

Motivation for Adults Learning English in the Work Environment

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Abstract

The strong desire of adults to learn a language with various heavy considerations is a new resolution in their life in order to improve and hone their abilities to be able to participate in various opportunities. The aim of this research is to describe the motivation to learn English for adults who already work in various professions. This type of research is qualitative research. The method applied is a qualitative method with a case study approach. The data collection techniques used were participant observation and in-depth interviews with course participants who had established jobs and were over 40 years old. The data analysis technique uses qualitative descriptive analysis. The data analysis model applied is Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The results obtained in this research are that adults' motivation to learn English is most influenced by external aspects, namely pressure and demands from the work environment. Meanwhile, the internal aspect is influenced by individual feelings such as lack of self-confidence (inferior), shyness, and tending to be afraid to express oneself in English. The various limitations and language barriers experienced by adults lead to an urge to study harder to make it easier for them to solve problems in the work environment. So that many adults' learning motivation is found from obstacles and problems from their surroundings.

Keywords: learning motivation, adult learning, work environment

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INTRODUCTION

The demands of increasingly advanced and developing times encourage humans to maximize their potential and skills so that they are ready to compete and compete in the Business World of Industry/ Dunia Usaha Dunia Industri (DUDI). Language is recognized as a means of communication, language also contributes and influences in changing the pattern of social order, one of which is English. Good and correct English language skills are needed to communicate with the national and international world to promote activities that focus on communication such as discussion, collaboration and problem solving (Arslan & Curle, 2024).

Education as self-fulfillment to make additional language learning a means to increase proficiency and a form of recreational activity (van der Ploeg et al., 2023). Reported on the Effective Language Learning page in 2020 by The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) categorizes that the duration required for someone to learn a foreign language is around 575 hours to 2,200 hours. The importance of a common language can be clearly seen in the work environment, where

English opens up many opportunities for individuals and increases diversification and efficiency for companies (EF English Proficiency Index, 2023).

Differences in language development between adults and children are very influential. The way adults learn (andragogy) and children (pedagogy) have opposite learning focuses. There are several differences between learning for adults and learning for children in terms of their cognitive development (Lewis & Bryan, 2021). There are five main assumptions that differentiate andragogy and pedagogy, namely: (a) Self-concept, adults tend to be independent or have no dependence and are able to direct themselves while children tend to be followers; (b) Experience, adults accumulate increasingly extensive experience, which becomes a rich resource in learning conditions; (c) Readiness to learn, adults want to learn about problem areas that they currently face and consider relevant; (d) Learning orientation, adults are oriented towards problem solving, not the subject; and (e) Self-motivation, children need support and encouragement from parents, teachers and others, while adults rely more on internal motivation. In the form of his own desire and impulse to learn.

In previous research which discussed the theme of learning media and motivation to learn English, it was stated that the high motivation of students in elementary school was influenced by their aspirations in choosing a profession in the future through creative learning (Triwardani, 2024). The next research is to discuss the theme of English language motivation for E-Comer UMKM participants with research results that increase language skills from online training provided to face the industrial revolution 4.0 (Sujarwo et al., 2023). Based on the results of previous studies, there has been no discussion regarding the reasons that motivate adults to learn English according to the pressure of their work environment. Furthermore the scope of the problem in this research seeks to answer what is the motivation for learning English among adults in the work environment? Based on the aim of describing the motivation to learn English among adults in the work environment.

METHODS

This research was conducted at LKP E-Core Sidoarjo, East Java. The research subjects were 6 English course participants who were over 40 years old and had stable jobs. This type of research is a case study. A case study is a process of exploring or deepening information from "system ties" or "diversity of cases" over a certain period of time through collecting data from various sources of information in a context (Assyakurrohim et al., 2023). A case study is the exploration of a phenomenon/case by researchers in a situation and collecting detailed and in-depth information using various data collection procedures over a certain period (Iswadi et al., 2023).

This research seeks to reveal how motivated adults learn English in the work environment. This research method uses qualitative research. This is reinforced by an approach that directs qualitative research more towards data analysis which involves collecting and compiling data systematically by emphasizing the need for comprehensive data details so as to strengthen understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Miles & Huberman, 1994); (Sanjaya et al., 2022).

