



AN ANALYSIS OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION - THE CASE STUDY OF A HONG KONG LEARNER OF ENGLISH

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Abstract:

The present second language acquisition research has attempted to enhance an in-depth understanding of the way learners acquired English. Situated in this line of research, the current case study, thus, explores the process in which how a learner from Hongkong (learner D) has learned English as a second language. Particularly, this study aimed at finding out (1) student motivation to learn English, (2) her learning strategy in distinct skills of English, (3) the learning styles that she prefers to use and (4) different aspects affecting her learning. Learner D was required to complete four questionnaires and an interview on two separate days. The questionnaires were counted and analysed while the audio recordings were transcribed and coded for evidence of learning background, learning strategies, motivation and learning styles. The findings revealed that the participant was a motivated learner of English and her principal needs were daily communication and academic purposes. Also, D is a flexible learner as she had several learning styles and she applied various learning strategies. Therefore, she improved her English quickly after moving to Manchester, UK for her exchange course.

Keywords: learning styles, motivation, language strategy

1. Introduction

According to Ellis (1984), second language acquisition is a complicated process which involves many factors such as age, aptitude, intelligence, cognitive style, attitudes, motivation, and personality. The acquisition is the product of many factors related to the learner and the learning situation. In this paper, some concerning issues affecting the process of learning English of learner D who is currently studying and living in Manchester will be examined. The case study analyzes the following aspects which are background, learning styles, needs, motivation, and strategies. The findings can give us a deep understanding of how the learner acquires English. In the process of data

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collection, many tools are employed including questionnaires, interviews and observation because questionnaires give evidence of patterns while qualitative interview data can supply more in-depth insights (Kendall, 2008).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Learning Motivation

Motivation is defined by Crookes & Schmidt (1991) as the learner's orientation toward the goal of learning a second language. Motivation plays an essential role in the success of language learning (Smith, 2012; Gardner et al., 1985). It is the most important factor in acquiring the English language (Barnett, 2009) because motivation can make pupils aware of the position at the beginning of learning, the process, and the end of learning. There are some main needs that aid to construct motivation of students by McCormick and James (1989) including the need for stimulation by the environment, other people, ideas and feelings; the need for achievement; the need to search for solutions to issues; and the need for enhancing their ego. Motivation is divided into two types namely integrative and instrumental motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Particularly, instrumental motivation derives from external elements such as passing an examination, getting a better job with a high salary, and achieving a scholarship while integrative motivation comes from inside the individual including their interest to learn English or a desire to communicate with native speakers and passion for the target culture.

2.2 Learning Strategies

Learning strategies, highlighted by Oxford (1989), are "*behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable*" (Oxford, 1989: 235). Learning strategy is an activity that teachers and students do in order to achieve learning objectives effectively (Land & Jonassen, 2012). In other words, learning strategies are specific actions to make the learning process more enjoyable, easier, and effective. It is also a factor which can facilitate learners to improve their English ability (Strike & Egan, 2010) because if pupils can identify their learning strategy, it is easier for them to learn and enjoy the lesson (Adams & Pierce, 2006).

2.3 Learning Styles

Brown (2000) stated that learning styles are the manner in which learners perceive and process information in learning situations. Learning styles could be divided into three primary types comprising of cognitive, psychological and sensory. While cognitive includes analytical/ global, and impulsive/ reflective learning styles; psychological learning styles refer to a personality like extrovert versus introvert. According to Dornyei (2006), sensory learning styles can be categorized into three sub types consisting of visual, kinaesthetic, and auditory. In terms of visual learners, they have a preference to use pictures in thinking and they tend to obtain information based on photos like graphs,

diagrams, or videos. In contrast, verbal learners usually get information via spoken or written explanations. Auditory learners use verbal discussion or listening to other speech to collect information; therefore, such learners can take advantage of reading texts out loud instead of written information. As for kinaesthetic or tactile learners, they enjoy activities involved in actions and movements (Oxford, 2002).

3. Material and Methods

To examine various aspects of the process of second language acquisition of a learner, questionnaires and interviews are adopted.

3.1 Participants

The participant was a Hongkong student studying in the UK, who consented to take part in the case study. She is a 20-year-old learner who was born in Hong Kong and her mother tongue is Cantonese. She was exposed to English from birth when her mother communicated with her in English.

At a later stage when she grew up, she followed formal classes where English and Cantonese are taught simultaneously at the age of five in the kinder garden. English is a compulsory subject from kinder garden to primary and high school which took around six hours per week (Appendix B, Q5). She admitted that she enjoyed learning English when she was in primary school but when she was in high school, she disliked this subject because it is exam-oriented (Appendix B, Q42). The public examination consists of both written tests and oral tests.

