

The Roles of Social Environment in Adult Women's English Learning: A Phenomenological Study of Kampung Inggris, Pare, East Jawa, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The English language, which is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, is very influential in expanding global opportunities and socio-economic status. Yet despite this critical skill, societal and cultural factors often impede adult women from learning it. Breast cancer, for example, is a breast disease that presents in different ways; it is also a disease that can carry cultural limitations, reduce future resources, and create anxiety. All of which stand in the way of women being able to pursue learning language successfully. This study investigates the English learning experiences of adult women in Kampung Inggris, Pare, East Java, Indonesia (established English language immersion centre point in Indonesia), revealing the way the social environment influences them.

Using a phenomenological lens, the research investigates learners' experiences and perceptions, the qualitative data are analyzed using Atlas.ti. Thematic analysis of in-depth interview data shows important facilitators and barriers at community, cultural beliefs, peer interactions, and institutional levels (to provide supportive learning environments). The results show the complexity of how these social components can both net two learning results in some circumstances. This calls for the presence of united, inclusive, and empowering social contexts that focus on gender differences and the demand for social attributes for the gains of successful language learning.

Through these findings, this research enhances the understanding of how avenues of social immersion may serve as mechanisms for linguistic acquisition while simultaneously catering to the nuanced needs of female language learners, therefore providing educators, policymakers, and community leaders with insights that empower the facilitation of equitable educational access.

Keywords: Kampung Inggris, phenomenological study, English as a foreign language (EFL), social environment, adult learners, women learners, foreign language

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalised world, English continues to be a vital skill for socio-economic mobility, academic advancement and cross-cultural communication. Although English is categorized as a foreign language, its use has gradually been growing in education, tourism and professional life enabling the country to connect to global networks (Alrajafi, 2021). This is a clear indication of the elevated status of the English language in Indonesia, as evidenced by the increasing number of language institutions such as Kampung Inggris in Pare, East Java (Mappiasse & Sihes, 2014).

Established in the 1970s, Kampung Inggris has become a hub for intensive English language learning. But unlike a conventional school system, Kampung Inggris has an immersive, community method, focusing on communication and interaction, combining formal classroom learning with casual conversation with peers (Pratiwi, 2020). Such a unique method promotes both fluency and confidence, raising motivation and making it particularly appealing to a wider audience, especially adult women, who tend to come up against different barriers when learning a language (Mappiasse & Sihes, 2014).

In Indonesian society, gender norms often dictate that women must fulfill their duties to their families and that access to resources be heavily restricted for women, which hinders their ability to learn English well (Rahayu, 2020). Kampung Inggris offers solutions to these problems with customized programs incorporating flexible hours, experiential learning, and supportive environments. It has been added on this method the audio-lingual, role-playing, and integrated media innovative techniques that can increase the interest of learners into the next level (Mahruf & Sari, 2022).

While such programs offer promising alternatives to traditional instruction, they remain underexplored in the context of adult female learners. In many parts of Indonesia, sociocultural expectations often restrict women's participation in continuous education, particularly when balancing domestic responsibilities and limited mobility (Rahayu, 2020). Although existing studies have acknowledged the challenges of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) acquisition in Indonesia, few have examined how women navigate immersive language learning within their specific social and cultural constraints. This constitutes a clear need in understanding the intersection of gender, adult education, and immersive language learning environments.

This study aimed to investigate how the social environment aspects that the adult women experiences in learning English as foreign language (EFL) at Kampung Inggris, with particular attention to their social environment that influences their English language learning. The study utilizes a phenomenological framework to reach the essence of the lived experiences of adult learners in the two settings, contributing to the understanding of the extent that social contexts shape L2 learning. The present study aims to explore how adult women experience English learning in this part of the world from the viewpoint of its social environment, focusing on the unique nature of the interplay of community, practice and institutional context.

Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research objectives:

1. To examine the effects of social interaction on adult women's English language learning experiences.
2. To explore the social-environmental barriers and enablers present in Kampung Inggris that impact the learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociocultural Environment and Language Acquisition

Second language acquisition (SLA) is strongly influenced by social interaction, community participation, and meaningful communication. In such environments fostering language-rich, immersive settings, people can become better communicators while creating less psychological blockers like anxiety (Krashen, 1982). According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, knowledge is co-constructed through social activity; learning comes through interactions with that knowledge. So, it gives us an insight of the importance of social participation and collaboration within a community (Vygotsky, 1978).

Social contexts - An essential for SLA according to recent research. According to research, learning environments that foster opportunities for peer collaboration and equitable teacher-student relationships are positively associated with improvements in the students' academic performance (Li & Li, 2022). In recent decades, the area of EFL has been highly influenced by socio-cultural studies and research, such as the fact that stronger students' cultural and communal compatibility could result in higher motivation and lower language barriers (Amiri & El Karfa, 2021). The positive results of the meta-analysis support the crucial aspects of stimulating and facilitating environments on EFL learning outcomes.

Gender and Language Acquisition

Adult women learners often face layered challenges in language acquisition, particularly in contexts where traditional gender norms influence access to education. Accepting that you are not perfect, nor do you have to be, is a tricky business when you are an adult woman going against the grain from cultural expectations while also raising children. Studies underscore that environments that are positive and inclusive, and that boost participants' self-esteem and mission can help reduce these challenges (Norton, 2013; Pavlenko, 2008). While

in EFL contexts, the effectiveness of gender sensitive learning environments in improving women's achievement is also significantly confirmed by literature. Flexible learning schedules, childcare availability, peer networks are essential to allow women to actively participate. Programmes which combine academic study with practical experience have also managed to transcend generation barriers (Sari & Rozimela, 2021).

Kampung Inggris as A Learning Ecosystem

Kampung Inggris is recognised as a small revolution in EFL education as it conveys intensive exposure to English language via programs and community-based services. There is a better combination of formal education and informal peer interactions, thus providing an environment that leads a learner into a context of fluency and confidence (Pratiwi, 2020).

This immersive context aligns with Krashen's reach where he placed comprehensible input or meaningful input essential to facilitate the process of second language acquisition (SLA) (Krashen, 1982). Debate, storytelling and cultural exchange, such activities include real-life language use and less anxiety and fluency in language (Swain, 1985; Sari & Rozimela, 2021). Task-scaffolding strategies that take a simple to complex approach also do a great job at maximizing learner capacity.

Self-Driven and Flexible:

This understanding goes in accordance with encouragement and flexibility needed for productive language learning. In this regard, the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) emphasizes that intrinsic motivation is one of the critical factors increasing maintenance and reducing the risk of engaging in language learning tropes. Environments such as Kampung Inggris, on the other hand, tend to foster just such a motivation as they offer learners opportunities to put their skills into practice in familiar and authentic contexts. Also, enrichment through such programs which can nurture goal setting and flexibility, such as online EFL learning platforms is effective in helping students achieve autonomy and resilience with such conditions like COVID-19 pandemic (Han et al., 2020).

Teaching English as A Foreign Language: Anxiety and Confidence

High anxiety describes the feeling of being overwhelmed with anxiety can inhibit learning, but some anxiety can assist people learn, so long as that too includes a small quantity of organization or sense of time within the learning for it to be productive. The EFL learners are usually under the influence of this combination, which will in turn affect confidence and performance. If the anxiety is excessive, the student may withdraw and experience cognitive overload, but moderate anxiety can enhance motivation and attention (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

In EFL environments, a way to pass through anxiety is gradually introducing learners to determinants of anxiety, while positive reinforcement is another successful strategy in this regard (Amiri & El Karfa, 2021). Kampung Inggris implements these methods, as peer interactions under supportive circumstances take place in structured activities that help boost confidence gradually (Sari & Rozimela, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The phenomenological aspect is based on the phenomenology of lived experience propounded by John N. Findlay (1970) to unlock the properties of phenomena. Husserl's phenomenology seeks to account for subjective experience by suspending or "bracketing" existing ideas about how subjects perceive and create meaning out of their reality (Yusuf, 2024). Thus, a phenomenological perspective has a broad applicability for understanding the nuanced social and cultural contexts that influence adult women's English acquisition at Kampung Inggris.