In this case study research, the types of data needed are primary data and secondary data. The instrument for collecting qualitative research data is the researcher himself (Hardani et al., 2020). Next, a simple instrument or data reduction will be developed as a technique for analyzing the data that has been collected. It is hoped that this effort can complement and compare the data that has been found through observations and interviews. In this research, descriptive data analysis techniques are used, namely the data obtained is described using words that can be understood, which in this research is the result of a case study related to how motivated adults are to learn English in the field of work. Data analysis in this research used three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing (Huberman & Miles, 2002); (Rijal Fadli, 2021).

Qualitative research data validity techniques are source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation (Pahleviannur et al., 2022). Data triangulation is used to improve the consistency of cross methods, such as field observations or observations and

interviews or by using the same method, such as several informants being interviewed over a certain period of time (Susanto & Jailani, 2023).

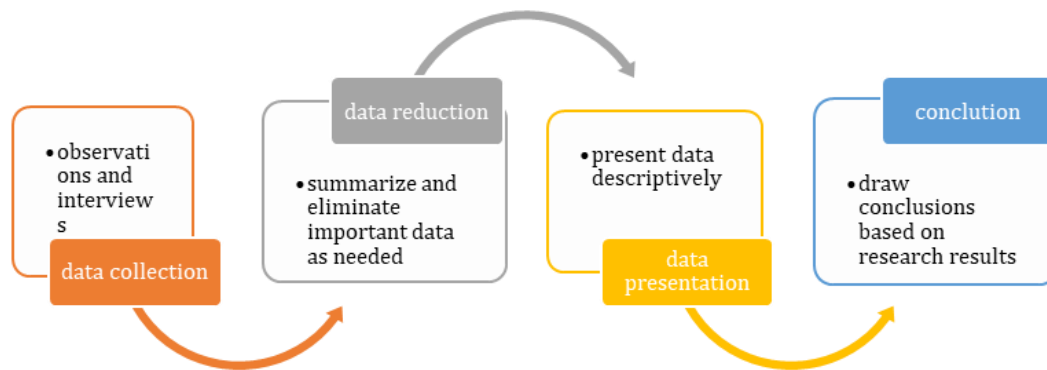


Figure 1. Data Analysis Stage

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The comfort of a position or title at work is a dream. Adults who have the desire/motivation to renew and increase their abilities at that age will certainly not be as mature as young people. The reduced development and speed of thinking of the adult brain is a big consideration in the learning process, especially when it comes to learning languages. Research subject information can be seen from the following table:

Table 1. List of Informants

Code	Gender	Age (year)	Work
1(IK)	Female	50	Staf of KLHK (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan)
2(WA)	Female	42	Construction Enterpreneur in PT. Wahyu Agung
3(SP)	Male	45	Head Master of SMK 1 Kare Madiun Jawa Timur
4(WH)	Male	48	Lecture in Universitas Halu Oleo Sulawesi Tenggara
5(WK)	Female	44	Lecture and Doctor in Adam Malik Hospital Medan
6(HR)	Female	44	Staf of BRIN (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional)

Adult Learning Motivation

Motivation plays an important role in the learning process which is related to the way students think, feel and behave (Almomani et al., 2023). Motivation comes from the word motive, namely the power within an individual that causes actions and actions (Uno, 2023). In learning, motivation is divided into two types, namely intrinsic and extrinsic (Al-Obaydi, 2023). Expert mcreated two dimensions of thinking about motivation theory known as motivation factors (intrinsic factors) and hygiene factors (extrinsic factors). Motivation factors push individuals out of their feelings of dissatisfaction, such as progress, work, the possibility of development, responsibility, recognition, and appreciation. Meanwhile, hygiene factors encourage individuals to achieve satisfaction, such as personal relationships, wages/salaries, company policies and administration, supervision, working conditions, and literature reviews (Alshmemri et al., (2017).

The essence of learning is a process carried out consciously to produce changes in one's own behavior, both in the form of new knowledge and skills and in the form of positive

attitudes and values (DJ et al., 2016). Motivation to learn as a strength or power or a complex state and readiness in the individual to move, motion, motive to towards certain goals, whether consciously or not (Leonbisa et al., 2022; (Anggraini & Sukartono, 2022). The strong role of learning motivation can produce strength and driving force to stimulate active, creative, effective and innovative learning activities (Supriani et al., 2020).