After accomplishing her second year at a university in Hong Kong where she majors in Business Administration in Accounting, she moved to Manchester for her exchange course in September 2018. Her course in the UK lasts nine months. She chose the UK, the motherland of English since she desires to improve her English. In Manchester, she has a group of close friends who are from Columbia, Singapore, and Indonesia and they meet on a daily basis. During her time in Manchester, she has travelled frequently. D will return to her country when she finishes her exchange course.

3.2 Study Design

Questionnaires and face-to-face interviews were adapted for this research (see Appendices).

3.3 Data Collection

The five-point Likert scaling questionnaires were used as it is commonly implemented as a technique to measure participants' attitudes (Corbetta, 2003). There were two sections, the first section elicits demographic information of learners comprising their level of study, which variety they learned at school and how many years they have learned English using multiple choice and short answers questions. The second section consisting of 3 separate questionnaires explores learning motivation, styles and strategies. In order

to understand the motivation of learner D, Dörnyei motivation questionnaire which was utilized in the 2013 Chinese survey (You & Dörnyei, 2016; You, Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K., 2016) is employed. There are several reasons for choosing this questionnaire. Firstly, this questionnaire is designed for Chinese learners with some cultural questions so that it might be suitable for a Hong Kong learner like D in order to explore cultural aspects. Secondly, this questionnaire has a professional and attractive design since the participant can easily stick to the breakdown of scale in each question instead of filling in the answer sheet like the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford (1989). To investigate the learning preferences of learner D, the Learning Style Survey (Cohen, Oxford & Chi, 2001) was adopted because it is quick to administer and complete and it has easily reportable scales. In terms of learning strategies, the Language Strategy Use Inventory by Cohen, Oxford and Chi will be adopted because compared with Strategies Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford (1989), it is easier to interpret and the scale is good to measure the value of strategy use.

Apart from questionnaires, the interview was also adopted to gain further information as it is considered a key factor in research design (Weiss, 1995). This kind of interview was chosen because the researcher could ask standard questions for all participants who were comparable and accepted new data if someone got divergence. In particular, the interview contains six questions

3.5 Coding and Analysis

The recordings were transcribed and verified by the researcher. The transcripts were coded in terms of learning strategies, learning motivation, and learning styles.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Need Analysis

In this section, D's learning needs will be mostly examined by interviews and my observations. There are two salient needs for learning English, which is for social purposes and academic purposes. D emphasizes that she needs to learn English for communication (Appendix B, Q8), especially when she lives in an English-speaking country. She wants to improve her speaking skills for daily use, travelling and her future career as a businesswoman. She puts speaking as superior as Florez (1999) has claimed that speaking is a priority for most learners of English. She points out that she wants to 'speak grammatically correct' (Appendix B, Q66). Through the interview, two outstanding grammatical errors have been revealed. Firstly, D committed errors in the use of verbs. For example, she used the present simple verb to talk about past events over ten times (Appendix B, highlighted words) or she forgot the inflectional suffix (s/es) for third singular pronouns (Appendix B, underlined words). Those errors might be because of the difference between the two languages. While English grammar uses inflectional morphemes to indicate plurals and tense in the sense of verb conjugation (Plag, 2018), Chinese is not inflectional and uses word order and function words to indicate grammar

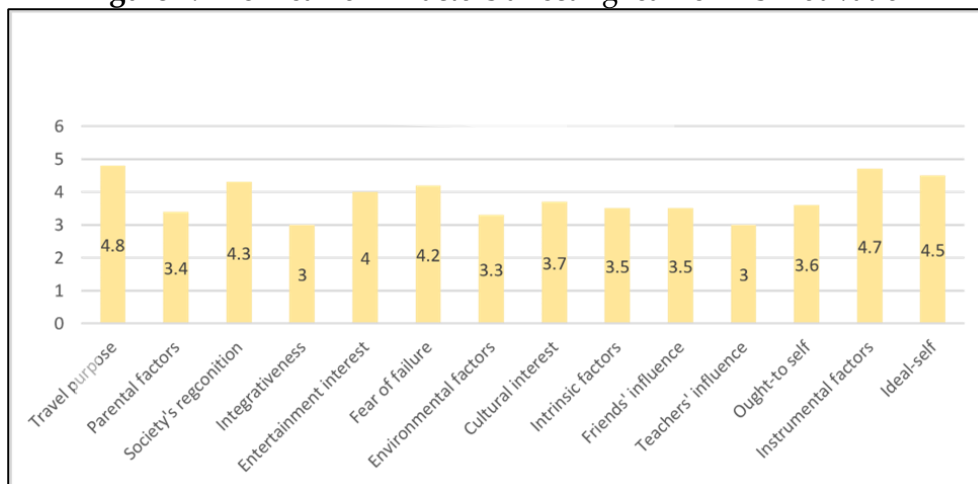
(Jing, Tindall, & Nisbet, 2006). D shared that 'it is quite confusing and [she] always forgets the grammar rule in the English' because she is used to Chinese structures and grammar and those seem to affect her English use. Secondly, D missed the definite or indefinite articles in some sentences which required the presence of articles over ten times (Appendix B, bold words). Sometimes, she also inserted articles when unnecessary (Appendix B, Q18, 63). The reason might be that there are no articles in the Chinese linguistic system; consequently, the absence of articles in Chinese indirectly influences D when she employs English articles such Lado (1957) assumed that in foreign language learning, it will be difficult to acquire if the elements in L2 are different from L1 (Lado (1957) (as cited in Ellis, 2008).

