

Impact of personal, psychological, and social factors on English language learning: A non-native student case study

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Abstract

Purpose: This case study aimed to explore the impact of personal, psychological, and social factors on a non-native English language student and to determine whether the students' errors in speaking and writing were developmental or transferred.

Methodology/approach: The case study was conducted on a single participant (an English language student) at Paktia University, Afghanistan. The data were collected using four different types of instruments. The data were analyzed considering the influence of personal, psychological, and social factors on the participants' language learning.

Results/Findings: The participant faced a great number of problems caused by personal, psychological, and social factors, including lack of social motivation, lack of social practice, economic limitations, and grammatical errors in productive skills usually transferred from the native language or caused by lack of practice. However, as an extraverted and motivated learner, he overcame most of the problems during learning. He improved his speaking skills and pronunciation through self-interactions and online communication.

Limitations: This was a single-participant case study; therefore, further studies are needed to generalize the findings to Afghan English language students.

Contribution: This study can help policymakers, curriculum designers, educational institution authorities, and English language educators to better identify the factors that affect English language learning.

Novelty: This is the only study conducted to examine the process of an individual's English language learning process in Afghanistan.

Keywords: *personal, psychological, social, factors, English language learning*

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1. Introduction

Learning a foreign language can be a challenging experience, especially for nonnative speakers. Language learning is influenced by a wide range of personal, psychological, and social factors (Ginting, 2021). According to previous research, personal, psychological, and social factors can affect an individual's language learning success.

Hanus (2016) examined the role of personal factors in English Language Learners (ELLs). This study highlighted the influence of parental motivation, expectations, and socioeconomic status on students' academic achievement. Positive parental beliefs and motivation directly affected students' motivation and achievement. Additionally, socio-economic status affected students' access to resources,

opportunities, and support for language learning. Understanding and addressing these personal factors are crucial for fostering successful language acquisition. In addition, Asif, Bashir, and Zafar (2018) explored the psychological factors affecting the use of English language in English-only classrooms. The study revealed that students' attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and emotions towards English language and culture significantly impacted their language usage. Psychological barriers, such as low self-confidence, self-efficacy, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes, hinder effective English communication. Thus, this study found that addressing these psychological factors is essential to create a supportive learning environment that promotes language proficiency and confidence. Furthermore, a study by Ginting (2021) found that social factors such as the learning environment and others influence students' engagement in learning English. He found that by recognizing the importance of social dynamics, educators can create a culturally inclusive environment that encourages English language use while respecting students' cultural identities and fostering a sense of belonging.

Therefore, we can say that research findings emphasize the importance of personal, psychological, and social factors in English language learning. Parental motivation, expectations, and socioeconomic status directly influence students' motivation and academic achievement (Hanus, 2016). Psychological factors including attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and emotions significantly impact language usage (Asif et al., 2018). Social factors, such as students' preference for native language use for identity and intimacy purposes, pose challenges to English language engagement. By addressing these factors, educators can create supportive environments that promote effective English-language acquisition. Research studies that explore the personal, psychological, and social factors affecting English language learning in Afghanistan are limited and cannot be generalized to provide a holistic view of the issue. Thus, the aim of this case study on non-native ELL is to explore the impact of personal, psychological, and social factors on a non-native ELL's learning process, and to determine whether the learner's errors in speaking and writing are developmental or transferred.

Research questions:

1. How do personal, psychological, and social factors affect EFL student learning?
2. Are the oral and written errors made by EFL students developmental or transferred?

2. Background of the Case

This paper studied the learning experience of English as a foreign language (EFL) students and other languages that he used at the time of the study in different aspects of his life. Mohammad was chosen as the pseudonym in this case. Mohammad was 23 years old and has graduated from the Department of English Language and Literature, Education Faculty, Paktia University. As a formal lecturer at Paktia University, Mohammad was also a student of a mine researcher for three years. During his education at the university, he worked with a car mechanic in the city, but later when he graduated, he started teaching English in a private English language center. He then founded his own English language center in Paktia province and hired other English language teachers to help him run classes. Mohammad himself was the manager of the center, and at the same time he also taught several classes of different English language proficiency levels.

Mohammad can speak the Dari, Pashto, English, and Hazaragi languages. Dari was his native language and he had learned it at home. Dari is the native language of the Tajiks in Afghanistan, which is the second largest tribe in the country. Pashto was his second language and he learned the Pashto language in social contexts outside his home. Pashto is predominantly spoken in Paktia province, so people who live in Pakistan can speak Pashto as well. Furthermore, in schools and other educational programs, Pashto is a medium of education; therefore, Mohammad learned academic Pashto at school. Furthermore, Mohammad learned English at educational centers. He studied English up to an advanced level before joining the English language and literature department. English was also taught in public schools from fourth to twelfth grade. Mohammad also spoke to Hazaragi. Hazaragi is a local language in Afghanistan, and Mohammad has learned Hazaragi through personal chatting with his Hazara friends using social media apps, such as WhatsApp, Telegram, and Facebook messenger.

