English as a Foreign Language Teachers' Perceptions of their Unique language acquisition device Construction in Second Language Acquisition

Process: (Grounded Theory)

Milad Omidi[1], Hamid Reza Khalaji[2,*,] keyvan Mahmoudi[2]

[1] Ph.D candidate in TEFL, Department of English Language, Malayer Branch, Islamic Azad university, Malayer, Iran.

[2] Assistant Professor in TEFL, Department of English Language, Malayer Branch, Islamic Azad university, Malayer, Iran.

- Corresponding Author E-mail: h. Khalaji1399@gmail.comz

Abstract:

In this study, the perceptions of selected experienced English teachers about the construction of their unique language acquisition device (LAD) in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) process is investigated. The grounded theory and constructive design were employed and open, axial, and selective coding after semi-structured interviews ranging from 30 to 90 was used. The teachers' perceptions showed seven categories related to the construction of their unique LAD, namely, (a) unique environment; (b) Psychological problems; (c) genetic factors; and (d) cyberspace. Perceptions showed that the following mentioned factors have been affected uniquely by those mentioned categories separately and uniquely. Factors such as motivation, interest, self-confidence, self-esteem, attitude, viewpoint, opinion, intentions, learning styles and strategies, exposure to the TL, rate of acquisition, acquisition progress, IQ and intelligence, social interaction, mental status, memory capacity, concentration, learning potential, metaphorical thinking, and ideology so that they would be equipped with the unique language acquisition device (ULAD) in SLA.

Key words: Unique language acquisition device; Second Language Acquisition; Grounded theory; Individual differences.

1. Introduction

There have been many efforts about different aspects of Individual Differences (IDs) and the way they relate to the study of SLA. The overviews conducted by Gregersen and Macintyre (2014), or Williams, Mercer, and Ryan (2015) are among the obvious example of those efforts. Other studies, (such as Dörnyei & Kubanyiova,2014; Oxford, 2011), highly likely to apply unique ID factors to their implications for language pedagogy. Besides, among all those factors influencing IDs, Biedroń and Pawlak (2016) scrutinized the role of intelligence, foreign language (FL) aptitude, working memory (WM) and personality. As mentioned in Biedroń et al. (2016), these factors root in classical cognitive psychology that view these cognitive IDs as hidden features, affected by genetic and environmental influences, with the former having been more completely investigated and firmly confirmed (Jensen, 1997; Plomin, 1997; Plomin & Deary, 2015). Research into these crucial factors in the study of SLA has a long tradition (see Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Ellis, 2008; Pawlak, 2012).

In contrast to Behaviorists such as Skinner, emphasizing on the importance of imitation and repetition in children learning, or nativists like Noam Chomsky, believing in innate capacities, Piaget (1957) asserted this is the result of interaction between individuals and the environment leading to cognitive development and higher levels of children knowledge is constructed by both innate capacities and environmental information. Opposite to Chomsky's innate LAD, he asserted mental structures change constantly while children interact with their environment and intellectual development happened as a consequence of qualitative changes. "Social Constructivists argue that the same biological or environmental factors have different effects on different individuals" (Kappur, 2018, P. 7069). However, the unique influences of these environmental interactions and intellectual developments on learners' LAD in SLA have never been investigated before.

The outlook of constructivism seems ideal to educators since it takes the role of the individual, the significance of meaning- making, and the active role of the learner into consideration (Gail Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). They recognize that students are not blank slates that need to be filled with knowledge. Instead, according to them, learners bring with them a repertoire of prior experiences, knowledge, and beliefs which they use while constructing new perceptions. Vygotsky (1980) stressed the role of the social environment in human cognitive development. Like Piaget, he considered children as active organizers of their

own knowledge and believes that the child has a ZPD. Similarly, Kappur (2018) asserts that children learn a lot while just watching their parents, or participating in adult activities from an early age. Vygotsky believes teachers should provide the necessary scaffolding to help learners develop their ability to think on their own, which is fit for their ZPD.

Despite the broad scope of this literature, little effort aims to explore the most important categories with their properties affecting the participants' LAD uniquely and equipping them with the ULAD and consequently the unique ZPD in SLA. Moreover, the researchers aim at

investigating those aspects of SLA that are influenced uniquely by each property. To that aim the central research question of the present study is " Is there any factor forming the LAD of twelve L2 instructors at three foreign language institutions in Tehran uniquely; if yes what are they?" The emerged sub research question of the study is: "How do those factors affect the LAD uniquely and equip each participant with the ULAD in SLA?" This research study needed to be conducted because the previous studies failed to investigate the influences of learners' unique LAD in SLA.

