

# Factors of Fossilization in Speaking English As A Second Language among Malaysian Undergraduates

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i4/21239>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i4/21239

**Published Date:** 17 April 2024

## Abstract

Fossilization refers to the persistence of non-standard or erroneous language elements, grammar, and systematic interlanguage knowledge as a person's foreign language skills develop over time. This research aims to explore the variables contributing to fossilization and the tactics employed by Malaysian undergraduates when speaking English as a second language. This study is qualitative and the data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with five Malaysian undergraduates from different universities. The results showed that there are three subfactors of Han's external causal factors of fossilization: frequent occurrence of external variables among participants, such as lack of input, absence of corrective feedback, and reinforcement from the language environment. The primary internal causes identified are L1 influence and limited opportunities to utilize the target language. To address the issue effectively, it is crucial to comprehend the underlying reasons for fossilization as it could establish a strong language acquisition for the needs of students. Also, the research has significant implications for language educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the field of language education. It offers insightful information for developing curriculum, teaching strategies, and support systems intended to improve Malaysian undergraduates' English language proficiency.

**Keywords:** Fossilization, English Language, Strategies, Malaysian Undergraduates

## Introduction

Acquiring English as a second language is a multifaceted process. Learning and mastering the English language is a time-consuming process. The English language was inherited from the British colonizers after Tanah Melayu gained independence in 1957. According to Pandian (1997), English was utilized in schools for the privileged in metropolitan areas during the colonial era. Following independence, numerous initiatives were undertaken to establish the Malay language as the national language, including replacing instructional instructions from

English to Malay. English has been a mandatory subject in schools since the 1980s. English is commonly utilized and recognized as the nation's secondary language (Ismail et al., 2007). Mandal (2000) stated that English is widespread. It is utilized across different areas like the business, education, mass media, politics, and popular culture on a global scale. English is predominantly utilized for global knowledge dissemination, where research conducted in other languages is commonly shared worldwide through translation into English. According to Lee et al (2010), English serves as a crucial second language for practical use, a universal language for social inclusion, and a strategic tool for professional development and career progression. This asserts that English can assist us in exploring many domains.

Learning our first language takes a significant portion of our lives, not to mention the added challenges of adopting a foreign language. This is evident from the inherent characteristics of a language. Language is a complex system. The complexity of language, including morphemes, phonemes, syntax, lexemes, and context, along with fundamental elements like grammar, pragmatics, and semantics, contribute to the challenges encountered in language acquisition. The contrasting features of these foundational elements from the native language might complicate the acquisition of a second language for learners. Ahibalova (2019) identified two phenomena in second language learning that pose challenges for language learners: 'Fossilization' and 'Plateau'. Fossilization is the permanent retention of errors, while a plateau is a transient phase. Both, however, elucidate Selinker's 'Interlanguage' theory. The major aim of this research is to investigate the variables contributing to fossilization and techniques to prevent it in second language learning. Yang (2015) stated that a discussion on interlanguage must precede a discussion on fossilization. Interlanguage refers to the structured understanding of a second language that is not influenced by the learner's native language or the language being learned (Ellis, 1985). Interlanguage is a language formed by a second language learner that has a linguistic system distinct from both their first language and the target language. This occurrence is common and unavoidable in the field of English education, as noted by (Chen et al., 2013). Interlanguage contributes to the concept of fossilization in second-language English learning, aiding researchers in conducting their studies.

Fossilization is a key feature in second language acquisition. However, there have been few studies on fossilization in Malaysia, but there have been many studies on error analysis. So, this study will provide new insights into identifying the tactics required to overcome fossilization in learning English as a second language among Malaysian undergraduates, as well as the factors that contribute to fossilization. Also, It is imperative to comprehend these elements in order to formulate precise interventions and pedagogical strategies that will augment the English language proficiency of undergraduate students in Malaysia. By addressing the underlying factors contributing to fossilization, policymakers and educators can enhance their ability to assist students in surmounting linguistic obstacles and honing their English communication proficiencies.

The fundamental question to be answered is

1. What are the common factors that contribute to fossilization in speaking English as second language among Malaysian undergraduates?