Adult education is also a systematic and continuous learning process for people with adult status with the aim of achieving changes in knowledge, attitudes, values and skills (Scholtz, 2024). The characteristics of adult education are characterized by self-directing learning activities, preferring problem-solving oriented learning, and preferring active rather than passive participation (Bryson, 2013); (Abdullah et al., 2022).

Organizing adult learning materials must be involved in planning learning objectives and materials, determining the systematics of learning activities by offering learning programs and activities, utilizing the practical experience of adult learners in learning activities, and opening up opportunities to replace learning materials at certain times according to agreement with adult learners (Burt et al., 2008; Destiani et al., 2023). Facilitators should avoid monopolizing the conversation, not be judgmental in providing feedback, and should be open to helping develop students' positive attitudes [Click or tap here to enter text](#). (Kurniati et al., 2022).

The principle of adult learning is to learn because there is a need. Adult education considers public education as an ideology, namely "a communal educational process leading to empowerment, both at the individual and collective levels (Wahyudin et al., 2023). The most important thing in adult education is: What the participants learn, not what the instructor teaches. This means that the end result is what the adult gets from a training, not what the teacher or trainer does in the training (Setiawati & Shofwan, 2023).

Instinctively, adults have choices and are able to set learning goals, allocate learning resources, design learning strategies and evaluate abilities independently which can be formulated into three categories, namely: (1) Adult education is a science that helps or facilitates adults' (2) Adult activities are organized in an organized manner; and (3) The aim of adult education is to increase students' abilities and participation (van der Ploeg et al., 2023).

Even though they have high motivation to learn, adults also experience perceived obstacles during the learning process. Some of the problems found are decreased self-confidence, pessimism, time constraints, weakened memory, understanding of the material tends to take a long time, difficulty with pronunciation, minimal speaking partners, tends to be shy and has difficulty memorizing. This is nothing new in the adult learning process because it is influenced by the synapses that connect important cells in the process of digesting information whose function is reduced.

These obstacles do not reduce motivation to learn because the world will continue to move, and humans must also be able to adapt to developments as well. Job demands are also a strong motivator for learning English. Bertran-Gonzales' study shows that the brain, like muscles, will function well if it is often worked and trained so that its sensitivity and responsiveness will be better and more sensitive to action. There are several principles of adult learning that are used as references in the learning process, namely (a) readiness to learn, (b) stages of learning, (c) understanding, (d) participation, (e) feedback, (f) consolidation/reinforcement, (g) learning motivation, (h) perception, (i) application, and (j) language transfer (Setyawan, 2017; Hamidah & Syakir, 2021).

Work Motivation

The work environment influences employees in completing their responsibilities to the agency (Nabawi, 2019). The work environment is everything around workers that can influence how they carry out their work (Iskandar & Yusnandar, 2021). A work motivation can be formed from individual characteristics, work and work situations which are formed from several indicators, namely the presence of (a) desires and wishes, (b) drives and needs, (c) hopes and ideals, (d) self-esteem and respect, and (e) interesting environment and

activities (Jufrizen, 2021). Based on the results of interviews by the Minister of Manpower on activities launching the "English for Indonesia with the British Embassy in Jakarta" program said:

"Increasing foreign language skills is needed to improve the quality of work. Moreover, currently the world is becoming a kind of global village so Indonesian human resources must also master foreign languages," (Harris Kurniawan, 2018); (Novianty et al., 2022).

Differences in levels of English proficiency between industries are likely a direct consequence of varying hiring practices and levels of investment in English language training programs. The persistence of the private sector appears surprising, especially considering the degree of international integration and competition across all industries. The government and non-profit companies will only harm their workers by only providing minimal or limited opportunities to increase their knowledge.

