Language Development Among EFL Students of English Department in a Public University: A Narrative Approach

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Abstract
The study aims to provide the description of language development among EFL students of English department and to find out the factors influence the language development among EFL students. This study employed a qualitative method with narrative approach. The participants of this study involved 5 EFL students of English department who are currently undertaken English education as their major. The researchers used interview in collecting data, and the data was transcribed, organized, and analyzed. The data collected from this study provide a clear understanding of the context and the influencing factors of language development. The context of language development among EFL students of English department is mainly in the social context and the factors influence the language development is based on situation and community engagement.

Keywords: language development, context, factors, peer communication, community engagement, classroom interaction

Introduction

English is a language that has an important role in Indonesia, despite its position as a foreign language, but English has always been one of the requirements for admission to universities. Even English has become a compulsory subject in secondary school level. In its position as a foreign language, English serves as (1) tools of international communication, (2) supporting tools for developing Indonesian into a modern language, and (3) tools for utilizing science and technology for national development (Agustin, 2011).

In relation to English as a foreign language which is only taught at the secondary school level, it can be said that children only know English officially at the age of twelve. but it is possible that some of them have known English earlier this which may be caused by various factors including family and environmental factors. In general, children's language development begins at age 0 where each age range has different stages for normal language acquisition. The language

development is very important for children as it supports child to communicate and supports the ability to express and understand feelings. On the other hand, students who learn a second or foreign language go through 5 stages according to Krashen & Terrell (1983) Preproduction, Early Production, Speech Emergence, Intermediate Fluency, and Advanced Fluency.

For students, especially those who major in English, developing the language they are learning is a must after studying English for six years at the high school level, in fact there are still many of them who have not been able to communicate in English well. Thus, the researcher wants to study how the language development of these students after entering the university with a special major in studying English, in this case the second semester student of the English department at Makassar State University The research questions that will be answered in this paper: 1) How is the language development of EFL students?, 2)What are the factors influence the language development of EFL students?.

Literature Review
Social context support and shape language development

The human potential for language is based in human biology but makes requirements of the social environment to be realized. All normal children in normal environments learn to talk. This fact no doubt reflects innate capacities of the human species that make language acquisition both possible and virtually inevitable, but it may also reflect universally available environmental supports for language acquisition. Another fact about language acquisition is its variability. At every point in development, children differ in the size of the vocabularies they command, the complexity of the structures they produce, and the skill with which they communicate. This variability no doubt also has a genetic basis. Behavior genetic studies of language acquisition estimate the heritability of language to be between 1 and 82%-depending on the method of study, the language outcome, and the age of the children (Dale, Dionne, Eley, & Plomin, 2000; Ganger, Pinker, Chawla, & Baker, 2002; Reznick,Corley, & Robinson, 1997; Stromswold, 2001).

The social contexts are described as a nested set of systems surrounding the child. The systems most distant from the child include culture, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. These distal systems shape the proximal systems, which include schools, child care settings, and peer groups. The proximal systems are then the source of the child's direct interactions with the world, and these interactions are the primary "engines of development" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996). This review has the additional goal of connecting evidence of how the language acquisition mechanism makes use of environmental support to the larger question of how the ecology of children's lives supports and shapes this human achievement.

Universal environmental supports for language development

According to Hoff (2006) there are two arguments about the role of universal environmental supports for language development: 1) environmental support is necessary for children to learn that language can be used for communicative purposes and for children to have the motivation to do so themselves, but that acquisition of the linguistic system per se does not depend on input from the environment, 2) in addition to providing opportunities for communication, all environments also draw the child's attention to speech, provide information about speech segmentation, and provide opportunities for making sound-meaning mappings. Harkness (1990) has argued that the contingency between language input and the nonlinguistic world that Western mothers provide their children by following their children's attentional focus is achieved in other societies by mother and child jointly focusing on a common topic. Together, these arguments suggest the hypothesis that the universal contextual supports for language

acquisition include the opportunity for communicative interaction and an analyzable language model.