Moreover, she also expresses her need to learn writing because academic writing is vital for success at the university for all students, international and domestic (Leki, & Carson, 1994). As an exchange student in the UK, all her lectures and assessment are in English. She mentioned that she has six assignments including business reports which are about two thousand five hundred to three thousand words and group presentations which is around one thousand words (Appendix B, Q32). She finds it hard to reach the minimum word counts. She said that in order to improve her writing, she needs to enhance her grammar and reading as well (Appendix B, Q57). In summary, D's primary needs to learn English are for communication and academic writing to overcome some spoken errors and accomplish her course.

4.1 Motivation

The questions in the questionnaire are classified into 14 categories and the mean of each category is calculated and presented in form of a bar chart (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The mean of 14 factors affecting learner D's motivation



Firstly, the result from the above chart suggests that two factors affecting D's motivation most are travelling and instrumental factors with the highest scores (4.8/6 and 4.7/6, respectively). As she mentioned in the interview, she has travelled to many countries such as Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Spain, Singapore, Korea, Japan, etc.

(Appendix B, Q50). D seems to have the view that she can travel around the world and explore new cultures if she could speak English fluently since English is a global language (Crystal, 2003). When asked about the reason for learning English, D emphasized that she 'needs English for communication because [she] wants to travel' (Appendix B, Q8) and '[her] main goal is that [she] can communicate fluently with the foreigners' (Appendix B, Q14). D admitted that after moving to Manchester, she is not afraid of making mistakes anymore and she is confident in her pronunciation (Appendix B, Q16). It can be inferred that travelling drives D to improve her speaking skills.

Secondly, instrumental motivation such as completing her course, further studies and future career might motivate D as she said in the interview that English is important in the business world where she is going to work (Appendix B, Q15). By contrast, integrative motivation, defined by Brown (1994) as a learner's desire to become a part of the target community, seems not to influence D in the learning process, as evidenced by the lowest score (3/6). This finding seems to fit Dörnyei's view that instrumental motivation might be more important than integrative motivation for foreign language learners because they might not have sufficient knowledge and experience to participate in the culture of the target language (Dörnyei, 1990). Moreover, intrinsic motivation might be in correlation with integrative orientation. D has also scored low in intrinsic factors (3.5/6) which seems to indicate that she does not show interest in the learning process for internal reasons such as a desire for personal development or enjoyment from the learning process. And if such interest is absent or low, she might not have a strong desire to integrate into the target community and appreciate it, as suggested by Noels et. al (2001) that the more learners enjoy the learning process for internal reasons, the more they appreciate the L2 community and want to integrate into it.

In addition, one of the most important factors, which is the ideal self is highly scored (4.5/6). This is not surprising as in the interview she shared that she desires to communicate fluently and grammatically correct in the target language (Appendix B, Q68). Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011) have postulated that the ideal self has been shown to be a strong indicator of motivated behavior. Consequently, it can be inferred that D is a motivated learner who sets long-term goals and invests much time to achieve them. D seems to put much effort into enhancing her English. She shared that she takes part in the Conversation club in the Language Center of her university and hangs out with her international friends on a daily basis in order to practice her speaking skills (Appendix B, Q29, Q30). She learns grammar by herself from books as well (Appendix B, Q67).

Furthermore, social recognition and fear of failure influence D's learning process as well (4.3 for the former and 4.2/6 for the latter). In Chinese culture, the concept of face is important like the idiom 'Men cannot live without a face, trees cannot live without bark'. Therefore, D is afraid of being failed as she does not want to lose her face which is important in Chinese culture. When asked for her reason for fear of failure, she replied that she will be embarrassed by her friends (Appendix B, Q73). It can be explained as the uneven distribution of power in Chinese society (Buttery & Leung, 1998) classifies people into different positions on a social hierarchy. Like other individuals, D has a desire to

possess a self-image and wants her self-image to be appreciated by other members of the community (Hwang et al, 2003). It seems that society's recognition also motivates her in learning English because if she is good at English she will be highly recognized by her community and many people will respect her. She is afraid of losing face as well (Appendix B, Q71).

In general, D is a highly motivated learner with main motivation is instrumental in which they support her future job and hobby. Her motivation has changed her attitude toward learning English since she moved to Manchester, from a person who dislikes English because of the exam orientation to a learner who is willing to practice speaking every single day without the fear of making mistakes.