As a student, I found that Mohammad was suitable for this case study. This was because he was a successful and motivated learner during his university studies. He regularly attended his classes,

participated in class work, and graduated with an A-grade transcript. Moreover, like the majority of other residents of Paktia province, he was working part-time with a mechanic to get something for living and then shifted his part-time job to teaching English.

3. Methodology

Mohammad was first contacted through social media. He was informed of the purpose of the study and that the data would be used for research purposes only. After he accepted it, a consent letter was sent to him in Dari, and he willingly signed the letter. Subsequently, Mohammad was asked to answer four different types of questionnaire. Two questionnaires (language learning styles and personality types) were adopted from the internet, and the third instrument was an eleven items semi-structure interview with follow-up questions to collect data on Mohammad's language learning history. Finally, the fourth instrument was for productive skills; participants were given multiple topics to talk about and write on. The data were then analyzed and interpreted in relation to each other.

The first instrument was an 11 items semi-structure interview on the participant's language learning history. The items asked about his background, family, history of native and other languages, challenges during learning English, and strengths and weaknesses in English. During the interviews, the researcher used follow-up questions when further elaboration was needed. The interview was recorded with the consent of the participant, so it could be transcribed and analyzed later. The interviews took almost 30 minutes.

After the interview, participants were asked to select one of the three topics given by the researcher. He had ten minutes to select and think about the topic, and then he was asked to talk as much as he could about the topic. All the topics were authentic based on the participant's daily life, so he spoke about the topic for approximately six minutes. One day later, Mohammad called for an appointment. At this meeting, he was given three topics in daily life. The participants were asked to choose one of the topics and write a composition about the topic. He had one hour for this task and then submitted his work.

The second instrument was a 24 items questionnaire for studying participant's language learning styles. The instrument was taken from the Internet and developed by the University of Texas (Center, 2006). The questionnaire included three categories. 8 items asked about auditory learning, 8 items asked about visual learning, and the remaining 8 items asked about tactile learning.

The final instrument was a 50 items questionnaire (Big Five Personality Questions) taken from the internet. The instrument was developed by Temple University (personality testing. info, 2018). The items had the following five categories: extraversion, agreeability, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness. Participants were asked to rate each item on a Likert scale of 1-5.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Language Learning History

Mohammad's native language was Dari, which is the second largest spoken language in Afghanistan. At the time of data collection, owned a private English-language center. He was the manager of the center, and despite teaching several different levels of English language classes every day. He was a Tajik and, with his family, lived in the center of Paktia province, which is the only residential area of Tajiks in Pakistan. His parents were both illiterate, but could speak Pashto. Mohammad's parents had learned Pashto in the community.

Despite their native language, Dari and Mohammad learned Pashto, Hazaragi, and English. Dari, as his native language, is spoken at home. However, because the majority of the population outside society are Pashto natives, Dari is also spoken in minority situations, especially when both sides of the interaction are Dari natives. Therefore, Mohammad's Dari was influenced by the Pashto accent, and many Pashto words can be found in his speech. Moreover, he did not use Dari in any educational setting because the usual language in educational settings is Pashto in Paktia. Therefore, Mohammad self-developed the writing and reading skills of Dari, and he was excellent in both the aforementioned skills.

Even though Dari is not used in public institutions in Pakistan, it is a dominant formal language in public administration because of its rich vocabulary and conciseness. Thus, Mohammad, like any other resident of the area, tried to gain proper proficiency in Dari. He said, “You know Dari is an important language in Afghanistan, as well as in Iran, Tajikistan, and other countries, so we should try to learn it.”

The second language that Mohammad used was Pashto. Pashto, as mentioned earlier, is spoken in 90% of Gardez’s daily situations. Therefore, Mohammad learned the Pashto language outside of the environment; he has been using that language since childhood. Mohammad used Dari inside home, but most of the time, he used Pashto outside, so he has developed a mix of both accents. While speaking Pashto, he understood that he was not a native, though he could fluently speak Pashto. In addition, Pashto is used as a medium in public schools, and Mohammad has also attended Pashto Medium School. Thus, Mohammad’s reading and writing skills in Pashto were at an advanced level, which was usually a challenge for ordinary people who learned Pashto only in social contexts. This is because Pashto has difficult rules for tenses, subject-verb agreement, masculine and feminine, and other forms. Even people who have spent tens of years in the Pashto-speaking environment make mistakes in these areas. However, students who have studied in schools in Pashto can better overcome these problems. Mohammad said that the most challenging problem in learning about Pashto was distinguishing between masculine and feminine genders. This is because Pashto has various rules in different contexts for masculine and feminine genders. Mohammad added that he overcame this problem over time by communicating more with the Pashto speakers. Consequently, the level of both formal and informal Pashto of Mohammad was advanced.