In order to do so, and to be able to use Husserl's approach in a more pragmatic way, the study relies on a modification of the Van Kaam method for phenomenological analysis, developed by Amedeo Giorgi that breaks the process of data analysis into systematic steps. This practice ensures that participants' stories are critically analyzed, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of their lived experience (Yusuf, Yunus and Embi 2018).

Data collection consisted of in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants to understand their personal stories and experiences of language learning; observations of participants in classrooms, group activities, and social engagements; and analysis of participant journal reflections on daily learning and emotions documented in writing.

Participants

The location of this research study was in Kampung Inggris in Pare, East Java, an area known for its immersion-based community of English learners. Do you work predominantly in lab or field settings, or in a hybrid environment?

Table 1: Women Participants

Participants	Age Range	Program Type	Background
P1	25-30	Beginner	Homemaker
P2	31-35	Intermediate	Teacher
P3	36-40	Advanced	Entrepreneur
P4	41-45	Speaking Focus	Student
P5	25-30	Grammar Focus	Freelancer
P6	25-30	Beginner	Homemaker
P7	31-35	Intermediate	Teacher
P8	36-40	Advanced	Entrepreneur
P9	41-45	Speaking Focus	Student
P10	25-30	Grammar Focus	Freelancer
P11	25-30	Beginner	Homemaker
P12	31-35	Intermediate	Teacher
P13	36-40	Advanced	Entrepreneur
P14	41-45	Speaking Focus	Student
P15	25-30	Grammar Focus	Freelancer

The study focused on 15 adult women 25–45 years old who were enrolled in several different English language programs at Kampung Inggris. Participants were purposely selected to include a diversity of backgrounds and experiences, allowing them to provide a rich exploration of the social factors influencing their learning journey.

Data Analysis

The latest version of Atlas.ti was utilized for the efficient management and analysis of qualitative data. It facilitated the coding of interviews and journals to extract patterns, illustrated thematic relations to conceptualize how participant learning experience was shaped by elements such as peer support and cultural expectations, and incorporated data from various data sources (interviews, journals, and field notes) for a

holistic understanding. Data analysis is undertaken using the Van Kaam method (as described by Moustakas, 1994) and utilizing Atlas. ti for improved structure and visualisation. It consists of the following major steps:

- Horizontalization: The data were reviewed to find significant statements that reflect [the participants'] experiences. Each statement was not given any level of bias.
- Exclusion and Removal: Statements irrelevant to the research aims, or lack key descriptive meaning, were removed. The other statements were grouped into themes.
- Theme Clusters: By considering similarities across emergent themes, theme clusters were created to represent the essence of participants' lived experience. Atlas.ti CODE/CONTENT CODING AND THEMATIC NETWORK VISUALIZATION was utilised to visually map the interrelationships between dimensions such as community support, anxiety and motivation.
- Textural Description: This produced a narrative description of what participants experienced with the everyday, including word for word quotes from participants to represent lived experience.
- Structural Description: Discussed the contextual and environmental influences on participants' experiences, like the environment offered by the immersive culture of Kampung Inggris.
- Composite Description: The amalgam of the textural and structural descriptions or a representation of the shared experiences of the participants, it was used to form the essence, or what the phenomenon of interest was like at its most basic level.

The empirical phenomenology in this study used a method based on Husserlian phenomenology and systematic analysis by Van Kaam to describe the meaning and essence of the lived experience of adult women in Kampung Inggris. The study centers on an immersive language learning context, capturing the very WHOs of the participants' journeys through the fusion of philosophically rigorous questions and cutting-edge analytic tools.

FINDINGS

Results highlight that involvement within social structures as an aspect of multiple opportunities can create supports that promote second language acquisition. Kampung Inggris demonstrates how strong, supportive, immersive environments can help adult women break through socioeconomic and cultural boundaries to become language fully competent.



