

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the study. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background

During the time the author teaches English in one of the secondary schools in Tasikmalaya, through direct observation, noticed how some students excel in language learning. Upon further observation of the phenomena, the author has come to an assessment that these students' English inefficiency happened due to the lack of English language exposure. Undoubtedly, language exposure highly contributes to learners' English performance. This claim is supported by two previous studies conducted by Munoz (2014), which showed that it was exposure to foreign language input that was a determinant predictor for learners' speaking performance. Language exposure also contributes to learners' general language proficiency and vocabulary knowledge (Munoz, 2014). On the other hand, Al Zoubi (2018) also revealed in his study that exposure to the target language has a massive effect on language acquisition and the development of the four language skills. Furthermore, Al Zoubi (2018) conducted a research in a Jordanian University with 42 EFL students of the English Language Department which revealed through an English test that students with the highest marks were those that are constantly exposed to the English language. This shows the more students exposed themselves to the target language, the faster their language acquisition will be. They further added that students who were weak in English were those that were handicapped by their environment.

From the findings of previous research, it can be concluded that frequent exposure to the target language impacted learners' second language acquisition. Thus, it proved the importance of exposing oneself to the target

language frequently not only inside but outside school as well. However, these previous researches did not elaborate on what language exposure was demonstrated by learners in their language acquisition. Language learning is often affected by learners' personalities as some researchers tend to associate extroversion with better language learning performance and some suggest counterevidence in favor of introverted learners (Hennebry-Leung & Xiao, 2023). Ellis (2015) once stated two hypotheses about the dichotomy of introversion/extroversion and language learning. The first is that extroverts are more successful language learners as they are better at basic interpersonal communication strategies. However, another hypothesis claimed that introverts are better language learners as they have developed cognitive academic ability. A previous study by Adan & Hashim (2021) revealed that introverted learners consciously employed goal-oriented specific behaviors and mental operations to ease acquisition, retrieval, storage, and use of information for both comprehension and production while extroverted learners used more interpersonal communication strategies. Yet, the fact that extroverted learners are relatively prone to start a conversation, did not necessarily enable them to be better learners, given the intricate nature of language-learning processes. Thus, it is a mistake to equate success only through speaking and to assess second language achievement and internal mechanisms in language learning.

Some learners may be introverted, quiet, unsociable, and passive but still possess good English skills while some may be extroverted, outgoing, and more active but may still be lacking English proficiency. Furthermore, in an EFL setting, English is not limited to simple conversational communication; It includes the construction of knowledge or pragmatic needs in a non-English speaking environment. The significance of this research come following Eysenck's (1981) theory of how introversion and extroversion brain functioned. Eysenck (1981) characterize brain processes by means of a simplified conceptual nervous system comprising key circuits relevant to personality which affects behavior. Thus, introverts and extroverts often took

different path or strategies in reaching goal. In the context of this research, the author seek to reveal what language exposure was demonstrated by introverted and extroverted secondary school learners in their second language acquisition. Second language can be acquired through repeated exposure to the target language be it intentional or unintentional. Benson (2011), in his research of language learning beyond the classroom, defined language exposure as the contact that learners have with the target language. De Wilde et al. (2019), stated that out-of-school exposure to the target language were beneficial in a relatable way for learners as it was authentic sources in a real-world situation.

This research focused on learners' exposure to the target language outside school where unintentional exposure often happened. Learners often unintentionally acquire second language as a result of unrelated activity (De Wilde et al., 2020). The participants were given a questionnaire created by Neris Analytics adapted from Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to determine whether they fell within the extrovert or introvert personality. Two secondary school learners were chosen as participants and were interviewed using semi-structured interviews which were then analyzed with thematic analysis. The findings of the study revealed what language exposures demonstrated by introverted and extroverted secondary school learners in their language acquisition outside school. Such information might be insightful for any English teachers. It may improve teachers' awareness of learners' personalities, particularly how each personality may have its preferred way of learning. Perhaps, it may also help teachers in developing a teaching strategy or forming a learning environment where both personalities may prosper in language learning.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background above, the researcher addressed the following question, "What language exposure do introverted and extroverted secondary school learners demonstrate in their English language acquisition?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misinterpretation of this research, here are the operational definitions of each keyword:

- 1.3.1 Language Exposure** : Exposures to language can be defined as the contact that learners have with the target language which in this case is the English language; It is any kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom and involves self regulated learning.
- 1.3.2 Introvert** : In language learning, introverted learners often use a significantly greater number of cognitive strategies such as analyzing expression, using formulas and patterns, repeating, and formally practicing with sounds and writing systems. Introverted learners speak less in social gatherings.
- 1.3.3 Extrovert** : In language learning, extroverted learners used more functional strategies and social-affective strategies and they tend to focus on meaning more than form, it is also known that extroverts asked more questions than their introverted counterparts.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The study revealed what language exposure introverted and extroverted secondary school learners demonstrate in their language acquisition.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Use

This study enriches knowledge in literature, elaborating upon Benson's (2011) theory of language learning beyond the classroom

through language exposure, acquiring a language, particularly viewed through the experience of an introvert and extrovert.

1.5.2 Practical Use

This study offers references for young teachers and learners, an insight or a guide in determining second language acquisition strategies through language exposure suitable for introverts and extroverts accompanied by self regulation in learning.

1.5.3 Empirical Use

This study provides empirical insights for the researcher into language acquisition through language exposure, viewed through the experience of an introverted and extroverted secondary school learners' exposure to the target language and how it enhanced their language skills.