Hazaragi was the third language that Mohammad could use. Hazaragi is an informal language spoken by the Hazara ethnic group in central and northern provinces. Hazaragi is not spoken in Paktia, but Mohammad has learned this language through social networks. He said that he had many Hazara friends, and they usually communicated in the Hazaragi language; as a result, his understanding of the Hazaragi language was raised. He said that he could only communicate orally in Hazaragi but could not read and write in that language. He started studying the Hazaragi language during his studies at the university. Chatting on social media was the only learning practice. His level of oral communication was above the intermediate level; however, his reading and writing skills were still in the early stages.

In addition to Dari, Pashto, and Hazaragi, Mohammad learned English. English is the language studied by most students as a foreign language in their schools and universities. Mohammad started learning English at the age of 16. The patient started a private course. At first, he was hesitant and thought it would be very difficult, but later on, when he was motivated by the teacher and when he started using some simple words in English, he found English interesting and easy to learn. In addition to the private center, he studied English as a subject at school. He obtained a diploma from a private center. Subsequently, he chose the English language and literature faculty at the entrance examination (Konkor). Luckily, as he said, he succeeded to the faculty and started studying English language and literature department. From his age of 16 to the date of data collection, he has never experienced a small gap in learning English, which, as a lack of practice, might have affected his proficiency. As soon as he graduated from English language and literature, he started teaching English at a private center. After a year, he established his own center to teach English. He managed his center and hired other teachers. He was very happy with his career, looking for a permanent job in his field, and saw himself as an excellent English speaker (advanced level).

During his interview, Mohammad said that he faced different challenges in his studies on learning English. He said that, at first, he had problems with word choices due to a lack of vocabulary. It was difficult for him to learn new words. This was because of his intention to learn 20 to 30 words each day. However, based on the advice of his teacher, he later started learning five words a day. He was writing each word 20 to 30 times, so it helped him overcome the shortage of words in English. Suter (2004) stated that one of the effective ways to build vocabulary is to write words and keep word records for review and repetition. The second problem he faced was in writing skills. Mohammad said that the challenging part of English mastered the reading and writing skills. He said, “Even after my graduation,

I still deal with them, although I think I have excellent proficiency in both skills.” As mentioned earlier, he could learn words better by writing them several times, so it seems that despite the fact that he was a read-and-write learner, he had problems in reading and writing. Based on my own experience in English teaching settings in Afghanistan, reading and writing are poorly focused on private centers, and because of many teaching credits, teachers cannot provide feedback on students’ written work. In addition, students’ writing and reading skills were also invalidly assessed in multiple-choice, true/false, and matching questions. Therefore, learners like Mohammad often have trouble with reading and writing skills.

In addition to the above-mentioned problems, Mohammad has personal, psychological, and social problems. First, he experienced anxiety at the beginning of English learning. He thought that he could not learn English, which would be very difficult. When he started learning English, he said that his teacher had told him, ‘Your voice is very good and you have a good pronunciation of English. You can easily learn English,’ so the motivation changed his perspective: when he first started practicing some simple phrases with his classmates, he found English very interesting and easy and that he liked learning and using the English language. He said that while he was on his way to English classes, he often interpreted ordinary people’s interaction in the streets and practiced them with himself. According to Ihsan (2016), students who attempt to use English in daily situations or class work are more motivated than those who do not. Furthermore, due to the miserable social situation in the country, Mohammad faced economic problems during his studies. He said that during his studies at the university, he was forced to work with a mechanic, so he could pay fees for the private course and provide other expenses he needed to do to fulfil his bachelor’s degree. However, as soon as he graduated, he left the mechanic shop and started teaching English at a private center. Mohammad also suffered from a cultural perspective regarding learning English. He said that, at the very beginning stages of learning English, he was not welcomed by the community because learning English was considered immoral. However, he said that his family support, especially his mother’s persistence, helped him ignore that perspective and progress in learning English.

As mentioned before, Mohammad was a teacher at his own private English language center. He taught the American English File syllabus system in his course and also taught special speaking classes. Thus, he continued to explore and practice English. Furthermore, Mohammad said that writing and reading were difficult skills, so he still had that sense and, to further develop them, he often met his teachers to feedback on his writing, read other writers’ papers, and studied effective reading and writing strategies. In addition, he said that social networks were an effective tool that helped him improve his English skills during and after his studies. He added that he was still using social media apps to chat with others in English and to follow productive pages. In a study of Iranian EFL students, Namaziandost and Nasri (2019) concluded that teachers should not ignore the usefulness of social media in English language learning classes. They said that it provided proper opportunities and activities for learners to practice the target language. Hashemifardnia, Namaziandost, and Sepehri (2019) have also stated that integrating social media into the language learning environment can stimulate interest and help students willingly improve their communication skills.