Figure 1 Cloud of Main Themes in EFL Learning Lived Experiences

The word cloud above illustrates the prominence and frequency of key themes that were identified through the Atlas.ti analysis. With grand terms like "Community Support" and "Immersion," learners are certainly staying in their realm. And so next, they made a network diagram: a visual representation of how the themes all connect.

Network Diagram: Themes and Sub-Themes in EFL Learning

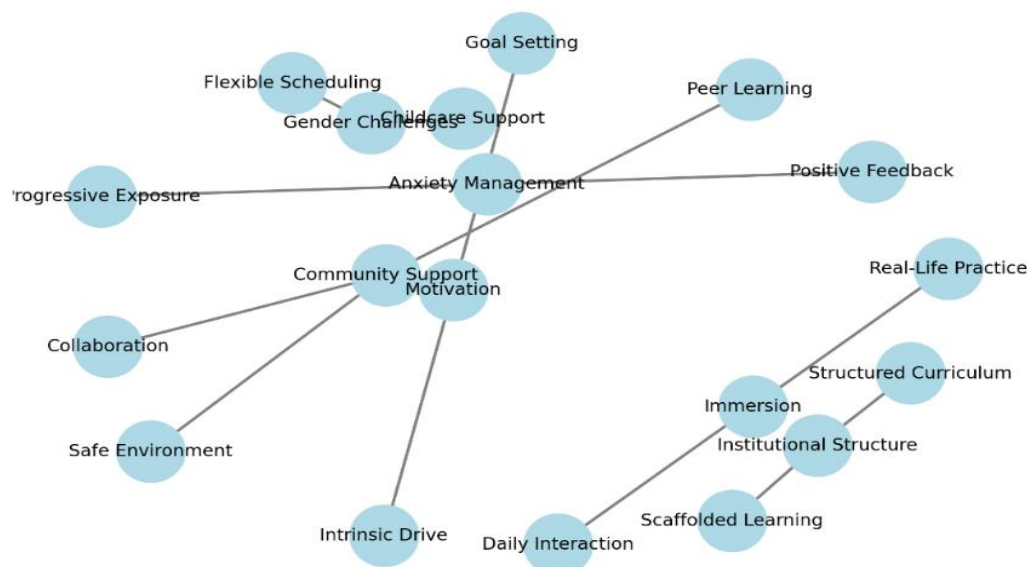


Figure 2 Network of Main Themes and Sub-Themes

Above network diagram shows the maximum themes and subthemes extracted from the data. It demonstrates that key elements like Community Support are associated with sub-themes: for example, it displays how ideas like Peer Learning and Collaboration all lead back up to Community Support, creating a clear map of how these different concepts are connected.

Theme 1: Community as Mechanism

The supportive environment of the Kampung Inggris community was consistently cited by participants as a major motivator. They credited peer support, shared learning goals and openness about progress with helping them.

Theme 2: Gendered Opportunities and Obstacles

Initial challenges included navigating social norms such as balancing domestic roles and study, but the formalized nature of programs and social networks among peers provided tailored support. Many other women, for instance, mentioned morning classes, or making childcare arrangements as enablers.

Theme 3: Engagement and Socialization

Daily interactions with peers and instructors, almost entirely in English, engendered a naturalistic-learning environment. Most participants, whom we spoke to said that, through participation in communal activities such as group discussions, debates and social events, they had developed fluency, confidence and familiarity with English.

Analyses Results: The Role of Institutional Frameworks

Then, language institutes in Kampung Inggris present a scaffolding learning experience where curriculum design depends on collaboration and real-world practice. This more formal support aligned with the social learning happening within informal, communal environments.

DISCUSSION

This study gives valuable insights into social interaction, challenges and enablers in adult women's English learning in Kampung Inggris. These insights also help us understand how language learning outcomes are shaped by social environments.