Variability across environments in support and in language development

If language acquisition depends on access to communicative opportunities and an analyzable language model, then language acquisition should proceed differently in environments that differ in the provision of these supports. The following sections test this prediction against data on the relation of social contextual variables to children's access to communicative opportunities and a language model and to children's language development. It is important to note that the bioecological model is not a model of language development but a model of environmental sources of influence on development, broadly conceived. It could turn out that despite the foregoing evidence of universal environmental support for language acquisition, the bioecological model contributes nothing to the understanding of language development. The social context variables specified in the bioecological model affect the availability of both communicative experience and a language model and these variables are also related to language outcomes, such evidence would suggest an integrated account of what in children's environments makes language acquisition possible while also making language outcomes variable. Effects of the more macro-level variables of culture, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity are examined first, followed by consideration of effects of the more micro-level variables that also define children's social environments including multilingualism, maternal age, birth order, child care and school, the settings of caregiver-child interaction, peers, television, and parents.

Cultural influences on language environments and language development

This cultural difference only in vocabulary composition, not vocabulary size. Insum, cultures do vary in the communicative opportunities and language models that they provide young children, and the cross-cultural data on language acquisition suggest differences in language acquisition consistent with the hypothesis that the language acquisition mechanism depends on both.

Influences of socioeconomic status on language environments and language development

Conceptually, socioeconomic status (SES) is a compound variable, usually comprising education level, occupational prestige, and income, which together create "different basic conditions of life at different levels of the social order" (Kohn, 1963, p. 471). In studies of child development, SES is most frequently indexed using maternal education (Ensminger & Fothergill, 2003). Thus, as was the case for culture, the weight of the evidence suggests that SES affects children's opportunities for communicative interaction and the availability of language input with the consequence that, even after effects of language style are taken into account, the rate of children's language development differs as a function of SES.

Influences of ethnicity on language environments and language development

Ethnic diversity is clearly associated with diversity in the social environment of language learning, but because ethnicity varies with SES and with dialectical variability the language itself, effects of ethnicity are difficult to isolate. In sum, the findings from research on African American parents and children suggest that ethnicity affects both children's input and their language development. The effects on the rate of language development are indistinguishable in the available data from effects of SES. In contrast, the acquisition of contrastive features of AAE and the unique stylistic features of the language of African American children suggest group-specific influences of input on the outcome of language development.

The influence of multilingualism on language environments and language development

Approximately half the children in the world live in multilingual environments (De Houwer, 1995; Tucker, 1998), yet the range of variation in multilingual environments and their consequences for language acquisition are only beginning to be documented. The circumstances of multilingualism vary enormously, and even confining discussion to the best-studied circumstance of bilingualism, environments vary. For example, one language may be spoken in the home and another in the community, or two languages may be spoken in the home but only one in the community, or the home and the community both may be bilingual. For language learning children in bilingual homes, their expo-sure to two languages may be fairly balanced, or one language may dominate Like monolingual children, children acquiring more than one language vary in their language development.

The influence of age of caregiver on language environments and language development

Compared to children raised by older mothers, children raised by adolescent mothers have different language experiences and, possibly, different language outcomes. Adolescent mothers (mean age = 15 years) have been found to speak less, produce fewer utterances in joint attention, provide fewer object labels, produce less affectionate speech, and issue more commands than young adult mothers (mean age = 23 years) (Culp, Osofsky, &O'Brien, 1996). Sometimes a child's young caregiver is not an adolescent mother, but a young aunt, an older cousin, or an older sibling.

Birth order influences on language environments and language development

In cultures and in families in which children are cared for in the home by their mothers, the first born child experiences a different early social and language environment than do later born children. First born children are temporarily only children, and while that status lasts they have greater possibilities for communicative interaction with an adult and greater exposure to adults' child-directed speech than later born ever do. When a sibling is present, each child receives less speech directed solely at him or her because mothers pro-duce the same amount of speech whether interacting with one or two children (Jones &Adamson, 1987). First born are more advanced in vocabulary and grammar but later born are more advanced in conversational skill further suggest that different experiences are relevant to each aspect of development.

