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An Analysis Of Factors Affecting Foreign Language Learning Of Gifted Students: A Case Study At Glc Palangka Raya

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Abstrak

Bahasa memegang peranan penting dalam berbagai aspek kehidupan manusia khususnya dalam bidang komunikasi. Di Indonesia dan juga banyak negara lainnya, sangat penting bagi siswa untuk mempelajari bahasa lain selain bahasa pertama mereka. Penelitian ini hanya difokuskan pada siswa berbakat dalam penguasaan bahasa asingnya. Siswa berbakat adalah siswa yang dapat menunjukkan potensi baik kecerdasan maupun bakatnya. Selanjutnya tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bahasa-faktor yang mempengaruhi pembelajaran bahasa asing pada siswa berbakat. Instrumen yang digunakan ada 2 yaitu observasi partisipan dan wawancara. Peneliti mengumpulkan data di Global Learning Center (GLC) Palangka Raya dengan cara mengamati langsung proses belajar mengajar serta mewawancarai pandangan guru mengenai topik tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat 7 faktor yang mempengaruhi pembelajaran bahasa asing siswa berbakat, yaitu (1) Kecerdasan, (2) Bakat, (3) Kepribadian, (4) Motivasi, (5) Budaya dan Status, (6) Strategi Guru, dan (7) Usia. Semoga penelitian ini bermanfaat bagi guru dan orang tua untuk mengetahui dan mempelajari bahasa-faktor yang mempengaruhi pembelajaran bahasa asing pada siswa berbakat.

Abstract

Language holds vital role in many aspects of human life especially for communication. In Indonesia as well as many other countries, it is very essential for students to learn another language other than their first language. This research was only focused to gifted students in acquiring their foreign language. Gifted students were the students who can demonstrate potential in both intelligence and talent. Furthermore, the aim of this research was to find out the factors affecting foreign language learning in gifted students. There were 2 instruments used, namely participant observation and interview. The researcher collected the data at Global Learning Center (GLC) Palangka Raya by observing directly the teaching and learning process as well as interviewing the teacher's perspectives regarding the topic. The result of this researcher showed there were 7 factors affecting foreign language learning of gifted students, they were (1) Intelligence, (2) Aptitude, (3) Personality, (4) Motivation, (5) Culture and Status, (6) Teacher's Strategy, and (7) Age. Hopefully, this research will be beneficial for teachers and parents to aware and learn the factors affecting foreign language learning in gifted students.

INTRODUCTION

Language holds vital role in many aspects of human life especially for communication. There is a saying "No life without language" because language is mode of communication that allows the people to understand one another (Apriyanto & Nurhayaty, 2019). Thus, before language is learned by a child, language is obtained first. The process of acquiring language is what we called as language acquisition. Language acquisition is the process of children getting the ability to capture, produce, and use words for understanding and communication. Sundari (2018) states that language acquisition is a person's acquisition of language unconsciously, implicitly, and informally. Implicit means that language acquisition takes place unconsciously other word, language acquisition is a subconscious process (Persson, V., & Nouri, 2018).

In Indonesia, the language acquisition is mother tongue. However, in Indonesia as well as many other countries, it is very essential for students to learn another language other than their first language. There are 3 languages that is very essential to learn in Indonesia, they are mother tongue (first language acquisition), national language, and foreign language (English). After a child has acquired his first language, he will after the second/foreign language. The process of occurring a foreign language after acquiring his first language is called language learning. In other words, language acquisition is different from language learning (Chaer, 2018: 167). This present research is only focus to foreign language learning (English).

Related to foreign language learning, Indonesian students still face the same issues in acquiring English as foreign language. Most of students are far than successful in both and

in oral and written English according to Nur (2004). Although, English as a foreign language is being made as a compulsory subject in schools throughout Indonesia, but Indonesian students still face the same issues in English learning. One of the problems is children's literature at Indonesian secondary schools is still neglected. The case study by Marlina, L., et al (2013) mentioned that the school textbooks in secondary schools tend to include less literary works as teaching materials. The use of literature in English learning in schools does not extend to discussions of language use or cross-cultural understanding. Other than that, the case study by Yusra, A., et al, (2022) also mentioned that Indonesian students still face the same issues in speaking English. The students' speaking is lack of self-confident because they are afraid to make errors and pronounce the word incorrectly that made them confront with anxiety.

