

Indonesian Pharmacy Students' Motivations for Learning English: A Qualitative Case Study

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Abstract

Despite the existence of studies on the motivation of learning, little scholarly work reports the motives of pharmacy students learning English. Further, a majority of those previous studies have been conducted using exclusively quantitative methods. To fill these empirical and methodological gaps, the current research used a qualitative descriptive case study method to explore the Indonesian pharmacy students' motivation for learning English. This study utilised in-depth interviews to gather information from participants. The thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews presented that the students' motivation for learning English were for academic purposes, cultural purposes, professional purposes, global interactions, and pleasure. The findings revealed that the orientations of learning English reported by the interviewees covered both integrative and instrumental motivation categories. Additionally, the results in this study contribute to our understanding of Indonesian pharmacy students' motivation for learning English that can be practically used as references by students, lecturers, and curriculum designers.

Keywords: English, Indonesian pharmacy students, motivation

Motivasi Belajar Bahasa Inggris: Penelitian Studi Kasus pada Mahasiswa Farmasi di Salah Satu Perguruan Tinggi Indonesia

Abstrak

Walaupun telah banyak penelitian yang membahas motivasi belajar, namun masih sedikit yang meneliti tentang motivasi mahasiswa farmasi dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, mayoritas penelitian sebelumnya mengenai motivasi menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif. Untuk menanggapi kesenjangan ini, penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kasus deskriptif untuk meneliti motivasi mahasiswa farmasi di salah satu perguruan tinggi di Indonesia. Untuk pengumpulan data, studi ini menggunakan wawancara mendalam. Dari analisis tematik, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motif mahasiswa farmasi belajar bahasa Inggris yaitu untuk tujuan akademis, budaya, profesi, interaksi global, dan

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kegemaran. Hasil ini menandakan bahwa kedua aspek motivasi baik integratif maupun instrumental ada pada temuan penelitian ini. Lebih lanjut, hasil penelitian ini akan memberikan implikasi terhadap pemahaman motivasi mahasiswa farmasi dalam belajar bahasa Inggris yang dapat bermanfaat untuk referensi yang digunakan baik oleh mahasiswa, dosen, maupun pembuat kurikulum.

Kata kunci: bahasa Inggris, mahasiswa farmasi Indonesia, motivasi

A. Introduction

In response to the importance of English as an international language, the government of Indonesia has implemented English instruction in school curriculum both at the higher education level and below. However, students' language learning success is not completely dependent upon educational policy alone, but also the contribution of individual efforts and their active involvement in learning and using the language (Lamb, 2004). The motivation of English language learners has been shown to be considerably relevant for successful language learning as well as various aspects of their learning process which can help their performance, such as language learning strategies, efforts, aptitude, and learning resources (Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner, 1985). These aspects all emphasize how learners can have greater results when they are more motivated to learn and take advantage of available resources. Because of this, it is essential for language learners to comprehend and gain encouragement from more experienced students. Additionally, this motivation will strengthen their willingness to learn the language (Noprival et al., 2021).

The proponents of the theory, such as Gardner (1985) and Deci and Ryan (1985), emphasize the importance of motivation for language learning in the field. Despite the fact that each of these experts has their own model of motivation, they all concur that learners' orientation toward the objective of learning a second language is closely related to motivation. Gardner's (1985) model is one of the many classifications of motivation developed by scholars, and it is commonly cited within the literature. A socioeducational model put forth by Gardner (1985) divides the motivation for language acquisition into two categories. The first is integrative motivation, which is a positive attitude toward the target language group and, additionally, a possible desire to utilize the language to integrate and adapt to a new target culture (Gardner, 1985). The second type of motivation, known as instrumental motivation, is what motivates people to achieve their goals and objectives.

Researchers have been particularly interested in the topic of language learning motivation due to its popularity and the importance it has for successful language learning (see Aladdin, 2013; Bateman & Oliveira, 2014; Chen, 2017; Giles, 2016; Marten & Mostert, 2012; Noprival, 2021; Pratt et al., 2009). For instance, Chen (2017) explored students' motivation in learning English in a junior high school in Taiwan, finding that the school's exams encouraged pupils to learn higher quantities of English. Additionally, Pratt et al. (2009) studied students' motivation to learn Spanish in a senior American high school in Texas. According to this study, students' primary incentive to learn Spanish concerned viewing it as a skill which would help them find employment in the workforce. In a similar vein, Marten and Mostert (2012) examined the driving forces behind Zulu learners in higher education in the UK. Many of the participants, especially those who planned to work or study in South Africa, believed that Zulu would be useful to them professionally. Giles (2016) also looked into why people in North America are motivated to study Irish. They found that people were largely motivated by pleasure,

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according to one of their findings. In addition, the motivation of Indonesian polyglots to study multiple languages was examined by Noprival et al. (2021). They discovered that polyglots learned numerous languages for a variety of reasons, including pleasure, social interaction, career advancement, and scholarly pursuits.