To sum up, in a place like Afghanistan, the majority of students share Mohammad’s challenging experience while studying. Although Mohammad has faced many challenges such as economics, anxiety, a negative perspective toward learning English, and difficulties in writing and reading skills, he was able to overcome them based on his own efforts and the support of his family and teacher. His great tool to deal with problems was his motivation for learning English, and as a hard worker, he could utilize each possible opportunity, both in real life and online, to improve his English. Consequently, he was a successful English speaker and worked in his field to improve further and assumed responsibility as a caretaker for his family’s expenses.

4.2. Learning Style and Personality

A written questionnaire was used to determine Mohammad’s learning style. The questionnaire was adopted from the Internet and was developed by Texas University. The questionnaire contained 24 items. The items were divided into three categories; 8 items for auditory learning, 8 items for visual

learning, and the remaining 8 items for tactile learning style. Participants were asked to rank each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). He had 10 minutes to complete his answers. Subsequently, his responses for each category were summed, and the calculations showed that Mohammad was a more auditory learner. The second highest score was for vision, and the third and last scores for learning style were for tactile. Auditory learners need more for listening; in this way, they can easily obtain input. According to Kayalar and Kayalar (2017), auditory learners can easily learn through listening and verbal communication; their important learning components are tone, pitch, and loudness. On the basis of their research, they concluded that studying in groups and recording their discussions or other lectures helps students to learn well, and it also provides them with an opportunity to review whenever they want.

The second instrument was a 50 items questionnaire adopted from Temple University to test participant's personality type. The questionnaire included ten items for each of the five major personality traits: extroversion, agreeability, consciousness, neuroticism, and openness. The participants were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). He had 20 minutes to mark all the items. Subsequently, the responses were calculated based on the specific formula suggested by the questionnaire designer, and the results showed that Mohammad had an extraverted and open personality. This means that he is willing to utilize outside sources when he is in trouble and is interested in getting new things. He had a moderate level of consciousness and neuroticism. This means that he is good at following the rules and has a medium level of emotionality. However, Mohammad marked a low agreement. This means that he does things as they really are, and he does not arrange his speech or ideas to suit others or be polite. Salehi, Hedjazi, Hosseini, and Ebrahimi (2014) said that extraverts are more interested in being physically and verbally engaged in activities and students who have openness are more 'curious, imaginative, and broad minded.'

4.3. Oral Skills Assessment

The participant was given three topics and the fourth option to choose any other topic he wanted, and then he was asked to talk about the topic as much as he could. The researcher provided him with a good atmosphere and a sufficient preparation time. He chose (My favorite memory of life) and talked about the topic two minutes and 47 seconds. He had few pauses and his voice was clear and understandable. His voice was recorded, so it could be transcribed for error analysis. In the following paragraphs, participants' errors are analyzed based on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

Generally, Mohammad had good pronunciation, and he clearly pronounced words. However, some of these words were mispronounced. For example, 'waking' was pronounced /wi:kɪŋ/ instead of /weɪkɪŋ/. Furthermore, he has pronounced the word 'struggling' as /stregəɪŋ/ instead of /strʌɡlɪŋ/. Furthermore, Mohammad has added an extra schwa sound to the words 'had' and 'mind.' Those words were pronounced like /hədə/ and /maɪndə/. Errors in the pronunciation of 'waking' and 'struggling' were transferred because most of these vowel sounds were not included in the participant's native language (Dari); therefore, he substituted them for their closest sounds in English. Hambur (2018) conducted a study on Indonesian students and found that learners often substituted new sounds from the target language for sounds closest to their native language. The third error, in pronunciation of 'had' and 'mind' was an error that might be committed because of speaker's personal habit. This is not because of a lack of knowledge, nor is it the transference of his first language.