### **Literature Review**

Malaysia's education system is working to improve students' English skills as part of a larger effort to give students the language skills they need to be successful in an international world. To meet this need, a number of programs and plans have been put in place. One important

part of this trend is the focus on improving English language education from the elementary school level up. Research shows that being exposed to English early on through immersive learning settings and good teaching methods helps people learn and become better at the language (Tamimi & Salamim, 2020). Using technology-enhanced language learning resources and tools in the classroom has also been shown to help keep students interested and make language learning easier (Lu, 2021). Also, work to fix specific language problems Malaysian students have, like phonological and grammatical fossilization, shows the dedication to focused interventions to get past barriers to proficiency (Huddin & Sapar, 2022). For Malaysian undergraduates to succeed in the academic and professional domains, fluency in English is essential. Even with a lot of exposure and training, many Malaysian students still struggle to speak English well. For Malaysian students, fossilization—the persistence of linguistic faults after extended language learning—poses a serious barrier to language acquisition.

The purpose of this study is to look into the elements that lead to fossilization in spoken English among undergraduate students from Malaysia. It aims to pinpoint important components such as the impact of the first language (L1), the efficiency of language learning techniques, the degree of exposure to English-speaking surroundings, and psychological characteristics like fluency anxiety (Ahibalova, 2019). Teachers and legislators can create focused initiatives to improve Malaysian undergraduates' English language competency by knowing these characteristics.

Notwithstanding the significance of tackling fossilization, there exists a noteworthy gap in research about the particular elements that contribute to this occurrence in Malaysian students. The extant body of literature primarily concentrates on fossilization within the context of general language acquisition or within particular demographics, hence creating a knowledge gap about the distinct issues encountered by undergraduate students in Malaysia. By performing a thorough analysis into the reasons of fossilization specifically among Malaysian undergraduates, this study aims to close this gap and offer insightful information to language educators and policymakers.

### ***Common Factors of Fossilization in Second Language***

Every language-related phenomena or issue must have its own origins. There must be a causal element that influences an event, decision, or scenario to occur. In this section attempts to discover the common characteristics that influence fossilization in second language English speakers. There is a significant amount of research that examines the reasons that often lead to fossilization in second language learning. Some were built using Han's causal variables.

### **Han's Causal Variables**

According to Fauziati (2011), it is identified that around 50 causative variables outlined by Han (2003) that help explain the causes contributing to fossilization. Han categorized the causal variables described in her writings into four main categories: environmental, cognitive, neuro-biological, and socio-affective (Han, 2003). The key categories can be divided into two broad groups: internal and external forces. Han (2003) also provided a taxonomy of all the potential causative variables. The taxonomy is displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1

*Han's taxonomy of putative causal variables*

External	Environmental		Absence of corrective feedback Lack of input Reinforcement from linguistic environment Lack of instruction Lack of communicative relevance Lack of written input Quality of input Instruction
Internal	Cognitive	Knowledge representation	L1 influence conspiring with other factors L1 influence Lack of access to UG Failure of parameter-resetting Non-operation of UG learning principles Learning inhibiting learning Representational deficits of the language faculty
		Knowledge processing (receptive/productive)	Lack of attention inability to notice input-output Lack of understanding Lack of opportunities to use the target language Failure to detect errors Lack of verbal analytical skills
		Psychological	Inappropriate learning strategy Simplification Avoidance Reluctant to take the risk of restructuring Transfer of training

	Neurobiological	Changes of structure in brain Maturational constraints Age
	Socio-affective	Satisfaction of communicative needs Lack of acculturation Willing to maintain identity

All of the potential causative variables that Han (2003) divided into internal and external components were gathered from a number of earlier research, including those by (Schumann, 1978; Schmidt, 1983; Selinker, 1993). Many researchers have examined the causes of fossilization in second language learning over the past ten years, focusing on factors based on the external and internal causal variables proposed by (Han, 2003). These factors correspond to Han's causal variables of factors that contribute to fossilization in second language learning. According to Chen and Zhao (2013), mistakes made during learning a second language might cause fossilization to appear. Thus, in addition to four external variables of interlanguage fossilization, they had presented three key internal aspects. The age, emotional state, and interference from the mother tongue of the learners are the internal elements that contribute to interlanguage fossilization. In the meantime, there are insufficient external elements in the form of learning opportunities, second language learning and communication methodologies, and the involvement of foreign teachers. Yang (2015) then claimed that learning a second language causes interlanguage fossilization to fluctuate. In the conference article, a few additional causes of interlanguage fossilization were covered and categorized into two groups: internal variables and external factors. Yang (2015) listed the following as internal determinants of interlanguage fossilization: the learners' age, goal, mentality, and manner of learning the linguistic. The impact of the target language's culture, communicative feedback, and teachers' influence on students are the external variables, in the meantime. It may be inferred from previous research that most of the causes that can cause fossilization are artificial. Han had divided the many variables into two primary categories—internal and external—as well as smaller ones, such as environmental, cognitive, psychological, neurobiological, and socio-affective. This allowed for a deeper comprehension of every element.

### Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to understand existing fossilization occurrences that happens in the actual life experience rather theory. Through purposive sampling, the authors identified five Malaysia respondents from multiple universities which are currently pursuing their degree. Table 2 shows their demographic profiles.

Table 2

*Demographic profiles*

	<b>Name of university</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>MUET (speaking score)</b>	<b>Band</b>
1.	Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Bahasa Antarabangsa, Kuala Lumpur	Teaching English as Second Language (TESL).	4.5 (60)	
2.	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Shah Alam, Selangor	Bachelor of Interpersonal Communication	3.5 (47)	
3.	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Puncak Alam, Selangor.	Bachelor of Accountancy	4.0 (56)	
4.	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Kota Bharu, Kelantan.	Bachelor of Business Administration: Islamic Banking	3.5 (49)	
5.	University Bochum, Germany.	Mechanical Engineering	5.0 (63)	

The researcher selected Malaysian undergraduates who achieved Band 3.5 or above in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) and scored 35 or higher on the speaking test. The contestants are from five distinct universities. The interviews which were semi-structured and in-depth were conducted and recorded over Zoom or Google Meet (lasting 40 - 70 minutes) with the informed consent of participants following ethical guidelines. All recordings were transcribed using Notta.ai. These transcriptions were then checked verbatim through the VLC media player before they were sent to the participants to validate.

The criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were used to enhance the reliability and precision of the qualitative analysis. To meet the credibility and confirmability criteria, member-checking was used by sharing transcriptions with participants before coding. Method triangulation was used to combine material from the literature with interview transcriptions. For reliability, two researchers were involved in the coding process. To enhance transferability, a combination of sample diversity and purposive sampling approaches were utilized to obtain a wider array of perspectives and increase the possible relevance of the results to different situations.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Common factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language among Malaysian undergraduates**

To investigate the common factors of fossilization employed by the Malaysian undergraduates in speaking English as second language, the researcher had utilized the taxonomy of putative causal factors of fossilization, which are divided into two categories, external factors and internal factors according to (Han, 2003). There are eight underlying factors of fossilization which falls under the external sub-factor, environmental, namely: (1) absence of corrective feedback, (2) lack of input, (3) reinforcement from linguistic environment, (4) lack of instruction, (5) lack of communicative relevance, (6) lack of written input, (7) quality of input, (8) instruction. Meanwhile, the internal factors comprise of three subfactors namely: (1) Cognitive, (2) neuro-biological, (3) socio-affective. Then, there are numerous subsets for these internal subfactors of fossilization.

***External factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language among Malaysian undergraduates***

The findings showed that some of the elements of external factors in Han's taxonomy influences the factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language among the participants. Accordingly, lack of input, absence of corrective feedback, and reinforcement from linguistic environment are the notable causal factors among eight of other environmental factors mentioned above.

Table 3

External Factors

EXTERNAL FACTORS	RECURRENCE
Absence of corrective feedback	4
Lack of input	12
Reinforcement from linguistic environment	9

The results in Table 3 show the external causal factors of fossilization employed by five of the Malaysian undergraduates from this research. Conforming to the table, there are four out of eight external factors mentioned by the participants of this research that can be analyzed. Accordingly, the most recognizable external factor is lack of input which was mentioned for a total of 12 times by all of the participants, followed by reinforcement from linguistic environment (9), then absence of corrective feedback (4), and lastly quality of input (4). The findings of these prominent external factors are explained below.

***Lack of Input***

Input, according to Zhang (2009), is the language content that the learner is taught to. It means that all of the data regarding the target language that usually, the teacher had presented to the learners. Thus, it is found that lack of input is the most recurring factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language in all five of the participants. Each of the participants had mentioned that one of the main reasons of their fossilization in speaking English as second language is the lack of input from the educators. This is because, the teachers usually focus more on writing input rather than speaking input. The evidences are as below:

*Interviewer: Did your teacher had provided materials to improve your speaking and listening skills?*

*Participant 1: In MRSM, I think there is less materials of practice for speaking and listening. Because I think in MRSM, the teachers mainly focused on writings since we are going to take SPM, right?*

Figure 1: Excerpt of Participant 1

*Interviewer: Did your teacher usually focus only on finishing the English syllabus or the students' comprehension?*  
*Participant 2: They are usually focus on finishing the English syllabus instead of helping with our comprehension because we have examination which focuses on writing and reading. That is why we write better in English rather than speaking it because we didn't speak English enough back in school and because we were trained to do more writing instead of speaking.*