Method

Since the purpose of this study was to explore the uniqueness of the LAD among learners, a grounded theory methodology was chosen. The grounded theory in the present study reflects the uniqueness of the LAD among L2 teachers who had experience acquiring an L2 effectively and have been experienced L2 instructors for many years. In this study, after the pilot study, in order to benefit from a homogenous sampling, L2 instructors were chosen as the target population. In convenience sampling, the researchers chose the participants from three language institutions in Tehran that the researcher had teaching experience. Moreover, the characteristics of participants are listed in table 1. During the interviewing, as a research tool, the setting should be quiet, with less background noise to have a clear recording data. Hence, the interview sessions were conducted in the available private classrooms.

Table 1. The participants' Demographics

Name	Academic Background	Mother Tongue	Knowledge of Other Languages	Instructor of	Years of Experience	Other Degrees
T1	Ma in TEFL	Turkish	Persian English	English	8	IELTS 7
T2	BA degree in Spanish Literature	Persian	Spanish English	English Spanish	5	TTC IELTS 7
T3	BA degree in English Literature	Persian	English	English	4	TTC
T4	MA degree in German translation	Persian	English German	German	10	International B2 in German
T5	BA degree in TEFL Ma in MBA	Persian	English French	English	10	IELTS 7
T6	B.Sc in computer science	Persian	English French	English	3	IELTS 7.5 TTC
T7	B.Sc in materials engineering	Persian	English Japanese	English	2	TOEFL ibt 100 TTC
T8	Ma in TEFL	Turkish	Persian English	English	10	
T9	BA degree in Italian literature	Persian	English Italian	English	4	IELTS 6.5 TTC
T10	Ma in French literature	Persian	English French	French	5	
T11	Ma in IT	Persian	English	English	12	IELTS 8 TTC
T12	PhD Candidate in TEFL	Persian	English German	English	12	

The Research Instrument

The research instrument used in the study was open-ended questions of the semi-structured interview, which allow the researcher to not strictly follow a formalized list of questions. The questions were based on the issue related to different environmental and genetic factors influencing L2 acquisition of the learners. Initially, the questions were adapted and modified from the literature reviews of constructivism, individual differences, intelligence, Foreign language aptitude, working memory, and personality. The main idea of creating these interview questions was to seek more information and explanation from the respondents on the influences of their unique environment (6 main questions), their unique features and characteristics (6 main questions), their genetic factors (1 main question), and other influential factors (1 main

question) on their L2 acquisition process. The researcher then gave the interview questions together with the cover letter explaining the significance of the study and feedback form to the panel experts to review the content of the instrument. The interview questions were arranged based on the panel experts' comments and suggestions. Moreover, the researcher debriefed with different faculty member, especially those who were professional in conducting qualitative researches to arrange the interview questions. At this point in the process, any unclear questions were rephrased by the interviewer in order to give a clear understanding of the interviewees and at the same time elicit more information regarding this study. At this point, the unclear

questions were rephrased by the interviewer to give a clear understanding of the interviewees and at the same time elicit more information regarding this study. One close-ended question along with 14 main open-ended questions was designed to elicit information from participants.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researchers used open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). They analyzed each transcript in phrases, sentences or groups of sentences to reveal single ideas through open coding. Then, as Strauss and Corbin suggested, they gave a code to each unit to display that idea or concept. The open coding determined 1724 items being combined during axial coding into 102 abstract concepts. In selective coding, the concepts were finally arranged into one central category, "what the research is all about" (p. 146), in this study, Unique Language Acquisition Device (ULAD) along with seven categories: (a) unique environment; (b) entertainment; (c) genetic factors; (d) cyberspace; (e) psychological problems; (f) individual uniqueness; (h) Unique Socio-emotional factors. The researchers identified properties for each category.

Unique Environment

Unique environment played the most important role on shaping the ULAD among the participants. The essential unique environment that fostered the ULAD among the participants are immediate family, extended family, workplace, and educational context. Among the properties of this concept, immediate family and the L2 educational context played the most important role on shaping a unique capacity in SLA among learners. Learners' parents and siblings played one of the most influential roles in their motivation and self-confidence while acquiring an L2. As one of the participants said, " My brother is seven years older than me and he is exactly my mentor. I even followed him in choosing my university field of study. (onsite interview, participant 1)" Familial values and family encouragement could influence children's attitude, view, interest and motivation in learning and study. As Shima quoted that, "financial issue is not as important as scientific progress for my family. (onsite interview, participant 3)"

She said that " if I tell my father that I am a hairstylist and I earn fifty million in a month, he wouldn't be as glad as when I tell him my article is accepted in a famous journal." Family literacy and immediate family's opinion and views, especially parents, toward the SLA, its culture, its people, etc., could play an important role in the learners' opinion, view, motivation, and the process of SLA uniquely. With regard to this, one participants quoted, "My parents are into studying. My mother reads novels a lot, but my father reads a lot in his major. I saw books in their hands from childhood and I think it was effective in my interest in studying. (onsite interview, participant 9)"

The second language educational contexts and materials plays another important role in SLA. Class environment and classmate rivalry affect SLA. Instructors also played an important role in SLA. A positive feedback from an instructor can have an important impact on learners' motivation, interest, self-confidence, acquisition process and also their academic life. As one participant quoted, "I heard a sentence from one of my German instructors that I still think that this sentence got me to pursue my education up to the MA level in the field of German literature and studies. (onsite interview, participant 3)" Educational books and materials also affects the interest, motivation, and acquisition progress in SLA.

