

## Factors Affecting the Success of Learning English with Limited Exposure: Reflections from Non-English Department Students

Khurniatu Sholikhah Qurrotu Aini Lubna<sup>1</sup>, Toyyibah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kediri

Email: [khurniatu.nia@gmail.com](mailto:khurniatu.nia@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [toyyibah@iainkediri.ac.id](mailto:toyyibah@iainkediri.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

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### Abstract

Acquiring English language skills is an important aspect of education for non-English department students. However, it can be a challenging task, especially for those with limited exposure to the language. This study aims to determine the factors that affect the success of learning English with limited exposure of non-English department students. The subjects of the study were 79 psychology department students. This research used 25 questions followed by open-ended questions and why they chose the options to collect the data. The result showed that motivation was the most factor affecting learning English as much as (80%). The second factor was aptitude and learning strategies which have the same percentage in affecting English learning success that is (76%). The third point that influences learning English success is personality as much as (70%). The last and the lowest factor was learning styles, with a percentage (57%). The result concluded that the students need instrumental motivation in English learning. The students needed the teacher's example and explanation in learning English. The strategy of learning English with medium pressure will help the students in managing their anxiety.

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## INTRODUCTION

Science has made enormous progress as a result of technological advancements. The advancement of this science corresponds to the advancement of research in the modern period. The advancement of science and technology influences the quality of students and educators. The easier it is to study and obtain knowledge, the higher the quality of every educational science globally. The advancement has both good and bad consequences of technological ease that there is a lot of irrelevant knowledge that is readily spread without oversight. Technological and science developments influenced English learning in Indonesia, from primary to higher levels. English development in Indonesia is increasing in line with technological advancements. This language has become an international and the most widely spoken language globally. This language has become an international language since it is applied in several discourse books, learning materials, and international communications.

Acquiring English language skills is essential to education, especially for non-English students. However, it can be a challenging task, especially for those with limited exposure to the language. Individuals face several challenges when trying to acquire English language skills, which can create difficulties in communicating effectively. One of the main obstacles non-English speaking students face is the need for more exposure to the language. English may be a different language spoken in their home, which limits opportunities to practice language skills. This lack of exposure also affects their confidence level in using the language, making them hesitant to speak or write in English. The theory used is based on the individual differences in second language learning. There are aptitude, motivation, learning styles, learning strategies, and personality (Dörnyei, 2005). Aptitude, motivation, learning styles, learning strategies, and personality are the factors used to find the differences. These points depend on the internal factor of the students.

Some experts agree that aptitude influences individual differences in second language learning. Skehan assumes that L2 success is linked with aptitude, but it remains one of the under-investigated areas of SLA (Skehan, 1989). The notion of a particular aptitude for language learning has been extremely held for many years (Saville-Troike, 2016). TOEFL and IELTS have been used for a long time to test the aptitude of second-language learners. To predict success in learning a foreign language, used The Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) which gives four types of aptitude abilities (Carroll, 1962): Phonemic coding ability (distinguish and encodes foreign sounds), Grammatical sensitivity (identify functions of words in sentences), Inductive language learning ability (concludes or induces rules from

samples), and Memory and learning (create and remember associations between words and phrases in L1 and L2).

The scholars stated that aptitude does not determine an individual's language learning ability if there are no other factors. Individual abilities can vary with other factors (Skehan, 1989). Other factors such as personality, language learning style, and motivation must be considered before being taken into account. To conclude that aptitude for language learning “is not wholly different from general cognitive abilities, as intelligence tests represent, but is far from the same thing.” Aptitude predicts success in second language acquisition; it cannot explain the reason behind it (Skehan, 1989).