4.2 Learning Styles

From the result of part 1 (Appendix C, page 37), the highest score belongs to visual means (29/69) in terms of physical senses. In the motivation questionnaire, she reveals that she relies more on her sense of sight such as maps, diagrams and charts which help her in understanding (Appendix D, Q54). She also reported in the interview that she learned new words by watching movies, and videos and she jotted down them in her notebook as well (Appendix B, Q60). Hence, D might be a visual-oriented learner. Besides, it is pointed out that D scored highly in kinesthetic means (23/59) so D sometimes benefits from doing projects, moving around or working with subjects as reported in the interview (Appendix B, Q48).

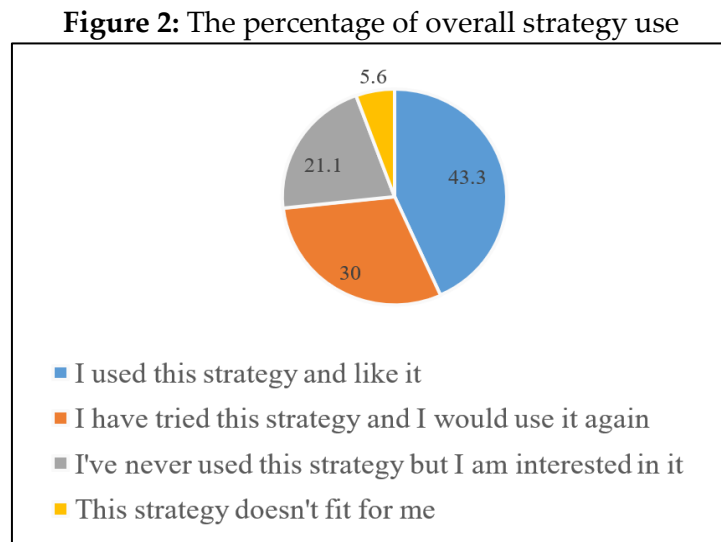
When it comes to dealing with multiple inputs, the result from the questionnaire shows that D seems to prefer dependent work to independent work (12 and 7, respectively). It is suggested that she tends to work in groups than individually. In addition, she revealed that she loves learning in pairs or in groups because they could motivate her. However, when she has an examination, she prefers doing revisions by herself (Appendix B, Q22).

In terms of taking information, there is a higher score in the global field (14/31) than the particular field (17/31) but the difference is small. It can be inferred that she may enjoy getting the gist more than the details. In the strategy questionnaire, D admitted that she did skimming to get the main idea first (Appendix D, 67). It is also supported by the interview which shows that D usually focuses on the main points when listening (Appendix B, Q56) and while reading, she pays attention to keywords instead of every single word (Appendix B, Q64). It also happens when handling language rules, she usually is more deductive than inductive (9 for deductive and 7 for inductive). D might go from general to specific and she has a tendency to start with rules rather than specific examples.

To summarize, D is a flexible learner who has a variety of learning styles in which she learns English in her own way.

4.3 Learning Strategies

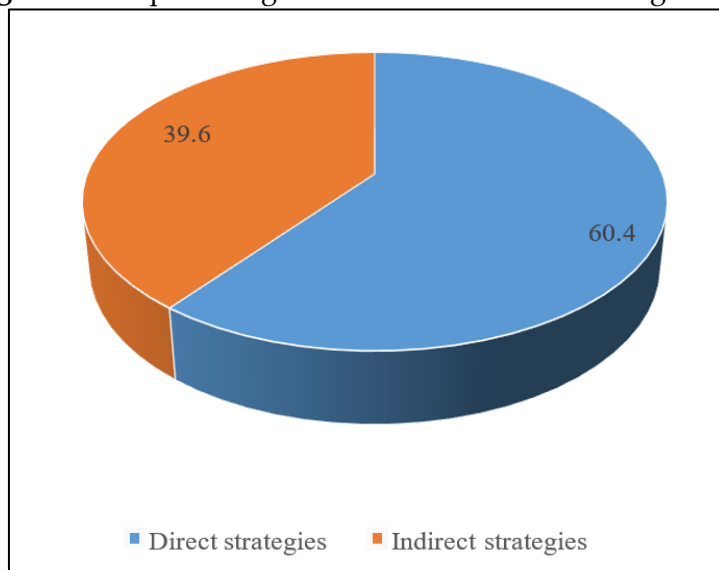
The interview, the motivation questionnaire and the Learning Styles questionnaire are also explored to support the analysis. The answers are calculated and analyzed qualitatively in a pie chart (Figure 2).



As can be seen from the chart, D employs more than 73% of the listed strategies. She used 43% of them and she likes them while she has tried nearly one-third of overall strategies and she would use them again. It suggests that D is a flexible learner as she lives in an English-speaking country. According to Oxford & Ehrman (1995), second language learners, who are learning a language in an environment where the language is everyday means of communication, normally utilize more learning strategies than other learners, who are learning in a country where language is not means of daily survival. Moreover, her gender might affect her as Gu (2002) has concluded that female learners often make better use of most of the learning strategies than males in general.

