



Understanding non-English Major's Students' Motivation in Learning English via Photovoice: Insights from Indonesian Tertiary EFL Students

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Abstract

Despite various studies on the motivation in the ELT context, there is a lack of study that centers on the learners' motivation of non-English majors through photovoice research. The current study attempts to fill this gap. This study was conducted in a private university in Indonesia, involving five non-English major students. A photovoice study was utilized so as to capture and understand their learning motivation. It was found that the photographs the students took illustrated that the students have now been learning English in much more critical ways. Various reasons for their learning English include the ideas that English is a beautiful and a useful language. They also perceived that learning English can help us get a better job; traveling is much easier with a good knowledge of English; and having knowledge of English can help you study abroad. They perceived that they should study English harder to achieve such goals. The findings also show that they belong to non-English majors. Suggestions for future studies are also offered in this paper.

Keywords: *L2 motivation, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), non-English major's students, Photovoice*

INTRODUCTION

One of the factors that can cause students' success or failure in language learning is motivation (Kabir, 2015). Highly motivated learners, tend to be more successful than those others. In the last two decades, researchers have identified the significance of motivation in language learning (Gardner, 1985; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995; Wharton, 2000; Noels, 2001), which indicates that motivation is the driving force for doing things and for achieving the goals (Kabir, 2015).

Gardner (1985) has previously represented that language learning motivation can include both goal orientation and the combination of effort that builds a desire to achieve the goal of learning the language. His core of motivation involves integrative and instrumental motivation. Even so, Ellis (2008) claims that instrumental motivation does not conflict with integrative motivation. Rather, it works in accordance with integrative motivation. Although a big disagreement about the impact of the sorts of motivation exists on English language learning, Garner, however, provides significant encouragement for the development of the motivation theory.

To date, studies on language learning motivation have been extensively carried out by researchers around the globe. For example, age-related motivation in motivation (Xu & Case, 2014), motivation for learning English by international students in Japan (Tanaka & Kutsuki, 2016), students' motivation and needs in English learning (Jiang & Luk, 2016), exploring factors causing demotivation and motivation in learning English in Pakistani college (Ali & Pathan, 2017), examining the link between motivation and their attitudes toward university studies and language learning in a multicultural university context (Bensoussan, 2014), the connection between students' motivation and engagement in EMI and non-EMI programs in Taiwan (Chen & Kraklow, 2014), the relationship between language learning motivation, perception of global English, and study modes (Lanvers, 2013). For the most part, all of these studies have revolved around L2 learning motivation and engagement, and this is done overseas.

Although these studies have been undertaken to date, a study centering on L2 motivation by non-English major students in the Indonesian EFL context using a photovoice study remains scant. Therefore, the current study attempts to fill this void. The current study examines the non-English major learners' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. Situated in the EFL context, the researcher hopes that this study's findings could substantially contribute to the setting in which English is quite important to learn. Based on this statement, the questions related to this study were addressed:

1. What are the non-English major learners' motivations for learning English?
2. Does their motivation to learn English belong to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation in L2: A working definition

Motivation is one of the essential tenets of second language learning. Such a factor becomes indispensable for those who wish to study L2 skills (Sundqvist & Sylven, 2016). Researchers have confirmed that students with good attitudes toward learning English will show high levels of achievement in the target language (Gardner, 1979; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). This motivation includes two kinds of notions: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Students with intrinsic motivation tend to enjoy learning a foreign or second language learning for its own sake, while students with extrinsic motivation are for the most part influenced by external factors, such as rewards associated with language learning (Noels et al., 1999; Falout et al 2009). Therefore, it is clear that motivation is not only a desire to learn a language but also a measure of an individual's behavior or attitudes toward working or striving to achieve a learning objective (Gardner, 1985).

In terms of intrinsic and extrinsic L2 motivation, Gillet et.al. (2011) have proposed that students with intrinsic motivation tend to produce positive learning results, while those with extrinsic motivation often lead to negative learning outcomes. This is to say that intrinsically motivated learners retain the content for a more extended period and that this is self-sustaining (Bravo et al., 2017). The emphasis on having motivation in language learning has also been argued by Lamb (2002). In this regard, he argued that motivation plays a pivotal role in language learning success even in places with educational constraints. He already researched that motivation plays a significant role in English language learning among several Indonesian EFL learners in poor educational conditions. It can be concluded that learning success is closely related to learners' motivation (Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013).