Workplace is another factor that directly effects the quality and progress in SLA. There are two kinds of working conditions. One is directly related to second language, such as those who are supervisors or L2 teachers. And the other is not directly related to the second language.

With regard to the workplace, one participant quoted,

> The view of those who worked in the company and the respect that I received from them. It was twice the ordinary workers whose work was not related to English. When I saw that I knew a second language that the other didn't know that, I thought that this was really good and tried my best to make this gap more and increase my proficiency level. It really affected my motivation to improve my English. (onsite interview, participant 3)

In the above extract, we can find how workplace and its unique environment may influence learners' motivation to improve their L2. Sometimes, learners' extrinsic motivation influences the participant's intrinsic motivation to acquire the L2 better. The interaction between the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation help them acquire the L2 better.

Extended family was another factor, having a unique influence on SLA. In this regard, one participant talked about the impact of his uncle who had been a pilot and had an English language diploma.

The above quotes from this participant revealed how a member of an extended family may influence learners' intrinsic motivation, interest, and attitudes uniquely to acquire an L2.

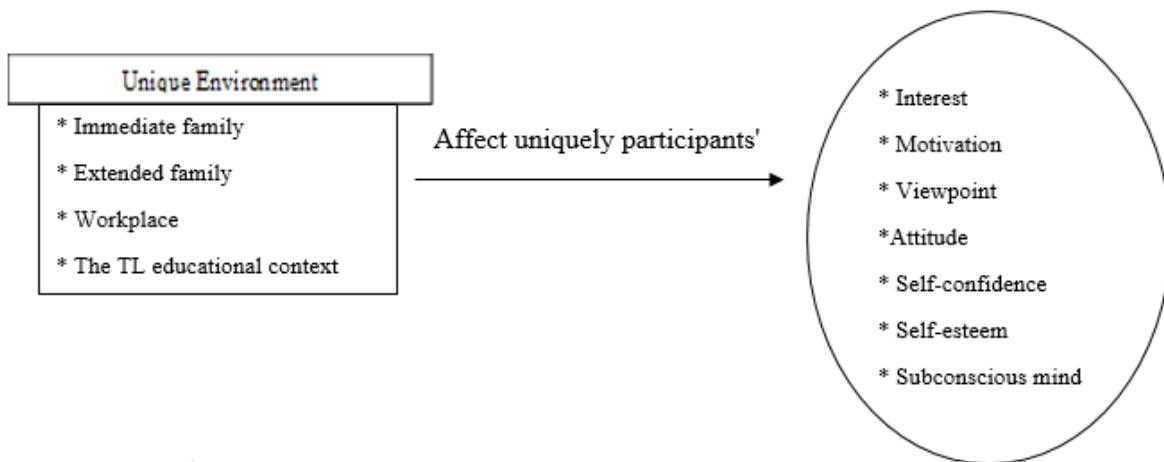Figure 1 illustrates how this category with its subcategory affected participants' LAD uniquely.

Figure 1. Unique effects of the participants' Unique Environment on SLA

Psychological Problems

Psychological problems played the next important role on shaping the ULAD that caused many problems during L2 acquisition. The properties in this category are OCD, lack of concentration, stress, and other unique psychological problems.

OCD was the most influential property that directly and indirectly affects SLA among learners. Sometimes learners have some unique OCD in their life that somehow stretches to SLA. It also may have genetic roots. The researchers also found how this problem may have root in the ordinary life of the participants and somehow affected SLA. As one participant told "When I want to learn something new, I have an OCD. I spend too much time on an issue while studying, but I found that I would learn it more easily if I read the rest of the lesson. (onsite interview, participant 7)" Meanwhile, the researcher asked "how about the issues you understand? Do you read them again?" she replied, "Yes, yes. For example, I read and understand the previous page, but suddenly I come back to the previous page unconsciously and read it again." At this time, the interviewer asked whether she has such a problem in her real life? She answered, "Yes, yes, for example, during the night, I check the alarm clock almost every 10 minutes to see whether I tune it correctly or not. I have these challenges many nights. It also influences SLA process." Lack of concentration was another property influencing learners' SLA as one participant quoted, " I have generally problem with concentration. It is not just related to studying. I have problems with concentration generally. Everything making my mind busy out of the time of