Social Interaction as a Strategy in Adult Women's Learning of English

Social engagement became an important element in participant language learning experiences. A strong peer support element and collaborative opportunities was key in providing a safe and motivating learning environment. Participants also reported gaining more confidence and fluency through group conversations, role-play, and informal conversations in an immersive environment. This is consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which describes language learning as occurring through social interaction and collaborative engagement (Vygotsky, 1978).

Thematic analysis, for example, highlighted those participants on occasions benefitted from daily interactions reflecting real-life environments, like discussions or group presentations. These activities not only helped to enhance language skills but also helped to eliminate psychological barriers, such as fear of making mistakes, reinforcing Krashen's input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982) about the role of comprehensible input and active engagement.

Social Environment Challenges and Enablers of Kampung Inggris

Participants spoke to both barriers and facilitators within the social learning environment. The challenges usually stemmed from the effects of domestic responsibilities that led to the struggle between language and family, especially for housewives. Cultural expectations and gender roles often constrained the time and energy that participants were able to devote to their studies. Such barriers have been reported in other contexts in which the provision of English as a foreign language (EFL) exists (Norton, 2013; Pavlenko, 2008) and women are subjected to societal limitations that prevent their access to education.

All these challenges were met with ample enablers that Kampung Inggris provided. The facilitators included flexible scheduling and gender sensitive program structures (e.g., morning classes and childcare support). Sometimes with the help of their peers and in a non-judgmental atmosphere, participants found their way through initial anxiety, and this increased motivation, assisting both studies that highlighted the importance of the presence of the supportive environment to get rid of the language anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Amiri & El Karfa, 2021).

The Wider Connection Between Social Contexts and Language Learning Outcomes

Kampung Inggris is an immersive and interactive social set up that is socially and culturally inclusive, improving linguistic competence and aptitude. Another aspect that this program builds are the informal interaction between international and American students and structured classroom learning, which encourages students to use the language in contextually appropriate manner. Group-administered tasks like storytelling and collaborative projects reflect the communicative nature of real life and promote pragmatic fluency (Swain, 1985).

In addition, the thematic networks developed with Atlas. ti shows us how immediate factors, such as peer relationships, macro-level influences, such as a culture fit, and meso-level factors, such as institutional support, interact to promote or inhibit language outcomes. These results are consistent with studies that show positive classroom atmosphere, along with innovative instruction and equity in teacher-student relationships, greatly enhance academic achievement and boost EFL learners' confidence (Li & Li, 2022; Pratiwi, 2023). Participating in the group discussions helped them identify that peer-based support created better motivation in motivating them to improve their English skills. Moreover, they had been provided with a support system, having similar learning objectives that enhanced their motivation toward English learning. With open communication, they were able to explore different learning styles of English learning

The participants also emphasized that it was their individual motivation that made a transformative difference in acclimatizing to the immersive ecosystem. Goal setting and autonomy-focused programs were particularly effective ways to encourage sustained engagement, in-line with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). From this experience, EFL programs need to be designed with a bigger scope to benefit both social and individual aspects of language learning.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the centrality of social interaction, supportive structures, and an immersive environment in the English learning experiences of adult women. Although barriers such as cultural barriers and family responsibilities still exist, enabling factors such as peer networks and flexible programming successfully minimize these barriers. Programs such as Kampung Inggris serve as vital contributors to linguistic advancement while cultivating an atmosphere of communal learning, sensitivity to cultural nuances, and motivation that enables learners to thrive in broader social, educational, and economic contexts.

Language programs take advantage of incorporating activities to build community. That makes it easier for them to attend, including tailored support, like flexible hours and childcare. Creating SLA spaces of this kind in rural and urban settings in schools would be a major step at policy-level. Kampung Inggris social environment plays a multi role in the process of English learning of adult women. It has shown the potential of socially integrated SLA approaches to effect positive change by fostering a sense of belonging, addressing gender-dominated issues and learning needs and finding opportunities for embodied interaction. Future studies need to address this model's scalability in other cultural settings and its long-term effects on learners' socio-economic mobility.

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