

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher will explain some points. Those are the background of study, the research problem, the objective of the study, the significance of study, the scope and limitation of study, and the definition of key terms.

A. The background of the study

Language is often studied in the context of first language (L1) and second language (L2). An individual's first language is generally his or her native language. A native speaker would then be one who acquired a given language as his or her primary language. The next language studied by the same individual would be his or her second language. Often, if an individual has studied other languages besides their L1, these other languages are each referred to as L2, because their acquisition is different than that of L1.

Acquiring a second language, surely someone needs a process which is not easy because it must learn how structural and pronunciation adapted from target language. The study of a second language is called Second Language Acquisition (SLA). SLA is not a uniform and predictable phenomenon. There is no single way in which learners acquire knowledge of a L2. SLA is the products of many factors pertaining to the learners and the learning situation. Different learners in different situations learn L2 in different ways. SLA stands in contrast to first language acquisition. It is the study of how learners learn an additional language after they have acquired their mother tongue.

Much of our own L1 acquisition was completed before we ever came to school, and this development normally takes place without any conscious effort. Muriel¹ mentions that “By the age of six month an infant has produced all of the vowel sounds and most of the consonant sounds of any language in the world”. Chomsky and his followers have claimed since 1950s that the nature of speaker-hearers’ competence in their native language can be accounted for only by innate knowledge that the human species is genetically endowed with. They argue that children (at least) come to task of acquiring a specific language already possessing general knowledge of what all language have in common, including constraints on how any natural can be structured.

Harwintha Yuhria in her book, *Otak dan Kemampuan Bahasa*², stated that “between the ages of two and three years most children are able to form a sentence that can be understood by adults, although the pronunciation may not right, but the structure of the language is good enough”. For a short time, they have gone from just crying when newborn, then they are able to understand and pronounce many words by the age of two and three years. This is in contrast to adults who learn a second or third language will not be as good as they are in the same timeframe. She also states that in the domain of syntax or grammar, it is hypothesized that a child is born with a universal grammar that provides grammatical construction (blueprints) that may exist or be used by the languages in the world.

¹ Muriel Saville-Troike, *Introducing Second Language Acquisition* (Cambridge : University Press, 2005), 12.

² Harwintha Yuhria. A, *Otak dan Kemampuan Bahasa*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Rihama, 2010), 35.

The study of language-learner language began with the study of L1 acquisition. There was a strong assumption that most of difficulties facing the L2 learner were imposed by his/her L1. Differences between L1 & L2, the learner's L1 knowledge would interfere with the L2. Similarities between L1 & L2, the learner's L1 knowledge aid L2 learning. This process is called language transfer.

One of the most controversial theoretical perspectives in SLA in the last quarter of the twentieth century was offered by Stephen Krashen³ in a host of articles and books which has an internal focus in the "Monitor Model" and the "Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis". It explicitly and essentially adopts the notion of a Language Acquisition Device (or LAD), which is metaphor Chomsky used for Children's innate knowledge.⁴ Krashen's approach is a collection of five hypotheses which constitute major claims and assumptions about how the L2 code is acquired. One of them is "The Input Hypothesis" that has been a point of interest in this research. Krashen states that⁵:

The Input Hypothesis claims that an important "condition for language acquisition to occur is that the acquirer *understand* (via listening or reading) input language that contains structure 'a bit beyond' his or her current level of competence. . . .If an acquirer is at stage or level *i*, the input he or she understands should contain *i+1*"

Listening comprehension is at the heart of language learning. Learners want to understand L2 speakers and want to comprehend a variety of L2 multimedia such as DVDs and the Internet. At the same time, listening is an important language

³ Stephen D Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 10.

⁴ Saville-Troike, *Introducing Second Language.*, 45.

⁵ Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*, (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981)

skill to develop in terms of SLA⁶. SLA studies have demonstrated that comprehensible input is critical for language acquisition as well as comprehensible output. Rost mentions that “a key difference between more successful and less successful acquirers relates in large part to their ability to use listening as a means of acquisition”⁷.