Related to issues above, the researcher believes that every learner has unique learning abilities, interests, and needs. Although, Indonesian students still face the same issues in acquiring the language learning, but it does not apply for all the students. There must be a student who can demonstrate potential in both intelligence and talent. The student who has different ways of thinking and learning that influences the way they overcome problems in language learning and improve their language performance are what we usually known as 'gifted student' or 'high ability learner'. For gifted students, their learning experiences need to be accelerated, enriched for depth and complexity, and differentiated from their peers (Bondie et al., 2019).

Based on the explanation above, the researchers are interested to find out the factors affecting foreign language learning in gifted students. The researchers collected the data in Global Learning Center (GLC) in Palangka Raya with the consideration that most of students are still far than successful in acquiring the foreign language both in oral and written in formal school. So, the researcher is interested to observe directly the teaching and learning process and interviewing the gifted students who take extra English course outside the formal classroom. Hopefully, this research will be beneficial for teachers and parents to aware and learn the factors affecting foreign language learning in gifted students.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed descriptive qualitative research. According to Ary (2010: 424-425), descriptive data in qualitative research is the qualitative inquirer deals with data that are in the form of quotes from documents, field notes, interview, etc. In this research, the processes of collecting primary data were obtained from two instruments, namely participant observation and interview. In participant observation, the researchers immersed themselves

in a particular class, observing the behaviors, interactions, and practices of the participants. The researcher observed directly the gifted students in Global Learning Center (GLC) Palangka Raya and find out the factors affecting their language learning. For interview, the researchers asked the teachers perspectives of three of ten students who are considered to be gifted students. The interview process was expected to provide information on the perspectives of the interviewees about the research topic and also to investigate the reasons for that perspective. Furthermore, data analysis conducted from Miles and Huberman's (1994) outlined steps, involving data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The data get reduced in order to get only the main data related to the topic analysis, then the researcher displayed the data in the form of table. The last was the researchers drew conclusion regarding the data result.

RESULTS

In this section, the results regarding the factors affecting foreign language learning of 3 gifted students in Global Learning Center (GLC) Palangka Raya are discussed. The data were obtained from observation as well as interview. The data are presented in the following table.

Table 1. English Teachers' Perspectives of Gifted Students

Gifted Students Code	English teachers' Perspectives of the Students
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student always pays attention to the teacher's explanation. • The student is calm and mature than his peers in the class. • The student is able to imitate the teacher's pronunciation confidently during drilling session. • The student always shows interests to the topic related to his favorite things regarding topic of technology, social relationship, and environmental issue. • The student likes to answer teacher's questions regarding the delivered topic correctly. • The student finishes his work faster than his peers and get a good score regarding the topic. • The student has high curiosity and always asks something out of the box.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is always curious about the new thing and gets excited when he meets new vocabulary. • The student is able to understand the meaning of the new vocabulary. • The student has a creative and unique way to answer the question than his peers. • The student can process the information quickly with only once repetition.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has a good imagination to describe some pictures. • The students have strong curiosity with. • The student is sensitive with some mistakes and complain if he senses something wrong. • The student is able to apply the learning materials in his daily conversation.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has high self-confidence than can see through his daily behavior to always come first to demonstrate his work. • The student can understand the material easily and pronounce the word correctly. • The student can express his idea in creative way than his peers. • The student has many English word stocks than his peers. • The student is always motivated to the topic that he has never learned before. • The student often get perfect score in answering the questions. • The student likes to talk current issue with his teacher and peers.

Based on the English teachers' responses regarding their perspectives of the 3 students, it is summarized that the students' characteristics are almost equal with the traits from National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). The student A, B, C can almost cover the 8 traits from NAGC. They have the ability to comprehend material, surprising emotional depth and sensitivity, strong sense of curiosity, motivated and enthusiastic about unique interests and topics, calmer and more mature, has creative problem solving and imaginative expression, and can absorb information quickly.