Figure 2: Excerpt of Participant 2

*Interviewer: Did your teacher had provided you with enough materials to improve your speaking and listening skills?*  
*Participant 3: I think for speaking they don't really have like any materials. They just you know by orally give us the lesson and we just learn from there and there are no formal materials that they provide for that. And I think that listening, we just get the listening materials when it is almost time for listening test so it is not sufficient.*

Figure 3: Excerpt of Participant 3

*Interviewer: Did you like your English lessons?*  
*Participant 4: I don't really enjoy my English lessons. I find it boring and because we had to study based on the syllabus so sometimes the teacher also doesn't do much activities and we just learn.*

Figure 4: Excerpt of Participant 4

*Interviewer: Did your teacher had provided you with enough materials to improve your speaking and listening skills?*  
*Participant 5: No. They provide me with a lot of text that I have to comprehend and answer questions through that text.*

Figure 5: Excerpt of Participant 5

From the excerpts, we can see that, all of the participants had mentioned how their teacher were more focused on giving input of the writing and reading inputs in language learning and less on speaking and listening materials. This is because, their school's teacher is strictly bound to the English examination format that includes Paper 1 for reading comprehension and Paper 2 is for writing. Back when the participants were in schools, the Common European Framework (CEFR) in English as a Second Language learning which focuses on all aspect of language learning (reading, speaking, writing, and listening) was not introduced yet in the Malaysian education system. CEFR was officially implemented in the Malaysian education system in 2018 under the English Language Education Roadmap that is expected to be fully implemented in all Malaysian school level in 2025 (Ministry of Education, 2015). Therefore, we can see that, the lack of input from the teacher on speaking aspects had influenced the fossilization in the participants' speaking ESL, as accordingly the lack of input eventually leads



to lack of exposure to speaking the actual language. This finding had supported the Input Hypothesis introduced by Krashen (1985) that is said to be the most important aspect in SLA, as it attempts to answer the fundamental question of how humans acquire language, which is through comprehensible input (Puspita, 2019). Other than that, it is stated in Jiang (2023) that the lack of input will be able to hinder and restrict learners to a relatively limited range of applications.

### ***Reinforcement from Linguistic Environment***

From Table 2, the results show that the second most prominent external factors among the participants is the reinforcement from linguistic environment. Most of them mentioned that, their English-speaking skills are easily influenced by their surroundings. In addition, they also mentioned that there are two conditions of their linguistic environment for second language learning, whether (1) no reinforcement from linguistic environment and, (2) bad reinforcement from linguistic environment. The examples are as follows:

*Interviewee: What do you think is the cause of the fossilization in your English-speaking skills?*  
*Participant 2: I think one of the causes is even my English teachers were not using proper English during my English class and then my surroundings were all speaking in Malay in which didn't help me practicing my speaking skills.*

Figure 6: Excerpt of Participant 2

From the excerpt above, we can see that the lack of reinforcement from Participant 3's linguistic environment had caused the fossilization in her English speaking as second language as the people surroundings did not encourage her to even use English in her daily conversation and even in class which had causes her to have less to no practice in speaking English.

*Interviewer: How did you learn your English language other than having English class?*  
*Participant 3: I think I started to communicate in English with my friends during high school in MRSM because we have sometimes the English day, right? So, some days we will communicate in English but in primary school I don't really communicate with my friends in English because people will look at you weirdly if you speak in English because they have the stigma that those who speak in English are just like boasting.*

Figure 7: Excerpt of Participant 3

*Interviewer: What do you think is the cause of the fossilization in your English-speaking skills?*  
*Participant 4: I think it is because of the surrounding... hearing the wrong way of pronunciations makes me think that, that is the right way to pronounce it but it is actually incorrect.*

Figure 8: Excerpt of Participant 4

From the excerpt inquired from Participant 3 and 4, it is found that there is also a bad reinforcement from the participants' linguistic environment. This is due to the non-acceptance towards speaking English in their community as they think that those who speaks English is boasting on their intellectual level. This stigma had led the participant to feel less

motivated to speak in English as well as restraining the practice of English in daily conversation. Other than that, bad reinforcement of their linguistic environment in terms of wrong use of English such as in pronunciations also caused the fossilization that occurred in their English-speaking skills. Roberts (2015) stated that at the beginning phase of language learning, the linguistic environment is prominently instrumental. This is because most language learners are easily influenced by their surroundings. In addition, a negative linguistic environment, some learners may even fossilize poor pronunciation patterns due to peer pressure or a reluctance to imitate the sounds of another language in certain situations.