Mohammad's speech transcription was used to analyze grammatical errors. He used correct structures of tenses, but the context in which each of the specific tenses should have been used was sometimes not properly matched. The participant has used the past progressive tense to talk about regular or habitual past actions; however, it is better to use the simple past tense. For example, he said, 'I was struggling mi uh very hard. I was waking up very early...' In some other cases, he used a simple present instead of a simple past form to talk about past events. For example, pointing to his mother, he said 'she supports me, she motivates me very much.' Moreover, in some other cases, when the speaker's focus was on the completion of the action and the time was not intended, he used a simple past instead of the present perfect. For example, he said, Finally, I achieved my goal. It would have been better if he had said 'finally, I had achieved my goal. Moreover, a few other errors were also observed, including sentence

fragments such as ‘That was at first if I tell about this memory, ’ missing objects of transitive verbs such as you in the previous sentence, using a comparative degree of an adjective instead of simple one such as ‘That was a greater occasion and a great memory. ’’. In his speech, it was noticed that he had repeated ‘and’ more, almost in each three sentences, so most sentences were conjoined by ‘and’ instead of other conjunctions. Finally, tense errors were found to be developmental and correlated with lack of practice. This is because Mohammad could use the structures correctly, but had problems semantically using them in correct contexts; this means that it was because of his insufficient oral practice. Ibna Seraj, Habil, and Hasan (2021) conducted a study and stated, “Concerning learners' oral practice environment of learners, all respondents reported that as there was a lack of oral practical environment inside and outside the classroom, teachers could not steer the oral development of learners’ (p. 510).

Furthermore, Mohammad used upper-intermediate level vocabulary. Words can convey the intended meaning and are easily understandable. The most frequently used words in English were used, and there was no evidence of incorrect use of any word. However, synonyms or noun substitutions were not used for repeated words and keywords. For example, in the two minutes and 47 seconds recording, he has used ‘goal’ eleven times without any other substitution, and it was six times collocated with ‘achieve’. No other synonyms have been used instead of these words. Moreover, phrases were also composed of very common words instead of more appropriate ones. For example, he said ‘for my memory for my goal in my life’ instead of ‘as my life goal. These errors are also developmental. When he was facing a shortage of proper language items, he was using unexpected phrases so he could think of the intended ones. Based on a study, Mart (2020) has found that the integration of listening and speaking and providing students with meaningful listening tasks helps students improve their oral productions.

In conclusion, Mohammad’s overall oral skills were at an upper intermediate level. He clearly pronounced the words and conveyed the message smoothly. Vocabulary, pronunciation, and some of his grammatical errors were developmental and were caused by a lack of practice. Some tense errors were transferred from Dari. As a teacher in a private center, he could easily develop his oral skills in the future.

4.4. Written Skills Assessment

After completing the language learning history and personality types questionnaires, Mohammad was asked to write at least one page (400 words) about one of the given topics. Mohammad was given three specific topics (A good teacher, the importance of learning English language, and the importance of pleasure reading) to make sure that already memorized or readymade outlines of topics were avoided. Purposefully, the genre of the composition was not specified for him because Mohammad had already studied the important genres of compositions in English. Therefore, he was given the opportunity to choose an appropriate genre for the topic, and then develop the length of his composition accordingly. He was expected to write an essay, as he was instructed to write at least 400 words, but he wrote a 300-words paragraph. He submitted his first draft, which was analyzed for content, organization, grammar, and vocabulary errors.

Mohammad’s expository paragraph has several organizational and content errors. First, a topic sentence was preceded by a more general sentence that was not needed in a paragraph. General sentences or hooks are needed in essays but not in paragraphs. Second, there are many problems with the coherence of the paragraph. The major and minor supporting sentences have been mixed. For example, to support the topic sentence “It is so substantial to learn this language for many reasons,” his first supporting reason was job opportunities. However, in the subsequent four sentences, he introduced four new ideas and again mentioned employability in the fifth supporting sentence. Supporting sentences were not successively backed with minor supporting sentences or examples, and their order was completely illogical. Moreover, cohesive devices were used incorrectly, and in some cases they were substituted with improper phrases. For example, in order to introduce an additional point, he has used ‘all though’ and ‘in the other hand.’ Transitions such as therefore, thus, and others are substituted with ‘so in this case’ and ‘so the greatest’ and other self-made phrases. The above-mentioned errors were developmental; they were committed because of students’ lack of knowledge or practice. Liu and Wang (2011) have analyzed errors in Chinese EFL learners’ compositions and found that students made more

errors in coherence rather than unity. They further added that students could write good topic sentences, but they had problems developing details, examples, and ideas to support the topic sentence.

Moreover, Mohammad made fewer grammatical mistakes than the organization discussed earlier. He had used the tenses correctly; there were no mistakes in subject-verb agreement. However, he had problems with writing compounds and complex sentences. The junctions and commas between the two clauses were used incorrectly. For example, the first supporting sentence was an if-clause, so the second clause should have started after a comma, but Mohammad had missed the comma. Next, he has written, "All though, it is not only easy and you can find more job opportunities." In this sentence 'although' has been split into two words, and the second clause is also preceded by 'and' which should have been replaced with a comma. Moreover, multiple morphemes [s] was missing in several places. Finally, modal auxiliaries were incorrectly used semantically in a few cases. These errors were developmental and caused by a lack of practice in writing skills. AlTameemy and Daradkeh (2019) conducted a study on Saudi EFL learners and found that, because of the lack of opportunities to practice the target language, EFL learners forget most of the rules while writing compositions in the target language.