Given the importance of input comprehension in language acquisition, current SLA research has tried to identify what it is that makes input comprehensible (or incomprehensible) to the learner, and its role in the language-learning process. The particular interest has been the effect of the input that is provided to the learners, the interactions which the learners engage in, and how the input and interactions facilitate comprehension and foster SLA.

Based on Yorio’s taxonomy about classification of learner variables⁸, input divided into two sides. That is free learner and instructed learner. State College of Islamic Studies (STAIN) Kediri included a formal education, so that the researcher put instructed learner to the main topic of finding the constraints. Within instructed learner, there is context of learning divided into many branches, as follow: (1) Type of instruction, (2) Length of instruction, (3) Place of instruction, (4) Material of instruction, (5) Source of instruction.

Different learners in different situations learn L2 in different ways. English department of STAIN Kediri has more than 400 English learners in a year. Each grade has divided into many classes. In the process of acquiring English

⁶ Tomoko Kurita, ‘Issues in Second Language Listening Comprehension and The Pedagogical Implications’, *Accents Asia*, (2012), 5 (1), pp. 30 - 44.

⁷ Rost, M., *Teaching and Researching Listening*, (London: Longman, 2001)

⁸ H.Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching- 5th Edition*, (New york: Pearson Education, 2007), 313.

especially listening skill, it has been delivered in the laboratory of language. By virtue of the researcher experience, many students ask about the use of media and facility inside and also the variety of teaching of a lecturer. Certainly in every year, it will change the way of teaching. The lecturers most likely will adjust the system and learning objectives based on their previous experiences. It will influence how the learners get the different input. That is why, the researcher wants to research about **THE INPUT CONSTRAINTS OF ENGLISH ACQUISITION IN LISTENING CLASS AT STAIN KEDIRI.**

B. The research problem

Based on the background of study above, the researcher tries to formulate the research problem: What are the input constraints of English acquisition in listening class at STAIN Kediri?

C. The objective of the study

The purpose of this research is to observe the constraints of English acquisition in listening class at STAIN Kediri, especially the input for instructed second language acquisition.

D. The significance of the Study

1. For the students

This research can be used to find the points where constraints can occur along with foreign language acquisition in adults. So that they can know how to avoid these obstacles with a variety of solutions that they should do.

2. For the lecturers

The result of this study can be the information what the students' complaint and constraints are acquiring in their process of learning. By knowing what constraints students in the process of acquiring language input, the lecturer can adjust the appropriate learning objective, or teaching methods that can be taught, as well as a possible decrease constraints occur. And hopefully the lecturers are able to bring up and remind their students to take care facilities available.

3. For English department

This research also can be one of way to collect the data what the student's need in process acquiring English easily. Maybe this research can also be the reference to give what the appropriate facilities to increase their ability. The availability of existing facilities is not enough without an intensive check and care that all are going well. That is because the media and supporting facilities can be one of factors to reduce the constraints students in proceeds.

E. The scope and limitation

The scope of this research is Second Language Acquisition. Many aspects in SLA can be researched. Specifically in this case, study about input for instructed learner. The study about input itself certainly can be from the inside and from the outside. Giving the limitation in this study, the researcher focuses only on the input constraints in acquiring English acquisition in listening class of English

department of STAIN Kediri. The research is also limited only input based on the classification of learner variables made by Yorio.

F. The definition of key terms

1. Second Language Acquisition refers both to the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as young children and to the process of learning that language.⁹
2. Constraints are limitations or barriers imposed on the individual that may lead to decreased or non-participation in an activity.¹⁰
3. Listening is an important language skill to develop in terms of second language acquisition (SLA). In spite of its importance, second language (L2) learners often regard listening as the most difficult language skill to learn.¹¹
4. Input is one of the most important elements in the process of second language acquisition (SLA). It is the language intentionally presented to the learners by the teacher or other learners in order to facilitate the process of L2 learning/acquisition.¹²

⁹ Saville-Troike, *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*, 2.

¹⁰ A, Hasan, Learners' Perceptions of Listening Comprehension Problems. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, (2000) 137-153.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Eve Zyzik, 'The Role of Input Revisited: Nativist versus Usage-Based Models', *L2 Journal*, (2009) Vol.1: 42-61.