improve their English skills.

## **2. METHOD**

The data collection method used in this study is a survey method by filling out a questionnaire. Questionnaires were sent to several respondents, some of whom were students and some were non-students. They answered several questions in the questionnaire which later related answers would be presented qualitatively.

### **2.1 Research Design**

As previously explained, data collection was carried out using a survey method, namely sending electronic questionnaires to several respondents who incidentally consisted of both students and non-students. After they answered several questions in the questionnaire, the answers to the questionnaire would be summarized and presented in a qualitative descriptive manner.

### **2.2 Research Population and Sampling**

Regarding the details of the respondents, there are 20 respondents who were randomly selected but have the potential for quite capable English skills. They come from two places, one of which is the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Mahasaraswati University and the other is a private company in the city of Denpasar where one of the FBA students at Mahasaraswati Denpasar University works. The total population of respondents is 20 people with an age range of 18 - 22 years old.

### **2.3 Data Collection Instrument**

The instrument or tool used in collecting data is a questionnaire that is sent electronically via WA or *WhatsApp* which will be collected and summarized for further analysis and described qualitatively in this study.

### **2.4 Data Analysis**

The data that has been collected through questionnaires will be summarized and analyzed descriptively qualitatively to see how far external factors can affect the motivation to learn English both from students and non-students. Some of the questions in the questionnaire referred to the reasons (external factors) why they are able to speak English well and what are the reasons that trigger them to learn English well.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Some of the tables below show the number of respondents who answered each question and from this number, it will be concluded the influence of external factors on the mastery of the English language itself.

Yes	No
All students	-

*Table 1. Apakah anda senang belajar Bahasa Inggris? (Do you like learning English?)*

From the table above, we can notice that they already have the intrinsic motivation ‘the passion and the love to English Language. This can be a strong foundation for further external factors to kick in and push it even more.

International Relation	6 people
Entertainment	3 people
International communication	2 people
English Structures	7 people
Job Opportunities	2 people

*Table 2. Apa yang membuat anda senang belajar Bahasa Inggris? (What makes you like learning English?)*

The second table shows us clearly, the exact reasons why they want to study English. 6 (six) of them are interested in building international networks. The next 3 (three) love the international entertainment e.g. Hollywood, Grammys Music, etc. The next two people think that English can ease them in having international communication with people from all over the globe. There are 7 people love the structure of the language and the last two think job opportunities are becoming their goals.

Likes	Dislikes	So-so
20	-	-

*Table 3. Apakah Anda senang mendengarkan lagu Berbahasa Inggris? (Do you love listening to English songs?)*

This table shows that all 20 (twenty) of them love English song. Songs will bring great impact towards the external motivation of whoever learn the English Language.

Likes	Dislikes	So-so
20	-	-

*Table 4. Apakah Anda senang menonton film Berbahasa Inggris? (Do you love watching English Movie?)*

All of them love watching English Movie and this activity can be something to trigger them to improve their English skill to enjoy the entertainment.

Yes they do	No they do not
13	7

Table 5. *Apakah ada anggota keluarga anda Ayah/Ibu dll yang bisa Berbahasa Inggris aktif di rumah?* (Do your parents or family speak English at home?)

Most of them having their family members being able to speak English and even most of them speak English with them at home.

Yes They do	No They do not
12	8

Table 6. *Apakah mereka kadang-kadang Berbahasa Inggris dengan anda?* (Do they sometimes speak English with you?)

Yes I did/I did seldom	No I did not
11	9

Table 7. *Apakah waktu kecil anda sering menonton film animasi Berbahasa Inggris?* (Did you watch English Cartoon when you were little?)

Yes They do	No They do not
8	12

Table 8. *Apakah lingkungan pergaulan Anda adalah mereka yang biasa menggunakan Bahasa Inggris?* (Do your circle of friends speak English?)

This table shows their circle of friends who speak and do not speak English. Some of them might not have the supportive friends circle environment where they can sometimes practice their English skills. However, they have already had enough motivations from some previous points.

Yes I did	No I did not
5	15

Table 9. *Apakah anda pernah bersekolah di sekolah nasional plus atau internasional?* (Did you ever go to national plus or international school?)

Some 5 (five) students did ever go to either international or national plus schools and it is all fine.

From the presentation of the results of the questionnaire in several tables above, we can see that there are many external factors that influence or motivate a person to continue studying and improving his ability in English as an international language, including the interest or desire to build international networks and want to open up more job opportunities, even to the international level. In addition, there are also those who really want to be able to enjoy world of

entertainment works such as Hollywood films and others. In addition, other external factors also influence such as family environment who can speak English, friendship environment, and others.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that it is true that external factors affect a person's ability to master a foreign language because these external factors are a form of external motivation that encourages a person to keep moving forward in strengthening the mastery of a foreign language.

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