studying would make my mind busy while studying. (onsite interview, participant 7)". Quotes from the participants showed that even those who have problems with concentration could concentrate well on the subject for 20 minutes. Stress is another property affecting SLA negatively, especially when it could not be controlled at a normal level. As one participant quoted "Sometimes I experience stress which couldn't be maintained at the normal level. So it had a really bad effect on my learning. (onsite interview, participant 8)" There are also other unique psychological to each person affecting SLA, such as depression, mood levels, etc. which should be taken into consideration more rigorously by scholars in SLA. Figure 2 shows how this category and its subcategory affected participants' LAD uniquely.
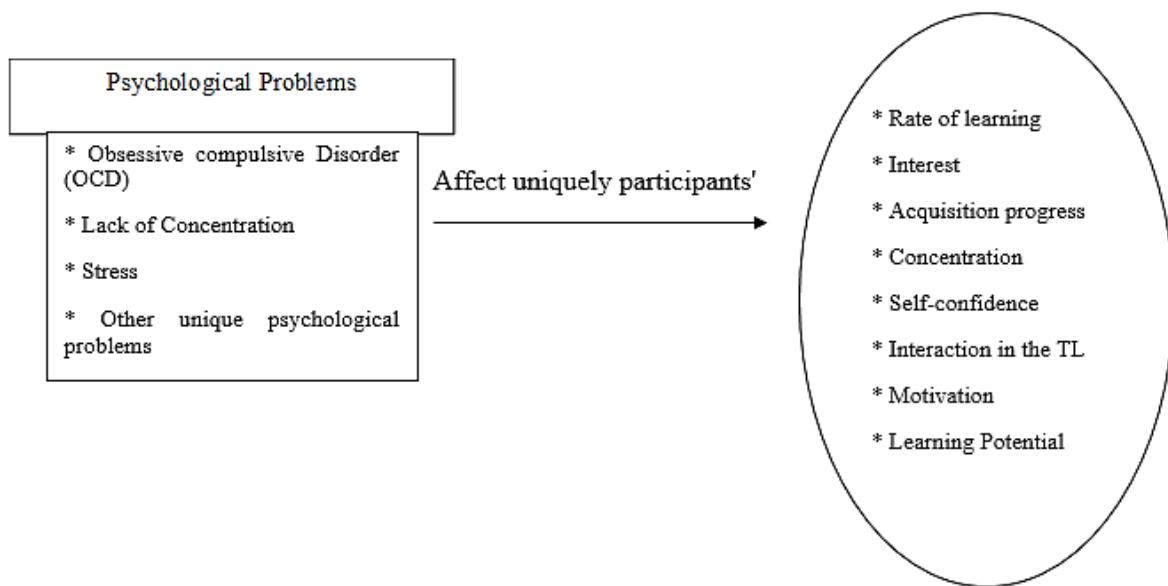

Figure 2: Unique effects of the participants' psychological problems on SLA

Genetic Factors

Another factor playing a role in shaping learners' ULAD is genetic factors. Through the interviews, we found that both immediate family and extended family played a genetic role on SLA. In this regard, one participant mentioned,

> my paternal relatives really like talking, using the words, and playing with the words. I also have a cousin who had good progress in language acquisition. He loved language learning and had a good capability in using that language, I also have such characteristics. I see such characteristics in my father too. I think that my father's job is related to the use of language. It means that my father has the art of using the language to change the people's sensations. I feel that it is a genetic and familial relation which is extremely transmitted from my paternal relatives.

He continued and mentioned about the genetic role of his mother and maternal relatives. "My mother and maternal relatives, on the other hand, love thinking and analyzing the issues in their mind. I think that I also have the same characteristics. With this language, I started thinking." Another participant, who was a trilingual of Persian, English, and French, quoted that "my maternal grandfather also knew Latin, English, and Turkish. I generally have a genetic background, (whats app interview, participant 10). Extracts and quotes from the participants revealed that learners' LAD is affected uniquely by the genetic factors. The following extract from another participant, who was an English teacher and studied Italian at university, showed some interesting points with regard to the genetic factors in SLA,

"My father loved English. My mother loved Turkish and learnt it. I also learnt Turkish. I could talk Turkish and understand Turkish but I couldn't write it at all." She pursued,

> Learning Turkish was really interesting for me. It was also really strange. Many people don't believe in me when I tell them about Turkish acquisition. Turkish naturally come to my mind while speaking it. It may be because I was influenced by lots of exposure while my mom was learning or by the Turkish songs.