Table 2. Observation Result regarding the Factors Affecting the Gifted Students

Observation and Interview Result	Factors Affecting the Gifted Students
Gifted student A, B, C are smart and it can be seen from their academic score and knowledge	Intelligence
Gifted student A, B, C has natural ability or potential to learn English easily and apply what they have learned	Aptitude
Gifted student A, B, C are confident, creative, enthusiastic, curious, and sensitive	Personality
Gifted student A, B, C are motivated when they find the material or activity enjoyable, fascinating, and challenging	Motivation
Gifted student A, B, C comes from good culture and status in the family	Culture and Status

Gifted student A, B, C can pay attention to the class and express their idea creatively when they find the questions fun and challenging	Teacher's Strategy
Gifted student A, B, C are young learners	Age

Based on the data provided in table 1 before, the researchers found the similarity of 3 gifted students. Those similarities in table 2 showed that gifted students acquire their foreign language caused by 7 factors. The factors were (1) Intelligence, (2) Aptitude, (3) Personality, (4) Motivation, (5) Culture and Status, (6) Teacher's Strategy, and (7) Age.

DISCUSSION

Based on the participant observation as well as interview, the study indicated that factors which affect foreign language acquisition of gifted students are presented in details below:

1) Intelligence

There was various definition of intelligence. According to Carroll (1993) defined intelligence as a type of mental ability that concerns the handling of (and reasoning about) information of various sorts. Furthermore, according to Cambridge Online Dictionary (2024), intelligence is the ability to learn, understand, and make judgment or have opinions that are based on reasons: an intelligence test, low, average, and low intelligence. In short, the term of intelligence is related to the ability to learn and handle an information and it is also used to measure performances on certain kinds of tests. Based on the data result, the researchers found that gifted students have high level of intelligence. Their level of thinking can be seen from how fast they learn, absorb, and understand the material. They also acquired English language learning much faster than their peers (average and low intelligence). Thus, intelligence plays such an important key in learning English language process. Arbabisarjou, A., et al (2013) in their study "Relationship between Different Types of Intelligence and Student Achievement" strengthen the present study by mentioning that spiritual intelligence has more effect on achievement. The study by Kaya, F., et al (2015) added that the higher the level of intelligence, the easier it is to understand abstract content and comprehend the complexities of a mentally demanding career. In brief, the link between intelligence and English language learning has been excessively reported.

2) Aptitude

Aptitude is described as the potential ability to reflect on one's chance to succeed in completing a task (Snow, 1996). Aptitude reflected a person's condition to reach various achievements and work optimally with the skills and capability that one owns. In brief,

aptitude is natural ability or potential to learn English easily and apply what they have learned. The gifted students in the present study were able to understand and pronounce the English vocabulary easily. Those gifted students had a natural ability to absorb the information quickly and then demonstrate what they learned well. The gifted student has the skills (aptitude) to success in acquiring the English language. The statement was also supported by the study of Tobroni, K., & Khaja, F. N. M (2021) that stated aptitude or skills to learn foreign or second language is defined as the capability to pick up languages either in naturalistic or instructed exposure easily and successfully. It is considered as privilege for any people who want to learn any given language. Language aptitude is a unique entity in itself and is independent of other differences such as the motivation, intelligence, attitudes toward the language, personality, and anxiety. In brief, aptitude is one of the factors affecting the gifted students' successful in acquiring English language.

3) Personality

According to American Psychological Association (APA) dictionary (2018) defined personality as characteristics and behavior that comprise a person's unique adjustment to life, including major traits, interests, drives, values, self-concept, abilities, and emotional patterns. In addition, there are 8 personalities of gifted students according to The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). In broadly, the rapid learner, surprising emotional and sensitivity, curious, enthusiastic, imaginative, creative, excellent memory, etc. Based on the present study, the gifted students have high level of self-confident, creative, enthusiastic, high curiosity, and sensitive. Their personalities are covered more than half from 8 personalities of gifted students by NAGC. Those traits of giftedness affecting to how fast they can learn and apply the English as foreign language. The study by Peperkorn, C & Wegner, C (2020) also showed that gifted students scored higher on the scale independence can be assigned to the personality trait conscientiousness. For the trait conscientiousness, gifted students' school performance is significantly correlated (Mammadov et al., 2018). Peperkorn, C & Wegner, C (2020) also stated that the differences between gifted and non-gifted students occur in openness, where gifted students score significantly higher than non-gifted students, which is matched by their most assessed personality types. In brief, personality played an important factor in affecting the gifted students' successful in acquiring foreign language learning.

4) Motivation

Motivation is one of most the pivotal factors in English language learning. The term of motivation refers to enthusiasm for doing something. Motivation is defined in two factors: 1) learners' communicative needs. 2) Students' attitude towards language learning.