Finally, the participants used word substitution; however, some word choices were inappropriate. He used 'jobs opportunities' and 'employability' and 'world' and 'globe' as synonyms which is a plus point in his writing. However, some word choices were not properly used. For example, instead of soon, 'by soon' is written to modify a verb. Moreover, instead of resources and research, he used 'sources and searches. These errors are transferred errors because in Persian, an additional morpheme is needed when an adjective is used as an adverb; therefore, he has translated that morpheme with 'by.' Moreover, search and research and sources and resources are not distinguished in Persian and Pashto, so Mohammad did not have the proper words in English; he also did not distinguish them in English. Thus, we can conclude that these errors were developmental. According to Watcharapunyawong and Usaha (2013), EFL students' errors in word choices are due to the lack of their knowledge in the target language, so teachers should focus on more input for better results in students' compositions.

In conclusion, Mohammad's major problems were the organization and structure of the sentences. Although he provided proper topics and concluding sentences, the supporting sentences were illogically ordered. The content and ideas are relevant. Therefore, the overall level of writing proficiency was upper-intermediate. Most of his errors were developmental errors. Only a few of them, such as word for word translation of prepositions from the first language, were transferred errors.

4.5. Discussion and conclusion

Mohammad as any other learner had many challenges during learning English language. Some of the challenges were social and some were personal and psychological. Mohammad, however, was successful in finding solutions for most of his problems. Therefore, his story of learning English ended with being a good teacher of English himself. In the following paragraphs, the problems faced by Mohammad and the relevant solutions are discussed.

Based on Mohammad's story of learning English, psychological and social factors affected his learning. First, at the very beginning, he had a negative attitude toward learning English. He said that he thought that he could not learn English. However, a single sentence from his teacher's perspective changed his mindset. His teacher told him that his pronunciation was like an American and that he could easily learn English. This means that teachers' comments about students' performance at the very beginning really matter to students' attitudes toward learning and their self-confidence. The second problem he faced was lack of social practice. The only opportunity to practice English was for one class hour. The solution used for this problem was self-talk. He said that when he would have been on his way to class, he usually translated and uttered the people's interactions with himself. Consequently, the use of English outside class helped him maintain his motivation to learn English. According to Ihsan (2016), students who attempt to use English in daily situations or class work are more motivated than those who do not. Furthermore, Mohammad had economic problems; however, because he was very motivated to learn English, he worked part-time with a mechanic and supported his studies.

The analysis of the data collected by learning styles and personality type instruments showed that Mohammad was an auditory learner with an extraverted personality. Auditory learners learn better through their ears. Mohammad also complained about a lack of practical opportunities in English. This was because he was interested in listening to English. However, because he was extraverted, he started talking with himself rather than listening to audio records or authentic media channels. Mohammad has also said that he has learned Hazaragi through social media, so it is also because of his interest as an extraverted person in interacting with others. Salehi et al. (2014) said that extraverts are more interested to be physically and verbally engaged in activities and students who have openness are more 'curious, imaginative, and broad minded'. Thus, a proper solution for learners such as Mohammad is class discussions and the use of authentic audio recordings outside the class. Kayalar and Kayalar (2017) have said that auditory learners can easily learn through listening and verbal communication, and their important learning components are tone, pitch, and loudness. Based on their research, they concluded that studying in groups and recording their discussions or other lectures helps students learn well, and it also provides them with an opportunity to review whenever they want. Therefore, group work, pair work, and self-interaction are effective activities for extraverted learners, like Mohammad.

Furthermore, an analysis of Mohammad's oral skills showed that he had few errors in pronunciation. He changed /eɪ/ to /i:/ and /ʌ/ to /e/ and added an extra schwa sound to words ending with /d/. These errors have been transferred to the native language. Hambur (2018) conducted a study on Indonesian students and found that learners often substituted new sounds of the target language with the sounds closest to their native language. Second, in a few cases, he used synonyms and word substitutions. This was because he had not practiced oral skills sufficiently because he had already said that he had solved his vocabulary problems by repeatedly writing words in his notebook. According to Mart (2020), the integration of listening and speaking and the provision of meaningful listening tasks helps students improve their oral production. Finally, the major problem with his oral skills was tense. Mohammad used the structures of the tenses correctly, but pragmatically they were incorrect. Simple present was used instead of past, past was used instead of present perfect, and in some other cases, past continuous was used to talk about regular past actions. These are developmental errors; therefore, the best solution for them is to perform more oral practice. Ibna Seraj et al. (2021) have also found that lack of practice in oral skills, avoid development in oral performance. To overcome this problem, Mohammad had better practice mini point-of-view story activities. Mini-stories are designed from a special grammatical point of view, such as specific tenses. Thus, when doing this activity, Mohammad is supposed to listen to the mini story of several stories and then recall that in the same tense, so it will help Mohammad master each tense correctly.