The influence of child care experience on language environments and language development

The environment of a child who spends eight or more hours a day in a group care set-ting is certainly different from the environment of a child at home with his mother, but, as it turns out, being in child care as opposed to home care has little effect on early language development.

The influence of school on language environments and language development

For somewhat older children, school is another environment in which they hear and learn language, and children's language experiences at school differ—to different degrees for different children—from their language experience at home. Talk at school is frequently decontextualized (Snow, 1983), whereas talk at home is more likely to be about the here-and-now. Language use at school tends to follow mainstream, middle class norms, which may be different from language use in the home for some children.

The influence of conversational settings on language environments and language development

The setting of interaction influences the nature of the talk produced. Several studies have compared the mother–child interactions that occur in book reading to those that occur in toy play.

The influence of peers on language environments and language development
Young children interact with peers in play groups, in child care settings, and in preschool, and peer interaction may be a significant context for language acquisition. That children learn some language from their peers is obvious. Often to the dismay of their parents, small children come home from preschool with words that they did not hear at home and that the teacher is not likely to have produced.

The influence of television on language environments and language development
Television is a significant feature of many children's environments, watched both at home and in child care settings. Language exposure via television differs from language exposure through social interaction because in watching television the child is not a participant in the activities that the language is about. On the other hand, examinations of the language in educational programs aimed at preschool children have found that it contains many of the features of speech used in direct interaction with children: the speech on TV describes ongoing events visible on the screen, includes many repetitions and questions, and novel words receive prosodic stress (Rice, 1984; Rice & Haight, 1986). The effect of TV watching on language development appears to depend on what is watched.

The influence of parents on language environments and language development
Parents are a primary source of language experience for most children, and parents varyin the experiences they provide.

Individual differences in language development
In a recent study, Peters (Note 4) cites four factors that may account for the strategy differences discussed above: individual makeup, type of input, type of speech expected by the environment, and perception of speech function.

Individual makeup
Individual differences may result when there is an asymmetric development in the different components. A child who is relatively more advanced in analytic-type skills may rely on these in early language acquisition, whereas a child whose gestalt processing is relatively advanced may become a skilled user of whole phrases. Wolf and Gardner (1979) describe individual differences in all aspects of symbolic development that appear to implicate distinct cognitive styles associated with temperamental differences. They distinguish between patterners (similar to the referential-analytic groups described here) who consistently focus their attention on the object world, use other persons largely as means to ends, and use language to pick out physical properties; and dramatists (expressive-gestalt) who are socially oriented and use language to establish communication. These differences were displayed by the children they studied in symbolic play as well as in language use, including metaphoric uses, throughout the preschool period.

Type of input
The type of input may also important this theory that input should not be gramatically sequenced. he claims that such sequencing, as found in language classrooms where lesson involve practicing a " structure of the day" is not nacessery, and may even be harmful. The primary factor affecting language acquisition appears to be the input that the learner receives. Stephen Krashen took a very strong position on the importance of input, asserting that comprehensible input is all that is necessary for second-language acquisition. Krashen pointed to studies showing that the length of time a person stays in a foreign country is closely linked with their level of language

acquisition. Further evidence for input comes from studies on reading: large amounts of free voluntary reading have a significant positive effect on learners' vocabulary, grammar, and writing. Input is also the mechanism by which people learn languages according to the universal grammar model.

Environmental conditions

An alternative to the neurological differential, maturation of skill, or style explanation of the differences displayed is that they are determined by environmental conditions of learning. That the language environment provided by the parent may be significant is suggested also by Lieven (1978), who analyzed the speech of two mothers whose children had quite different speech styles. Beth, a second born, had speech that could be characterized as expressive, whereas Kate, a firstborn, was more clearly referential. Both mothers adjusted their speech to their children along lines found to be generally characteristic of adult language to children, that is, short sentences and more imperatives and interrogatives than found in speech to adults.