Motivation is the drive which made the students want to learn language. Based on the result data, the gifted students showed interest to their favorite topics and motivated with the topic that they have never learned before. They also answered creatively and enthusiastically when it came to their favorite topic. Those things showed that the students can be considered as gifted or talented because of how enthusiasm and motivated they are with delivered topic. Sharma, V (2018) also stated that the unmotivated students do not take interest and always lack in acquiring second language. But motivation factor determines how ready and willing learners are to get more information and to increase their ability to understand, speak, and write second language. The observation indicated that motivation have a significant impact on students' learning outcomes in term of attention, memory, effort, and persistence. Therefore, a successful English language learning should have positive motivation.

5) Culture and Status

Family culture and status plays an important key to make a child considered as gifted students. The 3 gifted students in the present study came from family with good background where the parents well-educated, supportive, respectable, and friendly. The gifted students' intelligence might come genetically from their parents and also their culture (behavior and personality) from how their parents treat them. This data was supported by the writing of Ian J. Deary., et al (2022) stated that genetic contribution to intelligence differences is highly polygenic. In other words, there are large numbers of independent genetic variants, each of which accounts for a tiny proportion of intelligence variation. The overall degree to which genes account for intelligence is usually estimated to be at least half, or as high as 80%, with the rest accounted for by environment and life experience. Those data showed that the parents' intelligence was very influential to produce a gifted person.

Furthermore, culture also plays big aspects because the 3 gifted students can acquire the foreign language easily caused by the support of their parents who exposure them with many things. Other than that, the parents also provided them with kindness and treat them in respectable way. Results of the current meta-analyses by Madigan, S., et al (2019) indicated that children whose caregivers show higher levels of sensitive responsiveness and warmth display stronger language skills compared with children who received lower levels of such parenting behavior. Madigan, S., et al (2019) also added that on a behavioral level, responsive parenting may encourage children into social interactions that enhance learning. For instance, children of responsive mothers have been found to have an eager and willing stance toward others and are more motivated, exploratory, and enthusiastic to seek out new

information. Therefore, culture and status affecting the gifted students' successful in acquiring English language language.

6) Teachers' Strategies

Strategy is defined as a way of doing something or dealing with something. Strategies are the specific actions or techniques which teachers apply to accomplish goals such as planning, monitoring, evaluating or revising. Strategies applied by teachers in the classroom help to regulate learning process, optimizing learning resources, and dealing with difficulties. With a good strategy in teaching, educators can enhance effective learning styles in the classroom and educators will have a steadier and more trustworthy handle to provide enjoyable lessons (Buckley, & Doyle, 2017; Darmaji et al. 2019). Learning styles can also affect the gifted students' personal learning, it can be said that students are scientifically motivated which makes the learning process of students more effective. Therefore, teachers should set realistic as well as specific goals, select appropriate strategies, monitor and assess progress, and improve learnings. In brief, English language learning can be very much effective relies on teachers' strategy skills.

7) Age

The length of time during which a being or thing has existed is the definition of age by Random House Unabridged Dictionary (2023). In acquiring the language, age played a crucial role to make the students learn language quickly. There were terms "The earlier, the better to learn a foreign language" by Wang (2015). Wang (2015) concluded in his research that there were significant differences between the various types of second language learning, with different age onsets and relative achievements. Other hypothesis was stated by Hu (2017) that young learners will pick up a language easily and intuitively; nevertheless, it appears that after that, they will find it challenging to learn and use a second language. Hu (2017) believed in his research that kids will learn languages better than adults. Those assumption also strengthen the present research that 3 gifted students are young learners where they can learn and absorb the foreign language quickly. Then, the giftedness traits made them to learn the language fast than their peer that also labelled them as rapid learners.

CONCLUSION

The study found there were 3 of 10 students in Global Learning Center (GLC) Palangka Raya that considered as gifted students because they almost covered 8 traits of gifted child according to National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). Those students were being observed by researchers in order to find out the factors affecting their foreign language

learning. According to teacher's perspective and researchers' observation notes. The result showed there were 7 factors affecting foreign language learning of gifted students, they were (1) Intelligence, (2) Aptitude, (3) Personality, (4) Motivation, (5) Culture and Status, (6) Teacher's Strategy, and (7) Age.

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