Based on the previous literature review, studies have been done on language learners' motivation, but there has not been much research done specifically on Indonesian pharmacy students' motivations. Additionally, the majority of the research that has already been done has used exclusively quantitative approaches. To study this phenomenon, I endeavored to answer the research question: what motivates Indonesian pharmacy students to learn English? The purpose of this study was to investigate Indonesian pharmacy students' motivations for learning English in response to these methodological and empirical gaps. With regard to language learning motivation in the setting of higher education in Indonesia, there is a gap in the literature that needs to be filled. The findings in this research are beneficial for understanding of Indonesian pharmacy students' motivation in learning English that can be practically employed as references by students, lecturers, and curriculum designers.

B. Research Method

1. Research Design

The purpose of this study was to gather in-depth data regarding Indonesian pharmacy students' motivation to learn English. Under the qualitative approach (Creswell, 2007), the current study used a case study method, which Merriam (1998) defines as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit” (p. xiii). I utilized a descriptive case study expressly for this topic because I wanted to concentrate on explaining a phenomenon and the actual environment in which it occurred (Yin, 2018). As a result, I went into great detail regarding why Indonesian pharmacy students want to learn English.

2. Participants

I invited the pharmacy students of a college of health and sciences in Indonesia to participate in this study. They were selected based on purposive sampling. Although the participants were pharmacy students, they had experiences learning English during a three-semester period. This is implemented by their college as a curriculum policy. There were twelve participants that voluntarily participated during the process of collecting data; they were Ana, Dia, Hana, Karin, Lina, Mia, Nia, Nira, Nisa, Nita, Rara, and Tina. I used pseudonyms to hide the names of participants in order to preserve their rights and privacy. Following ethical research protocols, I could not insist on the participants' involvement, and all participants were free to stop at any time for their own personal reasons. However, during the data gathering procedure, the participants were incredibly helpful and cooperative.

3. Data Collection

An extensive interview served as the method for gathering data in this study. The interview was guided by instrumental and integrative motivation. I first put together a protocol-compliant list of interview questions. A procedure was created to direct data collection for the case study, as suggested by Yin (2018). Individual, semi-structured interviews with each participant were conducted at a convenient room in a college to gather the interview data. Indonesian was the language utilized to collect the data. I reassured my audience that their involvement was completely optional and An extensive interview served as the method for gathering data in this study. I first put together a protocol-compliant list of interview questions. A

procedure was created to direct data collection for the case study, as suggested by Yin (2018). Individual, semi-structured interviews with each participant, done in Indonesian, were conducted at a convenient and quiet room in a college to gather the interview data. I reassured my audience that their involvement was completely optional and that their comments would be kept private. They also had the option to discontinue their participation in my study at any time and to refuse to respond to any interview questions. Thankfully, all of the interviewees were helpful and forthcoming in supplying information.

4. Data Analysis

After interviewing all participants, I immersed myself into the data. I read line by line through the transcripts of the individual interviews with the Indonesian pharmacy students to examine their motivations for studying English. Following this step, I developed coding categories using words and phrases that indicated the regularities, patterns, and topics that the data covered (Saldana, 2009). In addition to developing coding categories, I also used theme analysis, under which one identifies larger themes within a transcript. I organized my draft's topics by developing them, classifying the data analysis's findings and responses.