Furthermore, motivation is enhanced when the learners gain positive learning results. As Spratt et al. (2002) confirmed, positive language learning results foster motivation, which intensifies learning success. For this reason, it is of value to research motivation in language learning.

Recent Studies on Language Learning Motivation

Many important studies seem to strongly support the concept of motivation proposed by most prominent scholars in related areas, some of which reveal the factors influencing

students' motivation in learning English as a foreign language. Nguyen (2019), for example, discovers that most successful EFL learners participating in his research have instrumental motivation in learning English, which means that their desire to learn the language is vastly influenced by the benefits offered. The study also dismantles some factors affecting their motivation including gender, the school year of study, the length of study, and the parents' speaking ability.

In line with the report above, another recent study by Wu, et al., (2022) presents that motivation is not the only factor that contributes to the student's success in learning English as a foreign language, but grit also plays a very crucial role in their language learning performance. According to Roberts (2009), the grittier individuals are, the higher motivation they have, enabling them to deal with obstacles and overcome challenges. In this sense, highly motivated and gritty students can have a chance to be more successful learners. Wu, et al., (2022) also point out that gender is another aspect that impacts EFL learners' performance, which is aligned with Nguyen's (2019) work. This resonates with other previous studies showing how gender influences the way individuals view their language learning process and styles and their motivation to use the language they learn (Montero-SaizAja, 2021; Azwar, et al., 2021).

METHOD

To empower students' voices, the researcher employed a photovoice as the approach to the study. According to Wang & Burris (1997), photovoice is a method inviting the participant to identify, portray or represent, and discuss and enhance their social lives and communities through photographic techniques, thus increasing the consciousness of personal and community issues and providing vital information for policy-makers. In this case, participants in photovoice actively and reflectively take photographs following specific themes and then discuss the photograph(s) that are important to them in a group setting.

In the photo-discussion sessions, participants are encouraged to share the meanings and stories behind their photographs, based on the following questions: SHOWeD: (1) What do you see here? (2) What is really happening here? (3) How does this relate to Our lives? (4) Why does this situation, concern, or strength Exist? (5) What can we Do about it? (Wang & Burris, 1997). They can also codify the issues and themes that emerge from their photographs during the group discussion. By actively taking, sharing, discussing, and codifying photographs, participants become more aware of their lives and are thus empowered to express themselves through narratives and visual images (Wang & Burris, 1997). Accordingly,

photovoice photographs serve as visual aids and data antecedents, rather than data, to empower participants to express their lived experiences, which can yield rich data for researchers attempting to understand phenomena from participants' perspectives (Plunkett, Leipert, & Ray, 2012).

Participants

The participants of the study were students majoring in Islamic education (non-English major students) from a private university in Indonesia. In choosing the participants, the researcher took feasibility for inclusion, in which it is only those who signed the research consent and were willing to participate voluntarily in this study. Therefore, six students are willing and categorized as highly motivated students based on their attendance list on the English course and their active participation in the classroom. They, in this regard, were invited to take photographs and give their opinions on the photographs they took. Thus, it represents their motivation to learn English and their lived experiences of learning English in the classroom.

Table 1

| Name (pseudonym) | Majoring | Age | College | Semester |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----|--|----------|
| Doni | Islamic education | 22 | University of Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong | 2 |
| Ani | Islamic education | 23 | University of Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong | 2 |
| Ratna | Islamic education | 24 | University of Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong | 2 |
| Vina | Islamic education | 23 | University of Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong | 2 |
| Fifi | Islamic education | 22 | University of Islam Zainul Hasan Genggong | 2 |

Data analysis

A grounded theory was employed as the data analysis in this study, consisting of open coding, focused coding, and selective coding. To begin with, the sharing and discussion were transcribed verbatim. The researcher, in this case, used open coding. The transcripts' content was reviewed line by line in an attempt to identify meaningful themes (Esterberg, 2002). Focused coding was then applied to develop more salient themes from the data, by reassembling the segments of themes that emerged from the open coding (Saldaña, 2009). Last but not least, the researcher searched for the credibility of themes from the data coded by

continuously examining and refining the themes with a comparison among incidents with themes, and themes with other themes throughout the coding process (Glasser & Straus, 1967). The researcher subsequently found the whole theme: "non-English major student's motivation in learning English through photovoice."