The questions in the questionnaire are categorized into six groups of different strategies introduced by Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) which include direct strategies (compensation, cognitive and memory strategies) and indirect strategies (affective, metacognitive and social strategies) (Figures 3 & 4).

Figure 3: The percentage of direct and indirect strategies used



It is obvious that D uses indirect strategies more frequently than direct strategies (60.4% for the former and 39.6% for the latter). For a detailed analysis of each specific strategy, the mean of each group is calculated as the bar chart below (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Bar chart demonstrating the mean of 6 groups of learning strategies used

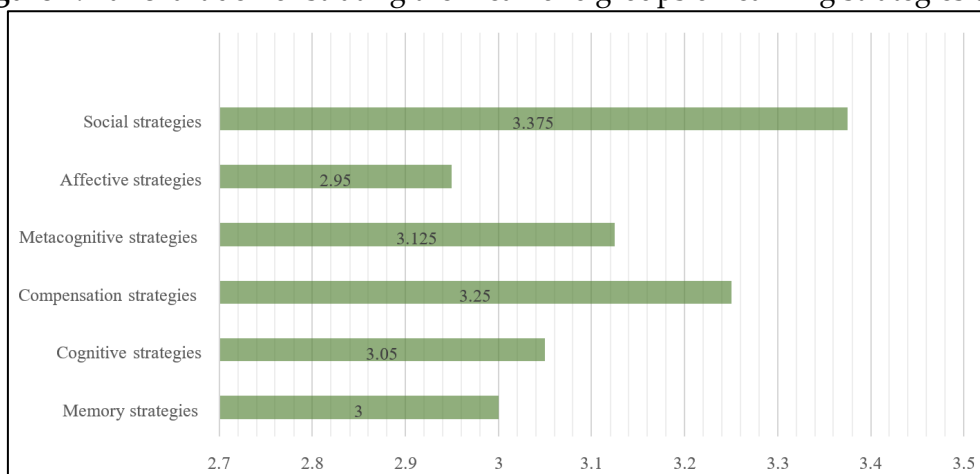


Table 1: Breakdown of Figure 4

The frequency	Score
I use this strategy and like it	4
I have tried this strategy and would use it again	3
I've never used this strategy but I am interested on it	2
This strategy doesn't fit for me	1

The result from Figure 4 indicates that D adapts social strategies most (3.375/4) which consists of asking questions for clarification; cooperating with proficient users or developing cultural understanding and becoming aware of others' thoughts (Oxford,

1990). It might be that D employs these indirect strategies because she wants to overcome her biggest problem which is grammar mistakes (Appendix B, Q66). She may be aware that practice makes perfect so she chooses social strategies as the primary strategies. D decided to attend the exchange course in the UK in order to have many opportunities to communicate in English and she usually practices speaking with her international friends (Appendix B, Q69). D also reports that she remembers things better when she interacts with others (Appendix C, part 1, Q11). It seems that those strategies are useful as after three months of living in Manchester, she is not afraid of making mistakes anymore and she is confident in her pronunciation which is challenging for Hong Kong people (Appendix B, Q66). It could be referred to that D is a good language learner as Fillmore (1983) and Rubin (1975) agreed that a strong desire to communicate in the target language is a characteristic of a good language learner.

Besides, metacognitive strategies, which are classified into three subsets including centring, planning and evaluating learning (Oxford, 1990), are recorded highly with 3.125/4. It can be inferred that D likes these strategies. The interview proposes that she often applies centring learning because she pays attention to keywords while listening or reading to get the gist (Appendix B, Q56, Q64). Moreover, she usually looks for practice opportunities, which is a metacognitive strategy in order to improve her speaking skills (Appendix E, Q48) and she mentioned in the interview that she joins the conversation club at the university as well as hangs out with her international friends (Appendix B, Q28).

Furthermore, D also applies frequently direct strategies which are compensation and cognitive and memory strategies (3.25, 3.05 and 3.01, respectively). When it comes to something she is not sure about, she has a tendency to guess based on body language and context in order to make up for her limited knowledge (Appendix E, Q24, Q26, Q72). D shared in the interview that if she does not know the meaning of the words, she tries to guess from the context (Appendix B, Q65). Many researchers have pointed out that guessing is one of the most useful strategies in language learning (Cameron, 2001; Thorbury, 2002) and “*good readers try to guess the meanings of words they do not know*” (Ellis & Sinclair, 1989: 89). D sometimes uses memory strategies including four sets which are grouping, imagery, rhyming, and structured reviewing (Oxford & Burry, 1995). It can be drawn from the strategy questionnaire that D likes sorting words into related groups (Appendix E, 33). Many researchers have stated that a learner’s style preference has a great impact on his or her strategy use (Carrell, 1988; Wen & Johnson, 1997; Oxford, 1989). For example, a visual-oriented learner like her has a tendency to use more listing and grouping strategies (Oxford, 2002) or learners who prefer visual style also practice listening to directions in various forms such as ‘drawing dictation’ (Oxford, 1990) which are shown in the interview (Appendix B, Q55).