Motivation is considered one of the most plausible reasons for success in second language acquisition. Motivation is the second strongest predictor after aptitude for second language success (Saville-Troike, 2016). She also argues that motivation significantly influences the level of effort that learners expend at various stages in their L2 development, frequently crucial to attaining the highest degree of proficiency. The types of motivations are Integrative and instrumental (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Integrative is seen in an individual who wants to integrate with and become a part of the target community/ culture; in this case, the learners desire to resemble and behave like the target community. While instrumental, it is discovered in those who wish to study a second language in order to gain second language skills. Goals include business advancement, increased professional status, educational goals, etc. Motivate someone to learn a second language, in this case. The two types of motivation have different roles to play. Both can bring success. Various personal and societal circumstances determine the relative importance of one or the other. L2 learning by members of a dominating social group may benefit more from integrative motivation, whereas L2 learning by members of a subordinate social group may be impacted more by instrumental drive (Saville-Troike, 2016).

Language learning styles relate to cognitive variations in a second language learning. Language learning styles are broad patterns that generally guide learning behavior (Cornett, 1983). Unlike age, aptitude, and motivation, which have not been well proven in explaining why particular L2 learners are more successful than others, it entails a complicated (and as yet little understood) interplay with unique L2 social and learning contexts (Brown, 2000). Learning styles are divided into some categories there are concrete learning styles, analytical learning styles, communicative learning styles, and authority-oriented learning styles (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

A concrete learning style is a learner that uses active and direct information for their study. They are looking for knowledge that is useful right away. The pupils are inquisitive, impulsive, and eager to take chances. They despise monotonous learning and written work, prefer verbal or visual encounters, and are amused and physically engaged in learning. Analytical learning styles correspond to self-directed learners. Analytical learners appreciate a logical, systematic presentation of new learning information with the opportunity for learners to follow up on their own. Most analytical learners take their studies seriously, push themselves hard, and fear of failure. Learners with communicative learning prefer a social approach to learning. They benefit from personal feedback, engagement, conversations, and group activities. They flourish in a class that is democratically administered. The last learning type is the authority-oriented learning style, which is responsible and dependable. Structure and sequential advancement are essential to them. As an authoritative figure, they choose the instructor. They want specific instructions to know what to do and are uncomfortable with consensus-building talks.

Field-independent style (left brain dominance) and field-dependent style (right brain dominance) are the types of learning styles (Witkin, 1973). Field-independent style learners are usually independent and confident, seeing parts and details from a whole. They also have rational, logical, and mathematical aspects to their minds, and they are more engaged during the learning process. They want to learn in a class full of activities and exercises. Learners with field-dependent styles, on the other hand, are better at comprehending observing notions and watching the entire situation. They are emotionally and aesthetically focused and prefer dialogue and contact to aid in second language acquisition since they are social creatures.

Learning strategies are learning techniques. The nature of their motivation, cognitive style, and personality, as well as unique settings of usage and possibilities for learning, all substantially affect their choice of learning techniques (Brown, 2000). O'Malley and Chamot define strategies as a tool for active, self-directed involvement for developing L2 communicative ability (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). They also recognized the following techniques: cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies. Cognitive strategies work directly on incoming information, changing it to improve learning. Metacognitive strategies are abilities that are used to design, monitor and evaluate learning activities. While interacting with another person to aid learning or employing control to aid a learning activity are examples of social and affective methods.

There are different personalities, including extroversion, introversion, and self-esteem. Extroversion and introversion are two sides of the same face (Dewaele & Furnham, 1999). Extroverts are gregarious and impulsive individuals. They hate

alone, are impetuous, and take chances. The extroverted person believes that they receive energy from outside sources. While introverts are thought to be quiet, silent, and reserved. Introverted people are more interested in the inner world of thoughts and are more prone to engage in solo pursuits. Self-esteem is a personal judgment of worth manifested in the individual's views towards himself/herself (Coopersmith, 1967).

The study of problems in learning English was very popular for some decades. Scholars investigate the problems from different backgrounds and subjects of study. In Indonesia, regarding the problems in learning English with non-English major lecturers, the observation and interviews showed three problems, namely socio-cultural, linguistic, and interpersonal problems (Madkur, 2018). In English learning success, attitude and personality factors are important (Dewi, 2021). This research focused on the internal and environmental elements influencing students' English learning. This research showed that people's attitudes and personalities affected their achievement. This research is in line with this study that found about personality in learning English. Most non-English department students need help learning English abilities such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening, and the teachers should choose the appropriate teaching method (Mubarok & Rofi'ah, 2022).