Procedure

The participants were invited to join a briefing session on 12 May 2023, in which the research procedure and aim were introduced. The researcher subsequently instructed the students on how to use mobile phones to take photographs with considerations of ethical requirements. After each session, the students were asked to take four to five photographs over four weeks based on one or more of the following themes. (1). What do you think about English? (2). Is learning English important in today's era? (3). What motivates you in learning English? (4). What makes English more important than other subjects?

All participants were invited to join the photo discussion session on 22 June 2023, in which each participant selected one of his or her photographs to share. The sharing was guided by the SHOWED question, in which the participants were given 15 to 20 minutes to answer. After each sharing, short responses were invited from the participants. When all of the participants had finished sharing, the researcher invited them to choose the shared photographs that they wanted to discuss further as a group. The sharing and discussion aimed to allow the participants to assign meanings to the photographs via critical dialogue (Latz, 2017). The sharing and discussion were audio-recorded and at the end of the session, participants were encouraged to submit their photographs to the research project. Six photographs were collected.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Having analyzed the data with a grounded theory analysis, the researcher found six organizing themes, showcasing their interest in learning English as a foreign language: *English is a beautiful language, English is a useful language, Learning English can help find a better job, Travelling is much easier with a good knowledge of English, and Having knowledge of English can help us study abroad*. These organizing themes reflect the significance of learning English in the current era. The description of these organizing themes is presented as follows:

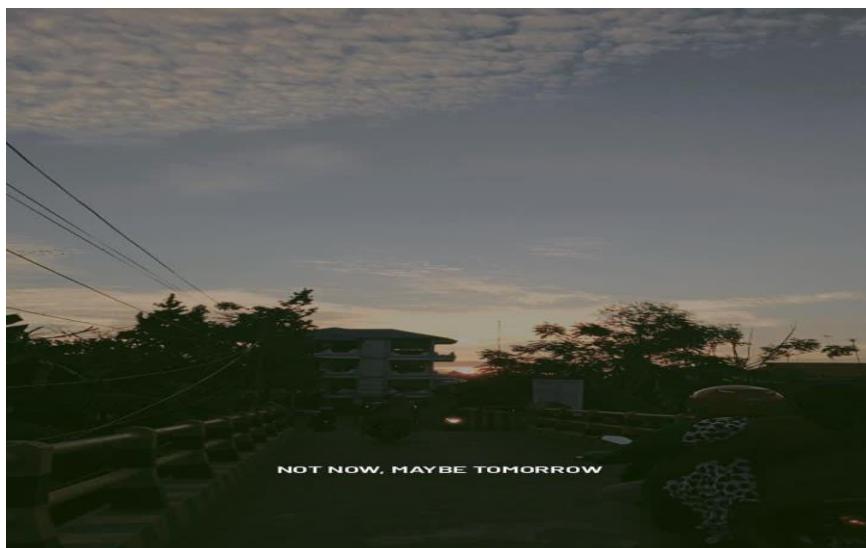
English is a beautiful language

As an international language, English has spread in a wide range of situations and contexts, including in Indonesia. Since then, English has been renowned by a number of people

around the globe. As a student, Vindi has come across several articles which employ English as a means of communication. She feels that English has been a beautiful language and that it has made her much more interested than others. Therefore, she becomes motivated to learn English. She claimed that it was like a sunset in the afternoon, which is always interesting to see and enjoy seeing. That language has made her look more stylish and cool. She comments as follows:

My motivation to learn English stems from my interest in English, because I think English is a beautiful language, the more you know it, the more addictive you will become, like the sunset in the afternoon, which is always interesting to watch and enjoy. In addition, I am also aware that English is an important language and is also one of the links to various things, such as education, work, and even holidays sometimes requiring English, such as bridges in the following picture, whose function is not only to connect between villages but also between islands or between countries. English with good pronunciation also makes a person look cooler and more stylish.