To conclude, D employs a variety of strategies which may help her to improve her target language. She might be a good learner with shared features listed by Rubin (1975) which are willing to guess; desire to communicate; being uninhibited about mistakes, taking advantage of practice opportunities, and monitoring their own speech and others’.

6. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the findings of this case study suggest that D is a motivated learner with her primary needs are communication and academic purpose. D is demonstrated as a flexible learner as she has varied learning styles and applies different learning strategies which might help her when she shows some improvement in English after moving to Manchester.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix: Interview Transcription

Note: T: myself; D: learner

a. Background

1. **T:** Good morning. Can you introduce yourself?
 D: Good morning. I'm Daphne. I'm from Hong Kong and I'm currently in Manchester for foreign exchange. I'm 20 years old.

2. **T:** When did you start learning English?
 D: I start learning English when I was born, I can say. I don't mean I'm learning it regularly since I was born. It's just sometimes my mom speak to me in English and teach me alphabets. Ya something like this.

3. **T:** And when you grew up. Did you study English at school or by yourself?
 D: Yeah, I do study English at school. There's a compulsory subject that I need to study when I am in kindergarten, primary and secondary school.

4. **T:** Oh, I see. Do you mean that you started to learn English from kindergarten?
 D: Yes. It's a compulsory course.

5. **T:** How many hours did you have English class when you were at school?
 D: around six hours per week until I finish my high school.

6. **T:** Are you learning English now?
 D: Yes. I'm not learning it from a regular English class but. I am a uni student now. All my course is conducted in English so it's kind of learning that I'm still listening and speaking English in Manchester.

7. **T:** *Yeah.* You mean now you are learning English by yourself
 D: *Yes.* Now it is kind of self-learning because I don't join any formal English language class in Manchester.

b. Need

8. **T:** Okay. So now why do you learn English?
 D: I learn English because [...] I think it's important for communication. I want to travel. And it's important for me to finish my university academic and [...] English. Learning a new language is interesting thing to know more about other countries, cultures and to watch their films and to talk to them [Yup].

9. **T:** *Do you enjoy learning English?*
D: Yes, I do
10. **T:** So why? Why do you enjoy learning English?
D: I enjoy it because after I master, I know this thing and know this language I could [...] know more about the world not just about my mother language. Because English is an international language. Lots of things are in English so if I know this language, I can know more things.
11. **T:** OK so you mentioned learning new things. Yeah. Why do you enjoy them?
D: That's interesting. I'm curious as to anything. Yeah. I love to explore the worlds around me. I can open my mind and satisfied my curiousness
12. **T:** Yeah. So why did you decide to do that exchange course?
D: I decide that because it's so this treasure. All I can say my school really support us to explore around the world that we can choose anywhere we want to go for exchange and I choose an English-speaking country because I think if I live here I could speak more in English so I could improve it.
13. **T:** Yeah. So, you mean you did move here because you want to improve your English skills.
D: Yes.
14. **T:** So, is this important for you?
D: Yeah, it's important because English could help me travel and communicate with people not just in my country. I want to communicate fluently with people from different countries. It's an international language.
15. **T:** Yeah. How about your future career Is it important for your future job?
D: Also, it's very important for my future career. Because I'm probably probably working in the business world. So English is necessary.
16. **T:** Yeah. Okay. So, do you have any changes in attitudes of learning English when you move here?
D: Yeah, I do. I think I've changed too that I'm not that afraid of speaking now because it's my daily thing here. I must speak English to to live here. Yeah. So, I'm not that afraid of speaking now. I mean and I'm not that afraid of making mistakes while I'm speaking.
17. **T:** So, what do you dislike about English?
D: I think the grammar. It is confusing. It's not my mother language and Cantonese is my mother language. Every language has its own grammar. And because my

mother language's Cantonese I always get used to the Cantonese grammar only but not English. And so, it's quite confusing and I always forget the grammar rule in the English.

18. T: Which one is the most important skills for you?

D: The most important things is **the** speaking and writing. As long as you can present yourself to others and you can communicate with others. But writing is important too because it's important for my academic work. I need to hand in all my assignments, my homework in English.

c. Learning styles

19. T: *Ok. So* how do you learn English?

D: You mean now?

20. T: Yes.

D: It mostly comes from the classes in uni because all the classes are conducted in English. And because now I'm an exchange in Manchester. Most of my friends are from international and the UK locals here. So, I speak English to them [yeah...] to learn English.

21. T: Okay. So, do you like learning English in a classroom on your own?

D: I like both. Yeah. It really depends. If I need some oral practice, I need to learn it in class. But if I want some self-exercise time, I mean book work exercise. So, I need my own time. Yeah.