5. Conclusion

The most problematic skill for Mohammad was be writing. An analysis of his composition showed that he had few problems with grammar and vocabulary. He had missed some punctuation rules, used few connectors improperly, had few word substitutions, and in a few cases wrongly used words. All these errors were developmental. However, he had more problems with the organization of the composition. His draft required coherence, and the supporting ideas were mixed. Writing is a common problematic skill for English language learners; Liu and Wang (2011) found the same problem based on research conducted on Chinese students. Moreover, as Mohammad is an auditory learner, he prefers oral skills to writing. In addition, there are few opportunities for writing to be practiced as a skill in Afghanistan's English departments. An auditory learner's solution to develop his writing skills is to listen to audio, take notes, and then try to develop a composition out of the outlined notes.

In conclusion, Mohammad has faced a great number of problems caused by social and institutional contexts, but as an extraverted and motivated learner, Mohammad has overcome most of them. Mohammad improved his speaking skills and pronunciation through self-interaction and online communication. However, until the end of the study, he still had some problems with writing skills and the usage of tenses. In order to overcome these problems, he is suggested to listen or read to topics, try to get outlined ideas, and then practice writing ideas in composition.

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Appendixes

1. Language Learning History Analysis Questionnaire

Please provide as much details as you can about the following questions. Be honest and speak real because this data is used for research purposes.

1. Give details about your native language, ethnicity, age, and family (parent's native language, their level of education, languages used inside your home and other related facts).
2. What is your current job?
3. How have you learned languages other than English language and your native one? Have you taken private courses?
4. At what age have you started learning English?
5. How long have you studied English language?
6. Tell me the story of your learning English from the very beginning up to now.
7. What challenges have your faced while learning English?
8. How do you overcome these challenges?
9. What is your level of proficiency in English now?
10. Which areas/skills of English have you still working to develop?
11. What social, psychological, or cultural factors have affected your English learning process?

2. Learning Styles Questionnaire

Check the box that best describes your reality.

| Item | Often | Sometimes | Seldom |
|---|-------|-----------|--------|
| 1. I can remember best by listening to a lecture that includes information, explanations and discussions. | | | |
| 2. I prefer to see information written on the board and supplemented by visual aids and assigned readings | | | |
| 3. I like to write things down or take notes for visual review. | | | |
| 4. I prefer to use posters, models, or actual practice and other activities in class. | | | |
| 5. I require explanations of diagrams, graphs, or visual directions | | | |
| 6. I enjoy working with my hands or making things. | | | |
| 7. I am skillful with and enjoy developing making graphs and charts | | | |
| 8. I can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds. | | | |
| 9. I can remember best by writing things down several times. | | | |
| 10. I can easily understand and follow directions on a map. | | | |
| 11. I do best in academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes. | | | |
| 12. I play with coins or keys in my pocket. | | | |
| 13. I learn to spell better by repeating words out loud than by writing the words on paper. | | | |
| 14. I can understand a news article better by reading about it in the newspaper or online rather than by listening to a report about it on the radio or internet. | | | |
| 15. I chew gum, smoke or snack while studying. | | | |
| 16. I think the best way to remember something is to picture it in my mind | | | |
| 17. I learn the spelling of words by "finger spelling" them. | | | |
| 18. I would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about the same material. | | | |
| 19. I am good at working and solving jigsaw puzzles and mazes. | | | |
| 20. I grip objects in my hands during learning periods. | | | |
| 21. I prefer listening to the news on the radio or online rather than reading about it in a newspaper or on the internet. | | | |
| 22. I prefer obtaining information about an interesting subject by reading about it. | | | |
| 23. I feel very comfortable touching others hugging, handshaking, etc. | | | |
| 24. I follow oral directions better than written ones | | | |

3. Personality Type

Introduction

This is a personality test, it will help you understand why you act the way that you do and how your personality is structured. Please follow the instructions below, scoring and results are on the next page.

