

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the study

English has been regarded as the most important international language that connects people across cultural and linguistic backgrounds so that all non-native speakers are keen in mastering the language, a phenomenon referred to by David Crystal (2003) as English as international language (EIL). Due to the importance of the English language as an international language, people from all over the world strove to learn English in all of its facets, may it be listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Studies conducted by Ilyosovna (2020) and Rao (2019) reinforce the notion that learning English is of great importance in the wake of globalization. Their research indicates the usefulness of learning English in various factors of life due to it being a global language, be it in the trades of international business trades or politicking, or if one decides to pursue their studies outside of their home country. Even the simple act of international social media interaction are mainly done with the English language. By mastering the English language, it is not a stretch to say that the world will open itself up more for you.

As a non-native speaker, I have come to that kind of awareness, and have continued to practice my mastery over the English up until this point. Of course, when it comes to mastery of the English language, it is split through two different sectors; The formal way of learning, and the informal way of learning. In his research, Krashen (1976) differentiated both formal and informal environments of language learning and

explained its contributions. Deriving from his own Second Language Acquisition theory, Krashen indicates that informal environments are far more important for younger learners due to how children can only “acquire” knowledge, insinuating that formal environments like classrooms can only act like supplements. However, he does not fully diminish the importance of formal environments due to the importance of feedback, explaining that feedback on the language acquisition of learners is necessary, as well as the importance of language rules that must be learned.

With that said, the avenues of informal language learning only expanded further in conjunction with the development of technology, especially with the prevalence of television and social media, and even more so in the age of the pandemic. Due to the imposed regulations to remain at home, teachers had to quickly get accustomed to the online teaching and learning process, and found that social media is a powerful tool for relaying class information and for emergency classes (Nugroho, Haghegh, Triana, 2021). Furthermore, while English learners hold firm belief that informal language learning is a promising endeavor, they are unable to engage in said activities for a variety of reasons, whether it be disrupting their already developed social groups or limitations such as inaccessible digital devices or lack of internet (Nugroho & Triana, 2021).

While formal language learning has been a staple through the years for integrating the English language as a second language for global use, people must not forget that informal environments also play a critical role in shaping a person’s English language mastery. Through formal environments, people learn the rules and regulations of the English language. In informal environments, through daily life,

people unwittingly acquire the knowledge on how to use the English language and store it through the subconscious. As a learner of the English language, the researcher seeks to discuss the importance of informal environments in the path of mastering the English language. For this matter, the researcher used autoethnography, using their life experiences as a way to express how the environment shapes his process of learning the English language through a qualitative and reflective narrative study.

Narrative studies of learning English as a second language have seen a robust undertaking in the last two decades, such as the studies done by Ebadi and Mohammadi (2022) in Iran, Zhang (2022) in Hongkong, and Nguyen and Terry (2017) in Australia. However, such a study in Indonesian contexts is still limited. For autoethnography in English learning, while there have been solid strides for the method on the global stage such as the studies conducted by Mora (2021) in Columbia and Miri (2019) in Afghanistan, autoethnography is still a novelty in the Indonesian research scene. The following study was intended to enrich the literature of second language acquisition using autoethnography of learning English in foreign language context. Through this study, the researcher sought to explore the many facets of informal learning that they have engaged in, and reflect on their experiences as he improves his English mastery through his engagements, all through the eyes of Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

2. Research Questions

In autoethnography (Canagarajah, 2012), the researcher interrogates a social phenomenon, in this case; learning English informally via reflections with some guiding questions. This research question of this study can be formulated into one:

1. How does the researcher master English via informal activities? To

guide the researcher's reflections, the questions below are explored:

1. What are the critical events the researcher encountered in that learning process?
2. How did the researcher manage to cope with the learning obstacles?
3. What are the lessons learned from the events?

3. Research Objectives

After presenting the questions that emerged after going through the introductions, it is proper that the objectives of this study are laid down afterward to answer said questions. That said, the objective of this autoethnographic research is:

1. To determine the various informal activities the researcher experienced in their path of English language development.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study employed two key theories to lay the groundwork for later studies and explorations conducted within Chapter 4.

The first theory is Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Albert Bandura proposed this theory with the implication that people are able to learn many things

through the observation and imitation of others. He believes that in a social setting, people are able to learn and acquire a variety of abilities and competencies through said observation and imitation, and learn about the consequences of doing actions at the same time. In said theory, Bandura suggests the presence of models for people to imitate, as well as the four stages of the cognitive learning process; Attention, retention, motor reproduction, and reinforcements. (Mujahidah and Yusdiana, 2023)

The second theory is Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory. In this theory, Krashen (2002) debates that learning a language and acquiring a language are different, setting them apart through one's level of consciousness as they gain the knowledge, as well as the setting in which both acquisition and learning take place. He further disputes that while learning and acquisition are interconnected, language acquisition is more valuable in the long run with the influence of a natural acquisition order, language inputs, grammar monitoring, and affective filters.

5. Definition of Key-terms

For this current study focusing on the learning of the English language, these key terms are worth a mention:

Autoethnography: A research method conducted from one self's point of view, presented as written excerpts on how someone is shaped by the culture surrounding them, and vice versa (Canagarajah, 2012).

Narrative Inquiry: A research method that mainly focuses on the use of narratives or stories as the main source of data. (Benson, 2014)

Non-formal activities: Activities done in places outside of formal environments, such as out of a classroom.

Second Language Acquisition Theory: A theory by Stephen Krashen that posits that language acquisition is how people mainly gain knowledge of second languages, more than language learning.

Social Learning Theory: A theory by Albert Bandura that prescribes the notion that people are able to learn and acquire abilities by observing and imitating the actions of others in their surrounding environment.

6. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher has collected a great number of sources in which they can write their autoethnography for the sake of research. However, due to time constraints and the variation of data sources, it was impossible to include all of the data into the autoethnography for further discussion. Thus, the researcher has decided to limit his data to sources he acquired through online social media conversations and Youtube videos transcriptions, as well as fanfiction they have written in past, and any supplementary data acquired as a result of the researcher's learning through said media. In light of this, the scope of data collection is also limited to the time when the researcher first entered junior high school, all the way to his current university life.

7. Organization of the Proposal

This whole autoethnography research report is divided into five main parts. The first one is the introduction which was already discussed beforehand in this section, covering introductions, objectives, questions, theoretical framework scope, limitation, and significance. The second part is the literature review, which covers all

the relevant theories and references pertaining to this research, with English learning research and other autoethnographies being the main targets, and compile a theoretical framework out of said existing theories. The third part is the research methodology of this study, detailing the kinds of research methods I will use to utilize for this autoethnographic study, ranging from data collection to personal narrative inquiries. The fourth part is the findings of the study, where the researcher details their autoethnography which will then be discussed further, connecting the autoethnography to the stated theories as well as its limitations and future implications. The fifth part is the conclusion, where the researcher states the overall conclusion of the study as well as providing suggestions to future researchers who wish to undertake similar studies.