22. T: Would you like to study in a group or independently?

D: It depends. I love learning in pairs or in group because people around me could motivate me to learn. But sometimes I need silent place to learn independently. For doing revision. Yeah.

23. T: Do you have many British friends?

D: Yes. I've met some locals when I'm in my flat where I'm living.

24. T: How often do you communicate with them?

D: Every day when we met in a kitchen. Uh. Yeah, but not, we don't talk a lot. Just basic things.

25. T: How about Hong Kong friends?

D: *You* mean do I speak English with them?

26. T: *Yes*
D: No, we don't. We speak Cantonese [laugh]. Unless we are in English class. It is asked to do so. Otherwise, we won't speak English voluntarily.
27. T: How about friends from other countries? I mean international friends.
D: Yes, I've met some international friends here. For example, Indonesian Singaporean, Columbia and Vietnam [laugh]. I was speaking English with them to communicate. I see them every day because we live in the students' living.
28. T: How often do you speak with them?
D: I met them maybe everyday. Actually, when I arrived Manchester, I normally speak English everyday. Not just those internationals but in class I meet a lot of international students and English is our main communication. I also take part in **conversation club of language center**.
29. T: Do you like that club?
D: Yes, I do because I have **opportunity** to see new friends and talk to them.

d. Motivation

30. T: So, I want to ask you about using English. What is your main goal to study English?
D: My main goal my main goal is that I can communicate fluently with the foreigners and I can do my academic work. I mean in writing. Oh yeah, I mean the way in presenting my ideas in the writing.
31. T: Yeah. So how many assignments do you have to do in this term?
D: This term I've done around four to six including the group presentations.
32. T: Oh yeah. Quite a lot of things to do. So how many words do you have to write in each assignment?
D: If it's a business report. It's around two thousand five hundred to three thousand words. But if it's a group work it's normally a thousand words.
33. T: Do you find them difficult?
D: Yeah, I think it's quite difficult for me because it's not my mother language and the word count are a lot for me.
34. T: Yeah, I see.
D: I find a bit hard to meet the minimum amount of word.
35. T: OK. Do you like the culture I mean British culture?

- D:** Yeah, I like the British culture. I love its accents too.
36. **T:** *Is accent important for you?*
D: Yeah, I think it's important for me. [...] I love listening to British accent. I think. It's really happy to listen to those good accents.
37. **T:** *Is it difficult for you?*
D: Yes. Difficult because in Hong Kong we normally learn **American accent**. They don't really teach us an American accent but what we heard in Hong Kong normally in **American accent**.
38. **T:** *Did you find the accent in Manchester is difficult to understand?*
D: You mean their English accent?
39. **T:** *Yes*
D: I think they are difficult to understand because I'll see that difference in our accent. Manchester is a multicultural city so I will meet many people from different countries. like English from Singapore, English from Vietnam or **Philippines**. Yeah. And for me in Hong Kong I'll see the difference between their English and mine. Our accents are quite different so that it's difficult to understand sometimes.
40. **T:** *Do your parents encourage you to learn English?*
D: Yes, they do. My mom teaches me English when I was young. They also think English is important for my career and for my life.
41. **T:** *What language do you refer when you watch TV.*
D: Of course, Cantonese because it is my mother language so I can understand most of the TV program.
42. **T:** *Do you like English lessons?*
D: It depends. I can say when I was in primary and I was in kindergarten. I love it. But when I was in secondary, I don't like it at all because it was quite exam oriented. We learn English because of the public exam in our secondary stakes and it's very hard and we are doing papers every day in English so I think it's so hard.
43. **T:** *Why?*
D: Cause everything need to be very accurate especially for the grammar and for the readings. It's difficult.
44. **T:** *How did your teachers teach you English? I mean did they focus on speaking or grammar or both?*

- D: They teach grammar since we are primary. They emphasize on [...] the accuracy in grammar when you are doing your writing or answering any readings question or even in your speaking. Well they do also emphasize speaking because there is an oral exam for our public examination.
45. T: Okay. Did you have a good teacher when you were in high school.
D: Yeah, I think she's good.
46. T: So, did they motivate you in learning English?
D: Yeah, she did. Because in her class she doesn't only teach with books she teaches through English music songs and English movies.
47. T: OK. So, do you have any speaking activities in high school?
D: Yes, we have. I can say because we have **oral test** in our public examination. We have to do oral. So, my teacher plans to have oral presentation twice a week.
48. T: Do you like playing games in the class?
D: Yes, I love games because it more interesting to learn with games, especially ball games and musical chairs. I like moving around and work in the team. I like competition and I want to win.
49. T: Yes. Okay so how many countries have you traveled
D: quite a lot. Actually, I think it's more than 10.
50. T: So, what are they?
D: Recently I've been to a Norway Sweden Ireland and I'm now in the UK. Yeah and Barcelona which is in Spain. Yeah. And when I when I was young I've been to Malaysia Singapore Shanghai Korea Japan Thailand. T: Oh lots of places. Yeah.
51. T: Do people learn English in Hong Kong?
D: For my generation all people learn English because there's a compulsory subject. When we are in kindergarten primary and secondary and then uni.
52. T: Do your parents influence your learning English?
D: Ah my mom sometimes talking English with me but she doesn't influence me because she doesn't care my scores at school.
53. T: Are you afraid of making a mistake when you are speaking?
D: Yes, I will. I'm quite afraid of it. But I cannot be afraid of it if I really want to improve it. Especially when I come to Manchester. It is pointless to get afraid of it. I still need to speak to improve my speaking.