They spoke Persian at home because her father was Persian. Through her interview, she told that " my mother was originally Turkish. She was originally a Turkish person from Iran who learned Istanbul Turkish. So it may be a genetic factor." This could be a genetic factor transmitted from her mother and maternal ancestors to her. Figure 3, illustrates how this category with its subcategory affected participants' LAD uniquely.
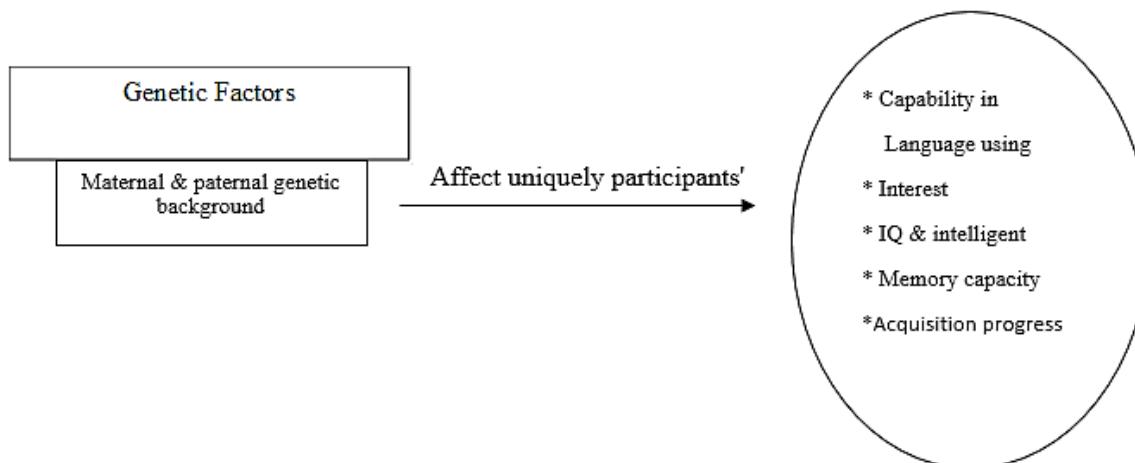

Figure 3: Unique effects of the participants' Genetic Factors on SLA

Cyberspace

Cyberspace was the other concept playing the least role among other concepts on shaping the ULAD. The category of cyberspace contains properties with dimensions of cyberspace that somehow affects learners' LAD uniquely. The main property in this category is social media. Reading posts, leaving posts, communicating in the target language, watching YouTube videos, face book, yahoo messenger and different chatrooms, etc. directly and indirectly have an influence on shaping the ULAD among learners. As one participant quoted that " Sending emails, reading weblogs, and writing posts in Instagram really helped me learn how to use the language better. (onsite interview, participant 7)" With regard to this theme, another participant added,

> I used you tube a lot to watch some videos related to human mind, especially those of Jordan Peterson because I really like learning more about human's psychology. It also helped me improve my mental status. These videos were in English and got me to improve both my English language and my mental status. Improving my mental status also helped me acquire L2 better. These videos made me know myself better, and English language was a required tool to understand these videos.

This extract showed how a social media, such as YouTube, can influence learners' LAD uniquely in SLA. Learners could learn many words and structures in cyberspace. Moreover, they could improve their mental status and also cope with different psychological problems and consequently influence their LAD and ZPD uniquely. Sometimes cyberspace may trigger learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation uniquely in SLA.

The above-mentioned extract showed how a social media, such as facebook, can trigger learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation uniquely in SLA. Figure 4 illustrates the way this category with its subcategory affected participants' LAD uniquely.
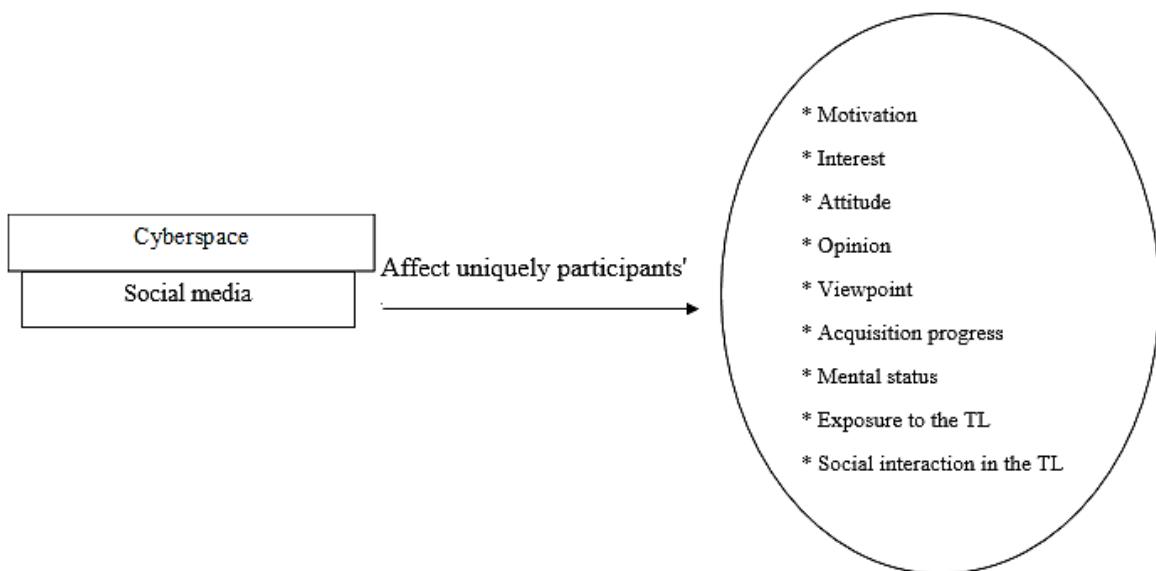