Working adults are a normal thing in our environment. Things are not without foundation. For the lower class, work is an effort to survive and fulfill their needs. Meanwhile, for the upper class, working is an effort to improve their standard of living and develop their quality to be able to compete and equalize their level. Fulfilling the living needs of adults does not stop people from working. The growing progress and innovation of the world is causing the wheel of life to turn in a more sophisticated direction. In the view of several informants, the underlying reasons for working are to fulfill life's needs (primary and secondary), improve welfare, give identity to oneself, increase relationships, increase productivity, train maturity, build character, feel self-satisfaction and reduce unemployment.

English in The Work Environment

Awareness of English has become an important requirement to have as a worker. The benefits and ease of work matters in mastering English is a self-value. Learning a foreign language as an adult can have benefits later in life, one of which can increase an adult's cognitive reserve and delay other mental illnesses (Geng & Jin, 2023). Differences in levels of English proficiency between industries are likely a direct consequence of varying hiring practices and levels of investment in English language training programs. The persistence of the private sector appears surprising, especially considering the degree of international integration and competition across all industries. The government and non-profit companies will only harm their workers by only providing minimal or limited opportunities to increase their knowledge.

The results of interviews conducted with six sources with different work backgrounds who were motivated to learn English were due to pressure and demands in the work environment which required them to be able to speak English. Several opportunities have been missed due to language limitations that hinder the communication process.

Resource person code 1 (IK) is a 50 years old woman who works as a staff member at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Central Jakarta. The main task of his work is to research, supervise and administer permits for regional spatial management. Often interacts and collaborates with foreign parties as a form of providing and providing services to agencies.

Resource person code 2 (WA) is a 42 years old woman. She is the wife of the owner of the company PT. Wahyu Agung Surabaya, East Java and serves as finance director. This company operates in the construction sector. The main task of his work is to supervise the development and progress of projects, establish cooperation and tenders, and travel domestically and abroad. This is also reinforced by his passion for traveling to various countries in the world.

Resource person code 3 (SP) is a 45 years old man. He is a principal at SMK 1 Kare Madiun, East Java. The main job duties are manager, supervisor, and administrator. He is not only a school principal but also a teacher of BIPA (Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers) which requires English as a language of communication with foreigners.

Resource person code 4 (WH) is a 48 years old man who works as a lecturer at Halu Oleo University, Southeast Sulawesi. The main job duties are as a teacher and require English when

attending international seminars and international conferences as well as understanding international scientific journals.

Resource person code 5(WK) is a 44 years old woman who works as a lecturer and doctor at Adam Malik Hospital, Medan. The main job duties are teaching medical students, providing medical services, and being responsible for examining and diagnosing diseases. To increase skills and knowledge in the health sector, international seminars are also held abroad.

Resource person code 6 (HR) is a 44 years old woman. He works as staff at the Intellectual Property Management Directorate of the National Research and Innovation Agency or Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN). The main task of his work is the preparation of policy formulation and implementation; management; implementation of valuation and analysis; implementation of promotions and mentoring; providing technical guidance and supervision; monitoring, evaluation and reporting in the field of intellectual property management. The use of English in the work environment can be seen from discussions of cooperation texts with foreign parties, analysis of documents related to research and comparisons from around the world, training to increase human resource capabilities which is often carried out abroad.

An agency or company will continue to move and optimize development. As the implementer of achieving this goal is the fulfilment of superior and competitive human resources. English language skills that are cultivated in the work environment are a common thing to do. The various efforts made by the informants were by taking English courses, listening, watching films, reading, practice and conversation.

In fact, adults' motivation in learning is based on urgent and important needs. Various obligations and responsibilities at work to be able to speak English help strengthen the intention and determination to learn. In terms of implementation, it will also be affected very quickly because work requires English so its use will be more optimal.

CONCLUSION

The presence of English in the work environment is a necessity and is inherent in every aspect of development. To be able to establish good and broad communication, workers must also be able to master language skills. Demands and pressure from several agencies also encourage adults to learn and develop themselves. In fact, this is an incentive for adults to want to learn English. Apart from that, the emergence of feelings of being left behind in language skills, tending to be shy, and lacking self-confidence also convince adults to want to start doing this. Even though logically learning in old age is difficult, if you can find active support from the environment, those closest to you and yourself then these obstacles can be overcome smoothly and easily. Adult learning (andragogy) can determine their learning needs specifically and with flexible settings to obtain targets and achieve the desired goals.

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