e. Strategies

54. T: OK. So how do you study listening?
D: Study listening. That's by. Yeah. Watching movie watching English TV series.
55. T: Yeah. So can you can you get me more detail when you watch these films or TV programs. What will you do to improve listening?
D: maybe for the first time I would [um] I would try to listen with English subtitles and hope to understand what does it mean. And after that I would cover it without subtitles and if I see something new, I would write it down. Then I would imitate the sentences many times. And for more exam-oriented listening I'm always taught that I need to write down I mean jot down the main points during my Yeah. So, I can understand.
56. T: What do you focus on while listening?
D: I usually focus on key words to understand main ideas.
57. T: Yeah. Okay. So how about writing. What do you do to improve your writing skills?
D: I'm trying to improve my grammar and my reading because I think this two affects my writing.
58. T: Do you practice writing?
D: Oh yeah. I try to write **postcard** in English now to improve my writing.
59. T: Okay. So, uh do you plan to further study in the UK?
D: No not yet. Cause I need to resume my study in my home country after this year of exchange.
60. T: So. How do you learn new words?
D: I learn new words by watching movies and watching YouTube's. [...] Normally through videos but I also learn new words through taking notes in lectures.
61. T: You mentioned taking note. So how do you work on it?
D: For example, in lectures when the lecturer [...] say and wrote on board I would like to jot it on my note. I could remember the words better I think if I write it down once. Yeah.
62. T: Okay so what do you do to memorize new new words?
D: I normally would write it down or spell it in mind and repeat it in mine. I mean repeat the pronunciation of it. To see it in my head.

63. T: How do you improve your vocabulary range?
D: I improved my vocabulary range by [...] reading **the** books sometimes because I think it is the most effective way to write down the new words in my own notebooks. sometimes I would learn it from watching videos too.
64. T: How do you read? I mean do you pay attention to every single word or just keywords?
D: Keywords mainly. Actually, that was affected by the learning in my secondary because it's exam oriented. So, if you want to do well in the exam it's time counts in **exam** so we could only focus on keywords in order to finish the exam on time. So, our teacher always taught us to focus on key words in the whole sentence.
65. T: What would you do if you don't know the meaning of some words while reading?
D: I will try to guess the meaning maybe from the words nearby. Then I will use the dictionary to check.
66. T: Yeah. Okay so what's your strength and weakness in English language?
D: I think my strength is my pronunciation in English cause I have opportunities to talk with native speakers. Although Hong Kong people learn English pronunciation in a serious way, it is difficult for us to pronounce some words. Maybe cause our mother tongue is very different from English. Yeah, but my weakness is my grammar. I want to write and speak fluently with grammatically correct.
67. T: Yeah, I see. So, do you do anything to improve your grammar?
D: Uh yeah, I do I try to watch more movie to see how the native English speakers speaks. So yeah, I love from them and I bought grammar book because I have to recall the grammar rules. Some of you need to learn it from basic really and need to work on exercises. That's why I think it's good to learn it through **exercise book**.
68. T: Yeah okay. So which area of English do you want to improve most when you move in Manchester?
D: Um I think it's a speaking part. Yeah, the fluency of speaking that I could be brave enough to speak with the native speaker here. They know what I'm saying.
69. T: How do you practice your speaking skills?
D: I'm practicing my speaking skills by exchanging. Yeah. That's why I choose to go to an exchange course now. So, I can talk with the locals and international friends and I would like to watch YouTube and films like Netflix to improve my speaking skills.

70. T: Yeah. OK so have you ever felt bored or tired of learning English?
D: Yeah, sometimes it's boring. Especially for the grammar things. Cause it's [um] it's some theoretical theory behind and the theory it's always boring.

f. After doing questionnaires

70. T: In your questionnaire, you say that English is important for you because you want to gain approval of the society and your peers?
D: Yes, [uhm]society is important to me because in my culture if I want many people respect me, I need to good at many things. Ig I am not good at English, I will lose my face. [ah] I'm scared of it.
71. T: Are you afraid of being failed?
D: Yes, I am.
72. T: Why are you afraid of failure?
D: Because if I fail, I will be embarrassed with my friends.

Le Thu Huong Phan
AN ANALYSIS OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION -
THE CASE STUDY OF A HONG KONG LEARNER OF ENGLISH

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