Language function and the language learning task

Speech in different functional contexts displays different features. As various linguists and sociolinguists have recently pointed out (e.g., Gumperz & Tanner, 1979), an enormous amount of social speech is formulaic in character .Thus, the function of the language that the child is exposed to is reflected in its form. The mother who labels and responds to questions makes it easy for the child to break language into its component parts, to become a word user. The language to be learned is traditionally thought of in terms of two basic units, the word and the sentence. In oversimplified but basically correct terms, words are learned as unanalyzed wholes, whereas sentences must be constructed from parts. Thus, the claim is that it is in the frame- work of social interaction that children learn language, and the nature of the particular kinds of interaction dictates not only the function and content of the language but which parts will be learned first and how those parts will be put together or broken down for reassembly. Because most children learn language in a variety of contexts for a variety of purposes, most children will exhibit aspects of both formulaic and analytic approaches in their early language.

Method

This study employ the conceptual framework of socio-cultural theory, in that learning is a social process where the development of cognition occurs through the interaction with others in a society and also influenced by the culture.

Participants

To recruit the study participant, this study used purposive sampling where the participants were chosen based on the length of study and their major. There are 5 participants in this study which are taken from undergraduate program of English department in the second semester.

Data collection tools and procedures

Structured interviews were used to collect the data. The interview guides were prepared for the students based on a review of related literature. The researchers designed the interview questions for students on their general attitudes and their own live experiences using English in communication.

The interview questions were pretested between 2 participants who belonged to the target population. The participants were asked about the appropriateness of the questions and the ease of

understanding the questions. This process of pretesting improved question development and refinement.

Each interview were conducted in bahasa Indonesia between 15 to 20 minutes via zoom application. The interview data were translated into English, rechecked and coded to ensure confidentiality.

Data analysis

The qualitative data collected from the interview were transcribed, organized and analyzed. Students participants were coded on the basis of the interview order (1, 2, 3 and so on)

This study utilized a constant comparative method of analysis in organizing the gathered data to enable thematic analysis of the content. The constant comparative method is a process of comparing and contrasting.

During this process, data considered critical to the research aims and the intended analysis were systematically organized into themes and subthemes (Boeije, 2002; Fram, 2013). This process allowed the researcher to determine the key categories or concepts and make logical connections between these categories.

Finding and Discussion

The data collected in this study allowed for a clear understanding of the context and influencing factors of the language development among EFL students which might have an impact on teaching and learning process. According to the analysis there are some key themes emerged, including 1) the context of language development among EFL Students; 2) The influencing factors of language development among EFL Students

The context of language development among EFL students

The data drawn from students' interview suggested that there are various models of the context of language development among EFL Students. The points are discussed below.

Peers' communication in English

Peer communication is one of the contexts that can be used in language development. In addition, peer communication also plays an important role in the acquisition of a second language where children will acquire new words from their peer environment as quoted in Hoff (2006) stated that children learn language from their peers is obvious and they return home from school by acquiring new words that have never been heard from their parents or teachers. In relation to language development for EFL students, peer communication in this case plays a role in language practice where students communicate with each other using English, so that they can get new words from what they listen to and practice their ability to speak in English. As an illustration of students' interview, some suggested comments are provided below.

> *Sometimes, I use English with my friends depend on who I talk to. If my friend can speak English, I will use English in communication. (S1)*
> *Not always, but I use English sometimes (S3)*

As we can see from the interview of students of English Department at UNM, they use English to their peers who can speak English but it is not very often, they only speak English sometimes and that is the majority of the students answer.

Classroom interaction

Student interaction in class is also very influential on language development, especially when students interact with lecturers and classmates. as stated by Holf (2006) school is a place where children listen and learn and children's language experiences at school and at home are very different. Thus, teachers or lecturers should be aware of the importance of creating a learning environment that can support students to develop their language. Based on the results of the interview, it can be seen that students are very dependent on the lecturer regarding the language used in the teaching and learning process.