Another researcher also investigated the study of problems in language learning, but different topics of the study investigated the difficulties of non-English department students in speaking. This study investigated problems in learning English but specifically in speaking skills. This study showed that the psychological factor, lack of confidence was the most affected problem in learning speaking skills (Nuryana, 2020). This study is used to determine the factors that affect the success of learning English with limited exposure: reflections from non-English department students. The sample was three classes of the psychology department of IAIN Kediri that had taken English courses in the first and second semesters.

## **METHODS**

This research used a descriptive qualitative method to describe in detail the dominant, successful factors in teaching learning English programs faced by the students of IAIN Kediri. The subject of this study was the 79 students of non-English department students in the psychology departments at IAIN Kediri. The data was collected by the 25 simple and understandable questionnaires based on individual differences in second language learning (Dörnyei, 2005). The students answered the questionnaire with their own opinion to get valid data. The type of questions is open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were chosen

because any number of alternatives followed them, and respondents had to react by typing a number, a word, or a brief sentence.

To get the valid questionnaires, an expert was asked to analyze the questionnaire before it was distributed to the students. The next step was tryout the questions to the third-semester students of non-English department students and non-psychological department students. Based on the try-out, there were revisions to the blueprint of the questionnaires. The expert also suggested changing the questions to Indonesian so they can be understood. In this section, the researcher tried out twice, the first was the researcher tried out 19 questions, and the second was 25 simple questions. Afterward, the student's answers were grouped based on the theme. Furthermore, the data analysis starts by demotivating factors from the data categorized or divided into themes. The data is categorized based on the second language learning variable: aptitude, motivation, learning styles, learning strategies, and personality.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Success in learning English is identified as the variable of second language learning. The first option is the questions related to "the factors that affect success." Some variables related to the factors that affect success are aptitude, motivation, learning styles, learning strategies, and personality. The result of the research on factors that affect the success of learning English is shown in the table below:

**Table 1.** Factors Affecting Students' English Learning Success

No	Factors	Items number	Yes	%	No	%
1	Aptitude	2, 3, 4, 5	61.25	76%	17.25	22%
2	Motivation	1, 6, 7	63.5	80%	14.75	19%
3	Learning Styles	8, 9, 10, 11, 12	45.40	57%	27.66	40%
4	Learning Strategies	13, 14, 15, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20	59.55	76%	16.33	21%
5	Personality	21, 22, 23, 24, 25	55.40	70%	21.20	27%

Based on the questionnaires filled by the participants, it showed that there were (76%) of participants agreed that aptitude influenced English learning success, and there were (22%) of participants disagreed that aptitude affected language learning success. This result is in line with the study of the correlation between students' language aptitude and their English proficiency that was investigated with aptitude tests, TOEFL, to find the correlation between foreign language aptitude and English proficiency (Kartini, 2021).

Four sub-variables of aptitude investigated in this research were: phonemic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity, inductive language learning ability, and memory and learning (Dörnyei, 2005). The first sub-variable of aptitude is phonemic coding ability, which showed that there were (72%) and there were (28%) of the total participants disagreed that phonemic coding ability affects learning English. Phonemic coding ability here means phoneme. Based on the percentage of agreement, it shows that pronunciation was an important point in the study of English. Most students agreed that we must study pronunciation to understand the meaning of words and sentences and the context of words in English learning. But, most of the students did not understand phonemes, so some of them think that the statement of phonemic coding ability is related to listening skills.

The second sub-variable was grammatical sensitivity, which showed that there were (65%) of students agreed that grammatical sensitivity influenced the factor that affected the success of learning English and (34%) of students disagreed. Some non-English department students of IAIN Kediri felt that grammar is the most challenging point in learning English, making them confused in understanding English. This result is in line with grammar is difficult to grasp due to the short time available in school for studying English (Triyogo & Hamdan, 2018).