Picture 1



English is a useful language

We know that a number of languages have been available in this world, and some have employed languages as a means of communication. However, English has become the major language in communication. Hanifa reported that indeed, there are many languages in the world that can be used for communication but English has become the most influential of other languages. For example, when I came to Bali, I needed to use English as a means of communication. It is quite important to use since many foreign people are living there for travel purposes. This language is like a star in the sky that can be eye-catching other than others. She was highly motivated to learn English because of this. As she reported in the following:

My motivation for learning English is that I want to be someone who can be useful in the future like a teacher or spokeswoman. English is an international, useful language for communicating with people across countries. Learning English is very important to me in order to accomplish my needs. Therefore, I really want to learn it because I want to show everyone that English is a beneficial language. Like the stars in the sky, everyone calls them stars but in one of those stars, there is one star that shines brightly from the other stars. The English language is the same as that.

Picture 2



Learning English can help find a better job

One of the international languages is English. This language has been used in communication by many people in the world. Afifah stated that by using this language, people can build good relationships with other people around the globe as this language is the world language. Therefore, with this language they use, they can easily find a better job through interacting with them. She informed me that the language is like the calm sea which shows that there are many fish inside the sea. People can find fresh fish if they want. She informed us as follows:

My motivation for learning English is that I want to increase my knowledge more broadly because English is a world language and probably a lot of people use English so it is easier to communicate with other people and finally find a good job. Building a good relationship with them using this language is very beneficial.

The greatest weakness is when one gives up learning English without trying again and again. In the future, if you fail to do something, you should not give up and continue to fix your mistakes. In realizing hopes and dreams, one must try not to be left behind in lessons and must study this language hard for a better future like the picture in the following that everyone can see the calm sea which has a lot of fish in it. One can take one fish that is fresh and breed for their necessities.

Picture 3



Traveling is much easier with a good knowledge of English

As one of the international languages, English has gained prominence these days. Therefore, this language becomes dominant. As a result, some people learn this language for communication and interaction. Tia has found this language very interesting and surprising. When she traveled to parts of the countries, such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Bali, she found that English is in use and is therefore very intriguing to learn. She was subsequently motivated to study this language and joined the intensive English program to learn such a language. As some people learn this language for communication, she felt highly enthusiastic to learn. As seen in the following picture, the English language is like the sun rising in the morning, giving her enthusiasm to learn and use the language. She comments on the following:

My motivation for learning English started from my fad in reading English textbooks so that I felt happy, wanted to know, and had fun. I think English is a language that has its own charm so it makes me interested in learning this language. What's more, I like traveling to some countries in the world, for instance, Bali. This place is my favorite place to visit when I am on vacation. It's the same as the sunrise, which makes me happy, amazed, and addicted when I see its beauty. It signifies that English is a must to learn if you want to travel around the globe; it gives you ease in interacting with the people there.

Picture 4



Having knowledge of English can help you study abroad

As a means of communication, English attracted people's attention, including Indonesian students. It happens because this language has been used not only in media but also as a requirement when applying for a job, studying, and so forth. As a result, this language has been well-known. Rendi has claimed that learning English as a foreign language is paramount because this language has been compulsory for studying abroad. He claimed that when you apply to study abroad, English competency is required. It is the same as the mountain in the following that every adventurer or explorer must climb to arrive at the top of the mountain. Therefore, he subsequently joined the intensive English program to develop his English language proficiency. As he reported in the following:

I joined the intensive English program because I felt English is a required language when I, especially, want to study abroad one day. In addition, I hope that I can apply for the company as well. Certainly, this will require me to learn English more diligently from now on so that I can study overseas. I viewed this language like a mountain in front of me that I needed to climb. Although it might be difficult for me to develop, I believe that I can cope with the challenges. I believe that I can develop my English skills and learn overseas for further degrees later on.

Picture 5



Nested in the descriptive lens, the current study has addressed the question of what non-English major learners' motivation is in learning English via photovoice study. The findings indicated that the learners study English for some reasons, such as *English is a beautiful language, English is a useful language, Learning English can help find a better job, Travelling is much easier with a good knowledge of English, and Having knowledge of English can help us study abroad*. These motivations have led them to be enthusiastic about learning English even though they have different majors from one another.