Figure 4: Unique effects of the participants' Genetic Factors on SLA

A Conceptual Model of the Integration of Categories

The conceptual model in Figure 2 illustrates a cycle of how learners engaged in the categories that in turn influenced their LAD, as a result, how they are equipped with the ULAD in SLA. Unique immediate environment is one important category influencing the ULAD among L2 learners. While growing in *their unique immediate family, learners' interest, viewpoint, motivation, opinion, self-confidence, attitude, intentions, self-esteem, and exposure to the TL* would be affected uniquely. Parents and siblings' interest in SLA, study, opinion, attitude, advice, literacy level, and their belief in the learner's abilities have a unique influence on these factors. *Extended family's* interaction with the TL and its community and also their memories influence learners' *motivation, interest, subconscious mind, interest, and their exposure to the*

TL uniquely. *The workplace* and its unique environment is another property of this category, affecting learners' *motivation, interest, opinion, viewpoint, self-confidence, intention,* and *attitude. The TL educational context* is another important property, influencing learners' *motivation, interest, styles and strategies, self-confidence, attitude, opinion,* and *viewpoint* uniquely in SLA.

Individual uniqueness is another category, shaping the ULAD in SLA. *Unique ideology and attitude, unique characteristics, unique interests,* and *knowledge of another language* are among the properties of this category. Learners' *unique ideology and attitude*, such as their general unique ideology and attitude in life, their unique beliefs, their flexibility to the TL culture have a unique influence on learners' *attitudes, interests, motivation, self-confidence learning styles and strategies, opinion, and their viewpoint.* Learners' *unique characteristics* like their favorite materials, their unique rate of learning, their unique intelligence, their unique flexibility, their unique feeling while using the TL, etc., affects their *metaphorical thinking, learning styles and strategies, motivation, acquisition progress, attitude, opinion, viewpoint, self-confidence,* and *interest* uniquely. *Unique interests* such as inspiration from the TL literati, interest in the TL country, interest in the TL songs and stories, interest in the TL literature and cinemas, and interest in history and etymology of words have a unique influence on learners' *motivation, attitude, opinion, viewpoint, styles and strategies*, and *exposure to the TL. Knowledge of another language* affects *self-confidence, metaphorical thinking, ideology, interest, intention, styles and strategies, exposure to the TL*, and *acquisition progress.*

Another important category affecting learners' LAD uniquely is *unique socio emotional factors. Empathy with the target language life style* affects learners' *interest, life style, motivation,* and *fluency* uniquely. *Ethno cultural empathy,* such as open-mindedness and interest to the TL culture, flexibility to the TL culture, etc., has a unique influence on learners' *motivation, interest, attitude, opinion, viewpoint, intention, exposure to the TL*, and *their acquisition progress. Unique social interaction* is another important property of this category affecting learners' *learning styles and strategies, interest, motivation, intention,* and *exposure to the TL* uniquely. Inspirations from *friends*, their attitude and goals, their familial values, their

11

interest, their inspirational sentences, etc., have a unique influence on learners' *self-confidence, styles and strategies, intention, exposure to the TL, attitudes, opinion, viewpoint, motivation,* and *interest*. The participants' story in this grounded theory showed that *society* is an important property having a role in shaping the ULAD. Society environments, society needs, society people attitudes to the TL acquisition, importance of the TL in society, and the TL as foreign or second language in society affect learners' *attitude, opinion, viewpoint, motivation, intention,* and *interest. Unique critical period of life* is another property which affects uniquely learners' *interest, motivation, attitude, opinion, viewpoint, styles and strategies, metaphorical thinking,* and *intention.*

According to the extracts, *entertainment* turned out to be another influential category affecting the LAD of the participants uniquely. *Song, computer games, movies,* and *media* are among the properties of this category. The *song* influences on learners and interest in songs and their lyrics affect learners' *motivation, interest, self-confidence,* and *exposure to the TL uniquely. Computer games*, their missions and instructions in the TL with their subtitle, and communicating with teammates from other countries in the TL influence learners' *motivation, exposure to the TL,* and *their social interaction in the TL* uniquely. Interest in *movies* and in going to those TL countries that learners watch in the *movies* have a unique influence on learners' *motivation, interest, intentions, attitude, opinion, viewpoint,* and *exposure to the TL. Media* is another property of this category affecting learners' *motivation, exposure to the TL, interest, attitude, viewpoint,* and *the TL acquisition progress* uniquely.