C. Research Results & Discussion

1. Research Results

The purpose of this study was to explore pharmacy students' motivation for learning English. Based on data analysis, I found overarching themes, including that students often learn English for academic purposes, cultural purposes, professional purposes, global interactions, and for pleasure.

a. Learning English for Academic Purposes

In this research, learning English for academic purposes also emerged from the data analysis. Particularly, a primary motive for participants to learn English was for understanding research articles about pharmaceutical topics. For example, Nia informed me that she wanted to read scholarly works about pharmacies published in international journals, "My motivation for learning English is to understand research articles published in international journals. I read international journals because they are a trusted reference." Similarly, "English makes it easy to conduct research because I can access English references, such as English journals for example," Nira reported. In addition, the participants' were also determined to continue their studies after completion of their bachelors' degree which, alongside understanding references written in English in their current study, also motivated them. For instance, Rara reflected that she was motivated by both for upgrading her current knowledge about pharmacy and continuing her education overseas, "By understanding English, I want to upgrade my knowledge through reading international journals...also I am determined to study abroad." Similarly, "I want to continue my education after graduating from a bachelor's degree in pharmacy. So I must learn English, especially TOEFL," Nita said.

b. Learning English for Cultural Purposes

The participants in this study indicated that one of their motivations for learning English was for cultural purposes. They were proud of their own culture and willing to promote it. For example, Tina stated her motivation for learning English was in part to promote her culture, "my motive of learning English is to promote our diverse culture [Indonesian culture] world-wide." Similarly, "By having English skills, it would be easier to promote our culture [Indonesian culture]," Rara reflected. Additionally, participants' motivation of learning English also included the ability to enrich their knowledge about

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a new culture foreign culture outside Indonesia. For instance, Hana reported that she was motivated to learn English to open her mind about diversity, "Through learning English, we indirectly learn a new culture that will foster us to adapt in a global community. In addition, through our learning, we can open our minds globally to see things from various perspectives." In addition, Karin similarly added, "Learning English enriches my cultural knowledge [with diversity]."

c. Learning English for Professional Purposes

In this study, the participants shared with me that their motivation for learning English was also for professional purposes. In particular, the participants were motivated to learn English in order to get a better job in the future. For example, Tina informed me, regarding her motive of learning English, "[My motivation of English is because] I know the importance of English these days for opening my opportunity to get a good job [after graduating from this college]." Similarly, "My motivation for learning English is in order to get a good job," Rara reported. In the same vein, Nisa reflected that she prepared English for applying for a job, "English is often used in a particular workspace...When applying for a job, some companies ask to attach TOEFL score." Additionally, Nia stated that she had an ambition to work abroad, "English is one of important soft skills, because it will help me to get a better job after graduating from college...Also English is a medium for widening my connection for professional purposes, for example an opportunity of working abroad."

d. Learning English for Global Interaction

The participants in this research informed me that they also learned English for global interaction. The participants were aware of the importance of English in recent decades. For example, Lina reported concerning this point, "As English plays an important role recently [in the globalization era], there is no excuse to avoid learning English." Additionally, Dia stated that she wanted to communicate with people abroad, "I want to communicate in English with other people because the scope of my association will expand. [Also] It will be very nice to be able to have a friend from a different country." Similarly, "In today's modern era, English has become a global language where if I can master it well then I can broaden my horizons and easily communicate...I can make friends in various parts of the world by communicating via the internet," Rara said. Then, Hana added, "English is the most widely spoken international language in many countries. Learning it will allow me to more easily communicate with people in various countries."

e. Learning English for Pleasure

In this study the participants confirmed another motive of learning English was for enjoyment. One of their hobbies was watching movies, which helped motivate them to learn English. For instance, Ana stated, concerning her motivation of learning English, "[I like watching] films from abroad. One of the ways to understand what I watch is through English." Additionally, aside from films, songs also encouraged them to learn English. For instance, Nisa reflected that movies and songs motivated her to learn English, "My motivation to learn English is to know the meaning of movies, songs or so on. Because it often happens that what is said in the film and what is translated [from the translator] is different so that it has a very different meaning." In addition, their motive of learning English for traveling. For example, Mia reported concerning her desire to learn English, "My motivation to learn English is for traveling [abroad]...In addition, I like online games, and sometimes playing them requires me to interact with foreign people [from abroad]."