First of all, English is a beautiful language. In this case, Vindi was quite motivated to learn since English became an international language and a beautiful language for her. This condition belongs to intrinsic motivation. Dorney (2001) has asserted that intrinsic motivation is about an action that is done for its own sake to experience satisfaction. It is because she was highly motivated by the beauty of the language. She claimed that people using good pronunciation in this language can look cooler and more stylish, thereby learning English becomes of great importance for her. Another result of the study also indicates that those who had fun, interest, and enjoyment of something will contribute to the process of language learning and acquisition which leads to English language proficiency (Atmojo, 2022).

Secondly, the English language is a useful language. Hanifa reveals that learning English is necessary, especially when she comes to Bali, using the English language for communication benefits her. Therefore, she joined the intensive course. She said that it is like a star in the sky which can be eye-catching. This result has also been confirmed by the study. Anam & Rachmadian (2020) suggest that all English language skills are needed for tourism students or those who will visit tourist places. Thus, it can be concluded that the student learns English for particular necessary.

Next, learning English can find a better job. Afifah argues that learning English is beneficial since it can build a strong relationship with other people around the globe and then find a good job. It has been stated in the study conducted by (Fachraini, 2017) that becoming proficient in English is essential to finding a better job.

Apart from that, Tia stated that by learning English, she can make it easier to travel around the ground. For instance, when she came to Bali, English communication was urgently required. It means that the English language has become a global language today. It is like the sunrise in the morning which gives spirit to everybody who sees it. Rohmah (2005) and Foley (2007) claim that English is not only an international language but also a global language and this language is used as a first, second, and foreign language.

Last, English also becomes essential when you would like to study overseas. It should come as no surprise that having good English skills makes somebody successful in overseas education. For example, when you want to study in Aussie, the USA, or England, you need to have competency in English. The competency is usually proven by TOEFL iBT or IELTS in which they are all eligible. Rendy has claimed that he joined the intensive course to be able to study abroad later on when they graduate from the University where he is right now. He states that learning English for studying abroad is like climbing a mountain. This challenge has required him to work hard in order to arrive at the top of the mountain.

It implies that all the students above have a good motivation to learn English, particularly he has an intrinsic motivation in order to achieve specific purposes, for example, for English communication, finding a good job, traveling around the globe, or studying overseas. Noels et al., (1999) & Falout et al. (2009) have noted that intrinsically motivated students are fond of learning a second or foreign language for its own sake. To this end, the student is interested in learning English as a foreign language in the intensive program because of the intrinsic motivation she has.

The second research question is that whether the students' motivation to learn English belongs to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. The findings have showcased that their learning motivation is mostly intrinsic. As stated by Gardner (1979) students with intrinsic motivation enjoy learning a foreign language for its own sake. In this regard, they view that learning English can result in many benefits for themselves, such as traveling around the globe, knowing English can studying overseas, and many more. Therefore, it becomes a new direction for those who would like to study English for a better future.

The current study has only been confined to the EFL context, another study on understanding students' motivation in different settings could be conducted so as to achieve

different views of students' motivation in learning English, particularly in today's digital era through photovoice studies.

CONCLUSION

Given that scant studies on English learning motivation using photographic techniques remain available, the researchers attempt to fill this gap through a photovoice lens. This study has tried to understand non-English major students' motivation to learn English in the intensive course program at the tertiary level. It has been found that they learn the English language for different goals, such as to be able to communicate in English, to travel around the world, to find a better, and to learn overseas.

Nevertheless, this study has some limitations. This study was only conducted within a private university with some participants using a photovoice lens. Another study can be done with a larger sample and using different qualitative paradigms such as case studies, narrative inquiry, or phenomenology in which the topic is still associated with learning motivation. Moreover, further studies on learning motivation using different methods and different areas might also be of advantage to provide a more impressive result.

This study implies that the students' motivation in learning English varies based on their perspectives in which these views will form their future as well. For example, English is a beneficial language. It means that those who belong to this outlook will utilize English for many things, such as communication, for looking a job, and so forth. Apart from that, knowing English can study abroad. Since the main requirement of studying overseas is good at English, those who are of this perspective will harness their English skill to be able to study overseas after they graduate later on. In the meantime, they also regard that having an ability in English can make them travel around the globe. To make this come true, they join the intensive English program to learn English harder so that they can improve their English communication and that they can visit any place in the world.

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