

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter consists of related literature that will be used to analyze the findings regarding the difficulties and factors faced during English learning

#### 2.1 English Learning

is a complex process involving various factors. One of the most influential theories in the field of linguistics is Chomsky's theory of Universal Grammar (UG). It is said that all humans are born with an innate capacity for language acquisition. This means that specific grammatical structures and rules are hardwired into our brains, allowing us to learn and understand language more easily. This theory has been supported by various studies, including brain imaging studies showing that language processing is associated with specific areas of the brain (Friederici, 2011).

While innate abilities play a crucial role in language acquisition, environmental factors are also important. Exposure to the language is essential for learning, and this can be achieved through various means. Immersion in an English-speaking environment, such as living in a country where English is the native language, is one of the most effective ways to learn the language (Genesee, 2003). In addition, attending language classes or using language learning apps and programs can also be effective ways to gain exposure to the language.

Authentic materials like books, movies, and songs can also help develop language skills. These materials can help learners to understand the context of the language and to develop their comprehension skills. Moreover, these materials are

usually engaging and entertaining, which makes learning the language more fun and motivating.

It is important to note that different people have different learning styles and preferences, and what works for one person may not work for another. Therefore, exploring various learning methods and finding the ones that work best for each learner is essential. By combining innate abilities and environmental factors, learners can effectively acquire the English language and develop their language skills.

## **2.2 English for Young Learners**

English learning is significant for young learners, as they have a greater capacity for language learning than adults (Pinker, 1994). This means that early exposure to English can have long-lasting benefits for children regarding academic achievement and future career opportunities. English has become the global language of communication, and proficiency in the language can open up many opportunities for young learners in their personal and professional lives.

To effectively teach English to young learners, it is important to use age-appropriate materials and teaching strategies. This includes incorporating games, songs, and interactive activities to engage and motivate young learners (Cameron, 2001). Young learners have shorter attention spans than adults, so engaging and fun activities must be used to keep them interested and motivated.

In particular, teachers should focus on developing all aspects of language learning, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing, to ensure that young learners develop a well-rounded set of language skills. Engaging in activities that

involve speaking and listening, such as role-playing and storytelling, can help young learners to develop their communication skills. Reading and writing activities, such as reading aloud and writing short paragraphs, can help young learners to develop their literacy skills. By focusing on all aspects of language learning, teachers can ensure that young learners develop strong language skills they can use throughout their lives.

Creating a positive and supportive learning environment for young learners is also essential. Teachers should praise and encourage their students and provide them with constructive feedback to help them improve their language skills. For example, teachers should be patient and understanding, as young learners may require more time and practice to develop their language skills fully.

Moreover, English learning is crucial for young learners, providing lifelong benefits. By using age-appropriate materials and teaching strategies, focusing on all aspects of language learning, and creating a positive and supportive learning environment, teachers can effectively teach English to young learners and help them develop strong language skills they can use throughout their lives.

### **2.3 Students' Difficulties**

Despite the importance of English learning, many students struggle to develop their language skills. According to Gilakjani (2017), pronunciation is one of the most common challenges. English has many sounds not present in other languages, and students may struggle to produce these sounds correctly. This can lead to difficulties in communication and comprehension and a lack of confidence in speaking English.

According to Biber and Conrad (2009), another common difficulty is grammar. English grammar can be complex and may differ significantly from the grammar of the student's native language. This can lead to confusion and errors in speaking and writing. Additionally, vocabulary can be challenging, as English has many words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students.

Furthermore, many students may struggle with language anxiety. This is a feeling of discomfort or nervousness when using a second language, which can negatively affect their performance and motivation to learn. Language anxiety can be caused by a fear of making mistakes, feeling self-conscious about pronunciation or grammar, or feeling pressure to perform well in a second language.

To address these difficulties, teachers can employ a variety of strategies. For example, providing ample opportunities for students to practice their pronunciation, such as through drills and repetition, can help them to develop accurate pronunciation. Furthermore, teachers can use visuals, such as pictures and videos, to help students understand grammar concepts and use them correctly.

Teachers can incorporate interactive activities to address vocabulary difficulties allowing students to practice using new words and phrases in context, such as role-playing and storytelling. Moreover, creating a supportive and positive learning environment can help to reduce language anxiety and encourage students to take risks in their language learning.

Students' difficulties in English can be addressed through various strategies focusing on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and language anxiety. By providing opportunities for practice, incorporating visuals and interactive activities, and creating a

supportive learning environment, teachers can help students overcome these difficulties and develop strong language skills in English.

### **2.3.1 Internal Factors that Influence Students' Difficulties**

Various internal factors can influence students' difficulties in learning English. One of the most significant factors is motivation. Motivation plays a vital role in language learning, as it affects learners' engagement, effort, and persistence in the learning process (Dörnyei, 2001). Students who lack motivation may struggle to invest the necessary time and effort to develop their language skills, leading to difficulties in speaking, writing, and understanding English.

Another internal factor is learning style. Students have different learning styles, and some may struggle to learn English using traditional classroom methods. For example, visual learners may benefit from using videos and pictures in language instruction, while kinaesthetic learners may benefit from hands-on activities and role-playing (Felder & Silverman, 1988). If teachers do not consider these individual learning styles, students may struggle to engage with the material and find language learning more challenging.

Moreover, students' prior knowledge and experiences can also affect their language learning. Students who have had exposure to English outside of the classroom, such as through media or travel, may have a more extensive vocabulary and greater confidence in using the language. On the other hand, students from backgrounds where English is not commonly spoken may have a more challenging time with pronunciation and grammar (Oxford & Crookall, 1989).

To address these internal factors, teachers can employ a variety of strategies. For example, incorporating student interests into lesson plans can help to increase motivation and engagement. Additionally, teaching methods catering to different learning styles can help accommodate individual differences and promote tremendous learning success. Finally, providing opportunities for students to use English outside of the classroom, such as through language exchange programs or community events, can help to broaden their experiences and increase their confidence in using the language. Moreover, various internal factors can influence students' difficulties in learning English. By understanding and addressing these factors, teachers can help promote tremendous success and engagement in language learning.

### **2.3.2 External Factors that Influence Students' Difficulties**

The external factors can contribute to students' difficulties in learning English. One of these is the teaching method used by instructors. A study by (Chang, 2011) found that some teaching methods, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, can lead to a lack of communicative competence among students. In contrast, methods focusing on communicative language teaching, such as task-based learning, are more effective in developing students' language skills.

Another external factor is the learning environment. Students who do not have access to sufficient resources, such as textbooks, audio-visual materials, and technology, may face more significant difficulties in learning English. Additionally, the classroom atmosphere and teacher-student relationships can significantly impact students' motivation and engagement in learning. According to a study by Dornyei and Csizer

(1998), a positive and supportive classroom environment can increase students' motivation and lead to tremendous success in language learning.

Social and cultural factors can also influence students' difficulties in learning English. For example, students from backgrounds where English is not commonly spoken may face more significant language acquisition challenges. Similarly, cultural differences in communication styles and social norms can effectively impact students' communication ability in English.

Moreover, instructors need to consider internal and external factors when addressing students' difficulties in learning English. By using effective teaching methods, providing a supportive learning environment, and acknowledging and addressing social and cultural differences, instructors can help students overcome these difficulties and succeed in their language-learning journey.