The third point of aptitude was inductive language learning ability. As much as (91%) of participants agreed, and (8%) disagreed. This point is about the clear example from the teacher or the people who help them study English well; this point influenced most participants to agree because it related to them. Most of the students agreed that the teacher was the most crucial point in studying English because the students need examples and deep explanations in studying English (Donalo, Beyerlein, & Fiero, 2017); (Obeidat & Alomari, 2020); (Retty, Martono, & Sarosa, 2022).

The last point was memory and learning. Memory and learning had the second higher affected on the success of learning English based on the aptitude factors. There were (82%) of students agreed that memory and learning affected second language learning acquisition, while (18%) of students disagreed. The percentage showed that memory and learning affected the success of learning English. The non-English department students of IAIN Kediri feel that using a dictionary helps them learn English and memorize the vocabulary well. This result is in line with the available dictionary that may help the students study English spoken and helps them in their pronunciation (Triyogo & Hamdan, 2018).

The second factor is motivation, and this is the most substantial factor that influenced the success of learning English in IAIN Kediri, there were (80%) agreed,

and (19%) disagreed. There are two sub-variables related to the motivation in individuals in second language learning; the variables were the integrative and instrumental motivation. Two statements related to integrative motivation; the first is related to the like and dislike of English subjects. Some (57%) of students like English, and (43%) dislike it. The second statement was related to the motivation of students itself to communicate with volunteers. The writers found that some students found difficulties in learning English, making them dislike it in general (Triyogo & Hamdan, 2018).

Some (82%) of students agreed that they wanted to study English because of their motivation to communicate with foreigners, and some (16%) did not want to have a relationship with foreigners. The research result showed that there were non-English department students of IAIN Kediri who had strong motivation in learning English because they had motivation in their future education and job. This study is in line with the research in IAIN Bengkulu, most of the students from the English Language Education Study Program in IAIN Bengkulu have the motivation to get a job or educational requirements, and some are encouraged to learn English because they want to understand the culture of others (Siregar & Siregar, 2020). The students had goals for success in jobs and education while studying English. The motivation was the highest percentage of the findings (Purmama, Rahayu, & Yugafiati, 2019).

The average percentage of integrative motivation statements was (70%) agreement and (30%) disagreement. There were two statements related to integrative motivation. The first statement was the expression of like and dislike in English. Some of the students like English because of their interest, some of the students like it because they feel mastered in the theory of English, and some think that they will get the benefits in the future, like in education and jobs. The second statement related to integrative motivation was related to the student's interest in communicating with natives. Some students were highly interested in communicating with natives because it helps them with English fluency. At the same time, some of them were not interested because their vocabulary was lacking.

The second sub-variable was instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation is an objective motivation based on a person. It depends on their shelf. This sub-variable statement was the motivation related to professional and educational business statuses. Some (91%) of students agreed that learning English help them in their future business and education, while (8%) disagreed. Instrumental motivation was the most decisive factor influencing the student's English learning success. This result aligns with the statement that English is useful for technology, science, and job opportunities (Lauder, 2008).



The third variable factor is learning style. Learning styles were the lowest factor that affected English learning; it showed that by the number of questionnaires, there were (57%) of students agreed and (40%) disagreed. Based on the learning style factor, five learning styles affect the students learning English based on individual differences in second language learning. The sub-variables of learning styles investigated in this study were concrete learning style, analytical learning style, communicative learning style, authority-oriented learning style, and dependent and independent learning style. Based on the concrete learning styles that indicate that teachers' explanation with fun activities help the student's interest in learning, it is affected until (48%) of students agreed, and (49%) disagreed. It shows that the students like formal activities and could have been more comfortable with the funny activities in language learning.