2. Discussion

Given these findings, it has been identified that the participants' motivation of learning English can be categorized into several themes, including learning English for academic purposes, cultural purposes, professional purposes, global interactions, and pleasure. In response to these findings, several important points seem worth discussing. Based on Gardner's (1985) motivation theory, the participants' statements concerning learning English for academic purposes revealed that their motives were categorized into instrumental motivation. In particular, as found in this study, they were motivated to learn English for understanding research articles written in English (published in international journals). This is in line with the previous studies, such as Zhao and Hirvela (2015), who conducted research about undergraduate ESL students' engagement in academic reading and writing in learning to write a synthesis paper. They found that the students' understanding of synthesis and the functions of sources played a crucial role in their learning to synthesize, as did their ability to use rhetorical reading strategies to complete this new literacy task. In addition, the participants in this study also had a motivation of learning English to study abroad. This is especially relevant because Indonesian students have been found to frequently struggle with learning a foreign language for academic purposes, especially those who intend to pursue studies overseas. As Mukminin (2012) discovered in his study, Indonesian graduate students in the US higher education system had language challenges in their first term and may experience difficulty as a result of their foreign language proficiency.

The next finding revealed from the study concerned participants learning English for cultural purposes, and thus is categorised as an integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985). Particularly, as found in this study, they were motivated to learn English to promote Indonesian cultures internationally. Also, they wanted to enrich their knowledge about a new culture and, as a result, open their mind to diversity. This is because language textbooks teach not merely language skills but also knowledge and values (Lestariyana, Widodo, & Sulistiyo, 2020), including culture. The findings of this study were relevant to prior research, such as Rani (2017), who investigated the relationship between language and culture, especially the use of idioms and proverbs through task based teaching approaches to take cognizance of the culture of the native speakers of English. She found that the majority of the students showed interest in learning the culture of the native speaker of English through idioms and proverbs.

Additionally, the findings confirmed that the participants have an instrumental motivation (Gardner, 1985) of learning English related to professional purposes. The results of this study were consistent with what Marten and Mostert (2012) discovered in their research, which indicated that one reason people in the United Kingdom choose to learn Zulu as a second language was for professional reasons. Furthermore, Bateman and Oliveira (2014) discovered that students of Spanish-speaking backgrounds were mostly motivated to learn Portuguese in order to advance their future careers. Similar to this, Pratt et al. (2009), who conducted their study in an American high school in Texas, stated that a primary motive for students to learn Spanish as a foreign language was for future job benefits.

Also, the interviews with the participants showed their desire for global interaction. This is under the integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985). In other words, the motivation of participants to learn English was to communicate with people from over the world. This result was consistent with other studies; for instance, as Gu (2011) found in their study done at one university where students in Hong Kong were learning multiple languages. Their motive for learning new languages was to communicate more intimately with the people using the target group language. Additionally, Moore's (2010)

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findings were in line with this finding. Since French and English are both official languages in Canada, Moore's study showed how Chinese immigrants learned both. They talked Chinese at home with their parents to preserve their identity; nevertheless, learning foreign languages there was also employed for social engagement.

The last form of the participants' motivation in learning English was pleasure. This motivation is also under integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985). Particularly, as found in this research, their motivation was related to enjoyment with English as a medium, which included movies, novels, songs, and traveling. This result was consistent with what Giles (2016) discovered in his study of non-Irish learners' motivation to learn Irish in North America. Giles found that students said that mastering the Irish language was only a hobby for them. Similar to this, Lamb, a Hungarian polyglot who spoke 17 languages, acquired numerous languages by using her passion for reading novels (Krashen & Kiss, 1996).

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Using a qualitative case study method, this research has examined the Indonesian pharmacy students' motivation for learning English. The results of this study indicate that the motivation reported by the interviewees covered all of the previously mentioned motivation categories (Gardner, 1985). First, one motive of the participants to learn English was for academic purposes. In particular, they were encouraged to learn English for understanding research articles published in international journals and preparing to study abroad. Second, they learned English for cultural purposes. They were not only interested in learning a new culture from outside Indonesia but in being able to promote Indonesian culture world-wide. Third, another participants' motivation for learning English was for professional purposes; specifically, they expected to get a better job in the future by learning English now. Fourth, participants' motivation to learn English included the desire for global interaction. Particularly, they were aware of the importance of English as it is used these days across the world. Finally, pleasure was another motivation of the Indonesian lecturers in learning English. In particular, their motivation was related to enjoyment with English as a medium, for example movies, novels, songs, and traveling.

Findings in this study contribute to our understanding of Indonesian pharmacy students' motivation in English. For lecturers, this can be a reference to maintain or enhance students' motivation at a higher education level. Meanwhile, this is also useful content for students so that they can understand the motivation of Indonesian students for learning English and possibly adapt their motives. To extend the present study, a further study and analysis of the motivations are needed to analyse students' motivation from different backgrounds.

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