Instructions

In the table below, for each statement 1-50 mark how much you agree with on the scale 1-5, where 1=disagree, 2=slightly disagree, 3=neutral, 4=slightly agree and 5=agree, in the box to the left of it.

| Rating | I.... | Rating | I.... |
|---|--|--------|-------|
| 1. Am the life of the party. | 26. Have little to say. | | |
| 2. Feel little concern for others. | 27. Have a soft heart. | | |
| 3. Am always prepared. | 28. Often forget to put things back in their proper place. | | |
| 4. Get stressed out easily. | 29. Get upset easily. | | |
| 5. Have a rich vocabulary. | 30. Do not have a good imagination. | | |
| 6. Don't talk a lot. | 31. Talk to a lot of different people at parties. | | |
| 7. Am interested in people. | 32. Am not really interested in others. | | |
| 8. Leave my belongings around. | 33. Like order. | | |
| 9. Am relaxed most of the time. | 34. Change my mood a lot. | | |
| 10. Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas. | 35. Am quick to understand things. | | |
| 11. Feel comfortable around people. | 36. Don't like to draw attention to myself. | | |
| 12. Insult people. | 37. Take time out for others. | | |
| 13. Pay attention to details. | 38. Shirk my duties. | | |
| 14. Worry about things. | 39. Have frequent mood swings. | | |
| 15. Have a vivid imagination. | 40. Use difficult words. | | |
| 16. Keep in the background. | 41. Don't mind being the center of attention. | | |
| 17. Sympathize with others' feelings. | 42. Feel others' emotions. | | |
| 18. Make a mess of things. | 43. Follow a schedule. | | |
| 19. Seldom feel blue. | 44. Get irritated easily. | | |
| 20. Am not interested in abstract ideas. | 45. Spend time reflecting on things. | | |
| 21. Start conversations. | 46. Am quiet around strangers. | | |
| 22. Am not interested in other people's problems. | 47. Make people feel at ease. | | |
| 23. Get chores done right away. | 48. Am exacting in my work. | | |
| 24. Am easily disturbed. | 49. Often feel blue. | | |
| 25. Have excellent ideas. | 50. Am full of ideas. | | |

4. Productive Skills Questionnaire

4.1. Oral Skills:

Choose one of the following topics and then talk about the topic as much as you can.

1. your favorite memory of life
2. your favorite place for living
3. your favorite topic in your profession
4. or any other topic you prefer

4.2. Written Skills

Choose one of the following titles and then write at least one page (400 words) about the topic.

1. A good teacher
2. The importance of learning English language
3. The importance of pleasure reading

5. *Written Skills Assessment (Raw Data)*

The Importance of Learning English Language

English language is the most commonly used language in the world in any parts of the life. It is so substantial to learn this Language for many reasons. First, if you learn English language you will discover that it is an easy language for learning. All though, it is not only easy and you can find more job opportunities to learn English language. In the other hand, when you learn English language, you will become a better educated in your life and you can easily travel to any country you would love. So in this case, I can say that English is the language of the globe. English is a language by which we can we will learn the culture of the other countries in the world. In other case, if you would like to become a doctor or maybe a scientists, you can improve your science career by soon by English. So, the greatest if you learn English, it makes you bilingual and more employable in any counties in the world. The other parts that I would like to share is, that English can deepen your connection with other culture too. Those who know English, they can go to the sources and search anything that they need in a very easy style. Moreover, once you learnt English language then you can start giving English lessons, which would increase your income and make you a valuable person in the society. Communication of English language helps us to have more opportunities in our life especially in our career which we like. Most people in the world boost their confidence by English language when they speak. Finally, I would say that English is the language by which you can boost all your life skills and career.

6. Oral Skills Assessment (Raw Data)

6.1. Audio Transcription

Question: Talk about your favorite memory as much as you can.

Response:

My favorite memory of my life is when I achieved my goal. When I was a school student, I had a big goal in my mind that I have to be an English literature student and I was trying too much for that goal. And I started many courses and I was struggling mi uh very hard. I was waking up very early morning studying for that goal for my dream to become true. Finally, when I took Kankoor examination at the first chance fortunately, I can say that I achieved my goal that I had in my mind. And I become an English literature student. On that time I was very happy and I had really greater time on that time when I just called to my family members specially to my mother she told me that congratulations my dear son, and she supports me she motivates me very much and she said that you have to continue your favorite faculty. And that was a greater occasion and a great memory of life that I have in.. life and still now I am working for this to become an English a best English instructor in my life. I am struggling very hard for my memory for my goal in my life. That was at first if I tell about this memory that was not easy. I struggled too much at early morning I was waking up and I was going to the courses and I was studying different subjects to achieve my goal that was not easy, that much easy that I tell. And you know I face with many challenges in my life during this achieving this goal . uh uh first early morning waking up early morning it is very difficult and going to a course at such early morning thar that was another challenge and the challenges that I have had in my life that was ..You the challenges of economical problem and it was a really difficult, but finally, when I achieved my goal and when I became a student of English literature on that time my goal my dream become true and that was a great occasion of my life. Finally I achieved my goal and now I also have a goal in this part that in the future I must be a greater English lecturer and I am struggling very much and I try to be a master in English language and INSHALLAH I will achieve my goal and that was a great memory of life.