> *We communicate with the lecturer during the learning process but it depends on the lecturer. If the lecturer requires us to use English, I will do it. (S1)*
> *I communicate in English during the learning process so that I can practice my speaking skill.*

Thus, to support the development of English language students, lecturers should make English as the main language of communication.

On the other hand, students also continue to use English with their lecturers even though it is not in the context of teaching and learning in the classroom, as obtained in the interview results as follows.

> *If I want to ask questions to my lecturer outside of the learning process I used English (S1)*
> *Sometimes I communicate in English with my lecturer through WA, but it depend on the situatuin (s4)*
> *For some unclear information, I send an email to my lecturer by using English (S5)*

Most of the students use English outside the classroom when sending messages to lecturers either via email or WhatsApp and when asking questions.

Factors influence the language development of EFL students.
Formal situation

Formal language is used in situations that are more serious, for example when you're in a job interview or emailing your university professor. It can also be used when you're speaking to someone you don't know very well and want to make sure you sound respectful. According to ell and Kriszner (2003:17) It is the way for express our own way to communicate with other person. To find out what students think about the formal situation, we can see that there are several different opinions below:

> *Yes, my communication skills in English have improved more during the second semester because some courses require students to express their opinions in English, via google meet or zoom.(S1)*

> *I think yes. I further deepen my knowledge in terms of writing in English. This is because by taking this major I can focus more on finding out mistakes and things to pay attention to in detail.(S5)*

In this section some students answered about improving their communication skills, and most students answered that their communication skills improved in semester 2 because there are several courses that require students to speak English when giving opinions when using Google

meet and Zoom application, there is also an increase in their communication skills because she wants to deepen her writing skills by using English.

Informal situation

Informal language is used in more relaxed, everyday situations. Of course, this includes conversations with friends, family and other people you know well. Unlike many other languages, though, most English speakers tend to use informal language with people they've just met, too. According to ell and Kriszner (2003:17) It is the way for express our own way to communicate with other person. To find out what students think about the formal situation, we can see that there are several different opinions below:

Usually in informal situations. While kidding. (S1)

When learning English and under certain conditions, such as the desire to speak English, and when my friend asks in English, I will also try to respond in English.(S4)

In addition, there were student interviews who said she communicated when communicating with friends from other countries, namely the United States.

When I communicate with my friends who are from other countries and with my host family residing in the United States.(S5)

Most of the students answered that they used English with their friends when the situation was not formal, when learning English and she also tried to respond in English, there were even students who answered that he communicated in English with her friends who came from other countries that is United States.

Community engagement

Community Engagement is the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community and its members It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices (CDC, 1997). Based on the interview that the students prefer community engagement to improve their speaking.

I need an English-speaking community/club that only focuses on speaking and is held 2 times a week. So that it trained me to be more confident in speaking English in front of many people. (S2)

Read English books more often, use English learning application, listen to English podcasts. (S3)

Beside club community and learning application, another student said she can improve her speaking when she in a good environment.

I think the environment. When I went to school in United State, I inevitably had to speak English because the environment and circumstances forced me to continue learning and using the language. However, if the environment does not support us to speak English, then it will be very difficult for us to improve our communication skills in English. (S5)

The last factor that affects the language development of students is that in order to improve their communication skills they need an English community or club which is carried out 2x a week, they also use an English learning application, then they listen to podcasts, while one of the most influencing factors is the condition and environment of the students, as in reality. When the conditions and environment are supportive or the people around them use English, the student's communication skills will improve faster than when the conditions and environment are not supportive, it will be very difficult to improve their communication skills in English. Those are some of the factors above that influence language development.

Conclusion

In the context of EFL students, the factors influence the language development depend on the situation and the environment which support them in learning the language, such as in the formal and informal situation, and community engagement. When the conditions and environment are supportive or the people around them use English, the students' communication skills will improve faster than when the conditions and environment are not supportive. It will be very difficult for them to improve their communication skills in English.

The context of language development among EFL students is mainly in the social context like peer communication and classroom interaction. In peer communication help the to acquire an informal language while in classroom interactions it forces them to use or acquire the target language more academically.

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