Another category that really influences the acquisition of the participants is *psychological problems. OCD* is one of the most influential psychological problems affecting learners' LAD uniquely. Learners' unique *OCD* in real life, tendency to repeat actions, spending too much time on an educational issue, idealism in the TL acquisition, genetic factors with regard to the *OCD, OCD* with repeated thoughts in the TL acquisition, *OCD* with regard to learning a subject thoroughly, etc., have a unique influence on learners' *rate of learning, interest, acquisition progress, TL acquisition progress*, and *exposure to the TL. Lack of concentration* is another property affecting learners' LAD uniquely. Getting easily distracted, thinking unconsciously about unrelated subjects during the TL acquisition, tendency to lose concentration while trying to concentrate on an issue in the TL affect learners' *rate of acquisition, acquisition progress,* and *acquisition progress*. Not being able to maintain stress at a normal level, bad memories from the past, future concerns, shyness, and instructors' bad behavior lead to emergence of *Stress* as an important property of this category. Participants' stories showed that *Stress* has a unique influence on learners' *self-confidence, concentration, interaction in the TL, acquisition progress, using new materials in context,* and *interest. Other unique psychological problems* such as mental status, mood, feeling conditions, depression, disappointment, and so on lead to another property of this category which affects learners' *motivation, learning potential, acquisition progress,* and *intention* uniquely.

Genetic is another influential category affecting learners' LAD uniquely. *Genetic background* is a property of this category that has a unique influence on learners' *capabilities in language using, interest, IQ and intelligent, memory capacity,* and *acquisition progress. Cyberspace* with the property of *social media* is another category affecting learners' *motivation, interest,*

attitude, opinion, viewpoint, acquisition progress, mental status, exposure to the TL, and *social interaction in the TL* in a unique way.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study prove that all the emerged factors in this research have important influences on shaping the ULAD in SLA. Chomsky first proposed the issue of LAD as an instinct capacity of an inborn child to acquire a first language ("Language acquisition device," n.d.). The issue of LAD has never been investigated in the history of SLA before. Therefore, based on the findings of the present study, the researchers aim to introduce the ULAD in SLA as a nurtured capacity of a person.

Tabula rasa theory proposed people are born with a blank slate without built-in mental content, so all knowledge emerged from experience or perception ("Tabula rasa" n.d). This study investigates how these emerged knowledge, especially those emerged concepts in this research, influences learners' LAD uniquely and equips them with a Unique Second Language Acquisition Device (USLAD). This study affirms that learners are not a blank slate in SLA, instead, their blank slate is nurtured in their own unique way and equips them with the ULAD in SLA.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of Biedroń and Pawlak (2016) who investigated the role of intelligence, foreign language (FL) aptitude, working memory (WM) and personality as individual differences in SLA. As cited in Biedroń et al. (2016), these factors root in classical cognitive psychology that view them as hidden features, affected by genetic and environmental influences, with the former having been more completely investigated and firmly confirmed (Jensen, 1997; Plomin, 1997; Plomin & Deary, 2015). Research into these crucial factors in the study of SLA has a long tradition (see Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Ellis, 2008; Pawlak, 2012). In this study, the researcher scrutinized the influences of these issues, especially the latter, environmental factors, and found the most important concepts with their properties on shaping the USLAD and the way these factors equipped the participants with the ULAD in SLA.

The findings are somehow in line with studies aiming at applying unique ID factors to language pedagogy (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova,2014; Oxford, 2011) and also with those examining IDs as heterogeneous constructs, consisted of different factors, interacting both together and with the environment (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Robinson, 2002). They are also in line with those showing the benefit of different ID factors in various learning and real world situations (Robinson, 2002; Skehan, 2002). The results are also in line with the assumption of dynamic systems theory and those researchers insisting all these factors are changing and influencing each other dynamically and are better to be considered as a system than single entities (see

Dörnyei, 2005, 2009, 2010; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

Moreover, the findings of the present study are in line with Plomin and Deary (2015) who argued that the inheritability of intelligent expands from about 20% in infancy up to nearly 80% in later life. It is also in line with Biedroń et al. (2016) who emphasized on the important role of the family environment in childhood and stressed that this role slowly alleviate at an older stage until it becomes of minor importance in adulthood. In this study, the researcher also finds the important role of immediate family in shaping the ULAD.