The second sub-variable was the analytical learning style. Some (52%) of students agreed with severe and formal teaching, while (46%) disagreed with the analytical learning styles. The third sub-variables of learning style were communicative learning style, with total agreement (77%) of students and disagreement (20%) of students. This sub-variable relates to the statements about group discussion and activity use. The percentage of the student's agreement showed that most students agreed that group discussion and activity comforted them. The fourth sub-variable of learning style was the authority-oriented learning style. This result is the opposite result of Siregar and Haswani's research, which showed that communicative learning style was the second lowest factor in their research (Siregar & Haswani, 2020). Some (85%) of the students agreed, and (14%) disagreed that the teacher's explanation is better than group discussion. Most students agreed that they need teachers' explanations rather than group discussions. The last sub-variable was (25%) of students' agreement and (71%) of students' disagreement related to left and right brain dominance. It is the lowest agreement of learning style. The students disagree that left and right brain dominance influences challenges in acquiring English with limited exposure. The percentage of disagreement showed that the students did not care about left or right brain dominance; they learned what they needed and must do less caring about left or right brain dominance.

The fourth factor is learning strategies. Learning strategies are the fourth factor that can influence students in learning English. Learning strategy was the second higher factor, like aptitude, with a total agreement percentage was (76%) and disagreement (21%) of students. There are three sub-variables of learning strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, and social and affective. Six statements indicate cognitive strategies influence learning English. Based on the average percentage from the six statements showed that there were (81%) of students

agreed that cognitive strategies influence learning English as a second language, and there were (16%) of students disagreed with the statement. This statement related to the use of a dictionary, note taking, knowing the meaning, and the theory helps the students learn English; they agreed that all of them improve their English skills.

The second sub-variable was metacognitive strategies there were (84%) of students agreed with the metacognitive strategies in their English learning while (13%) disagreed. It is the highest percentage of learning strategies. Metacognitive strategies were the highest percentage; metacognitive strategies were the medium used by some teachers (Atika, 2019). The last statement is related to social and affective strategies. And this is the lowest percentage of learning strategies, there were (62%) of students agreed and (33%) disagreed with the social and affective strategies. This study is in line with the study by Atika, which found that social strategies were correlated with tactile, group, and individual styles (Atika, 2019).

The last factor is personality; the average percentage was (70%) agreement and (27%) disagreement from five sub-variables of personality. Personality was the medium that affected the success of learning English of non-English department students at IAIN Kediri. It aligns with personalities significantly contributing to the student's English achievement (Warman & Erlinda, 2023). The sub-variable of personality were extroversion and introversion, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, and anxiety. The first sub-variable factor of personality is extroversion and introversion based on the percentage showed that there were (76%) of participants agreed that extroversion and introversion personality affected someone in their learning English. In comparison (22%) of students disagreed. The second was self-esteem; as much as (72%) of the total samples agreed that self-esteem affected English learning, while (24%) disagreed about that. Next, inhibition personality indicated doing something challenging there were (52%) of students agreed, and (46%) disagreed. The fourth sub-variable of personality factor was risk-taking, there were (73%) of students agreed and (23%) disagreed that risk-taking personality influences factor in learning English. The last was anxiety; anxiety is the highest affecting personality in language learning. Some (77%) of students agreed, while (20%) disagreed that anxiety affects learning English.

## CONCLUSION

This research identifies that there are five learning factors that can influence non-English department students' success in English learning, they were: aptitude, motivation, learning styles, learning strategies, and personality. The research concluded that motivation was the most critical factor affecting successful English learning in limited exposure to psychology department students of IAIN Kediri.

The second factors were aptitude and learning strategies. The third factor was personality, and the last factor was learning style. Based on the research result showed that the psychology department of IAIN Kediri is highly motivated to learn English.

After showing the conclusion, as a final point to increase the research, has some suggestions for the teachers, students, and other researchers. For the teacher, the result showed that motivation was the highest in affecting the success of English learning, so teachers should motivate students to increase their English learning success. The sub-variable of motivation with the highest percentage was instrumental motivation factors since the students need motivation in learning English for their professional status like business and educational status. Since the second factor influencing English learning success is aptitude and learning strategies factors, teachers should provide more examples and explanations to improve their English learning success. Aptitude, another vital factor in this finding, implies that English teachers should give interesting material, use humor, and effective intermezzo in the class. As personality also becomes a crucial factor, teachers are suggested to help the students manage their anxiety so that they do not feel stressed in learning English. Further studies can use this research finding as a reference to develop more exploration of the factors affecting English learning in different contexts and proficiency levels.

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