The findings are also in line with Cattel's theory of crystallized intelligence (Gc) referring to the individual ability in using skills, knowledge, and experience which is directly related to one's lifetime of intellectual achievement, as recognized through the person's vocabulary and general knowledge. In this study, the researcher found how these factors equipped individuals with a the ULAD in SLA.

The findings of the study also are in line with the socialization aspect of FL aptitude which is seemed to be dynamic, having the ability to develop evolutionarily while interacting with the environment (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2000) and also with different scholars working on the personality factors and learning styles (Cohen, Oxford, & Chi, 2001, Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Oxford, 1999, 2003). In this study, the researchers see how personality factors, unique characteristics, and unique styles and strategies have an important role on shaping USLAD.

The findings are in line with those researches that show the significant role of empathy, having been discovered to influence success while acquiring pronunciation (Hu, Ackermann, Martin, Erb, Winkler, & Reiterer, 2013; Rota & Reiterer, 2009) and to be highly placed in a mutual relationship with FL aptitude (Forsberg Lundell & Sandgren, 2013), since empathy with the target language life style and ethnocultural empathy are two properties of socio emotional factors equipping the participants with the ULAD. As one participant quoted how her interest to Kristen Stewart affected her language acquisition uniquely. She even made her room similar to hers in the movie. She quoted, " I was repeating Kristen Stewart's dialogues exactly similar to her. I tried to listen carefully to those dialogues and repeat them in exactly the same way as Kristen Stewart. (onsite interview, participant 2)"

The findings of the study are in line with the tenants of constructivism, such as the theory of Plato, according to Kappur (2018), insisting on the learners' belief system that can be challenged by their own investigations while identifying what is true or false based on their previous knowledge. Kappur (2018) also states that constructing meaning is based upon the learner's experiences. The findings are also in line with Piaget (1957) emphasizing the importance of the individual's interaction with the environment in their cognitive development and higher levels of children's knowledge and learners' schema. In this study, we find those important concepts and properties in the environment of the participants affecting their schema uniquely with regard to SLA and equip them with a USLAD.

Kappur (2018) also cites that opposite to Chomsky's innate LAD, these mental structures change constantly as a result of the child's interaction with their environment and intellectual development happened as a consequence of qualitative changes. And this study shows how this

intellectual development as a result of qualitative changes through interaction with the unique environment equips each learner with the ULAD in SLA.

It is worth mentioning that the researcher examined the ULAD and its influences on SLA for professional teachers who were selected purposefully to disconfirm the findings to reach data saturation. Therefore, the study reflects the influences of the emerged concepts and properties on SLA for these participants and may not be exactly the same for other participants. Moreover, a more diverse research team might have analyzed the data differently.

Finally, the ULAD theory has implications for scholars since it may be a solution to understand the reason why learners could not progress beyond a specific level and reach native like competence in SLA. They may even find some features in the ULAD of the learners preventing them to improve their proficiency level up to the native like competence such as those mentioned psychological problems in the present study. The theory also has implications for parents as they could prepare a unique environment for their children to get them to get interested in learning and studying. It is not necessary for them to have an academic education. However, their views, attitudes, encouragement, and their interest in studying could affect their children's motivation, interest, self-confidence, and success in SLA and influence their ULAD. Its implication for leaners is when they feel they are not good enough in SLA, or when they are in lack of motivation and self-confidence to acquire it, they can pay more attention to their ULAD. They could improve themselves with some special therapies or consultation to come up with a solution. Moreover, this theory has implications for L2 instructors. They should take the humanistic approach more into consideration and be really cautious with regard to their instruction and behavior with the learners since they have an important role in affecting learners' interest, self-confidence, learning styles and strategies, and motivation, etc., in SLA and equip them with the USLAD.

Conclusion

In this research, based on the grounded theory, seven influential categories affecting the LAD of the participants uniquely. These categories are namely, unique environment, individual uniqueness, unique socio emotional factors, entertainment, psychological problems, genetic factors, and cyberspace were found. All these categories with their properties have a unique influence on learners' LAD. As a result, they equip learners with the ULAD in SLA. The ULAD make learners have a unique motivation, unique interest, unique self-confidence, unique self-esteem, unique attitude, unique viewpoint, unique opinion, unique intentions, unique learning styles and strategies, unique exposure to the TL, unique rate of learning, unique acquisition progress, unique IQ and intelligent, unique social interaction in the TL, unique mental status, unique memory capacity, unique concentration, unique learning potential, unique metaphorical thinking, unique ideology, and unique ability in using the TL.

Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

L2: Second/Foreign language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

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