### ***Absence of Corrective Feedback***

The absence of corrective feedback in speaking English as second language had also influenced the fossilization among the participants. Reyes (2019) defined corrective feedback as the teacher's remark to the students demonstrating that their use of the target language is grammatically incorrect or communicationally deficient. The findings shows that the absence of corrective feedback mostly for the participants' teacher had led to fossilization in their English-speaking skills. The evidences are as below:

*Interviewer: Does your teacher had ever corrected your errors in speaking English?*

*Participant 1: During my primary school and MRSM, I think no. because at that time the teacher is more encouraged to let the students to speak in English so maybe they are scared if they corrected or speech when we talk in English, we will be discouraged to speak in English.*

Figure 9: Excerpt of Participant 1

Based on excerpt of the interview with Participant 1, when asked do the teacher had ever corrected the errors in speaking English, she said no. It is also mentioned that the teachers were pretty much glad as they felt that they have already met their purposes if the students are brave enough to just speak in English without taking into account the needs for corrective feedback if there is any error in their speaking skills that will be fossilized if not being corrected. Another excerpt from Participant 5 below also agreed that that the absence of corrective feedback is one of the causes of fossilization in speaking English as second language.

*Interviewer: What do you think is the cause of the fossilization in your English-speaking skills?*

*Participant 5: Lack of practice. No one to correct you because other people also do the same mistakes....*

Figure 10: Excerpt of Participant 5

Furthermore, we can also relate to the most recurring external factors in this study which is lack of input to the absence of corrective feedback. Accordingly, the lack of input in speaking English as second language had made it certainly impossible for the teachers to corrected the errors that occurred in the students' English-speaking skills. As there are fewer speaking materials provided by the teacher which results in less chance for the students to speak and then less corrective feedback on the students' speech.

***Internal factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language among Malaysian undergraduates***

The findings also showed that some of the elements of internal factors in Han's taxonomy influences the factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language among the participants. Accordingly, L1 influence and lack of opportunities to use TL are the notable causal factors.

Table 4

*Internal causal factors*

INTERNAL FACTORS	RECURRENCE
L1 influence	11
Lack of opportunities to use TL	11

The results in Table 3 show the internal causal factors of fossilization employed by five of the Malaysian undergraduates from this research. Conforming to the table, there are two internal factors mentioned by the participants of this research that can be analyzed. Accordingly, the most recognizable external factor is L1 influence and lack of opportunities to use TL, which were mentioned for a total of 11 times by all of the participants. The findings of these prominent internal factors are explained below.

***L1 influence***

L1 influence, refers to the influence of the learners' first language to the second language. Based on the semi-structured interview, the participants had mentioned that Malay language had mainly influenced their speaking English as second language.

*Interviewer: Did your first language influenced your speaking skills in English?*

*Participant 5: Of course. You can hear my English is very like Malay Malay, right? It influences my English very much. And also, in pronunciation as for example in Malay, we don't have the pronunciation 'th' and we as Malays tend to replace this pronunciation with 'd' so like it becomes 'de' when it was supposed to be 'the', something like that. So, at first, I was also accustomed to this fossilization and then as I grow up, I learn to adjust but it was quite hard at first but now it is kind of fine.*

Figure 11: Excerpt of Participant 5

From Figure 11, Participant 5 had stated that her English-speaking is influenced by her first language, Malay in the configuration of mostly pronunciations. This is because, English language has a rather complex system to pronounce things, as some alphabets are supposed to be pronounced differently from how they are spelt. During the interview, Participant 1 mentioned that:

*"I think somehow it influence my speaking skills in English for example in terms of tone because as you know tone in Malay and English are very different so somehow when I speak in English, I always use the tone that I used when speaking Malay."*

Participant 3 also said:

*“Yes, sometimes, it is either how the sentence is structured when you direct translate your first language to the second language, the error does occur. Because there are some structures in English that can be very different from my first language.”*

From these two statements, it can be deduced that the pronunciation, tone, and the structure of the participants' first language, Malay is quite distinctive with the English language. That is why, the participants had difficulties in grabbing a perfect English-speaking skill as according to Rustandi et al. (2023), one of the key factors in learners' failure to master the English language has been shown to be syntactical discrepancies between Malay and English.

### ***Lack of opportunities to use TL***

From Table 3, we can see that the another most recurring internal factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language is the lack of opportunities to use TL (target language). It is found that, most of the participants for this research had less opportunities to use the English language whether in the classroom along with outside of the classroom. The evidences are as below.

*Interviewer: So, do you think that back in MRSM, the less opportunity to that you get to speak in English affected your speaking skills now?*  
*Participant 1: I think yes, because when you get less opportunity, you have less practice in English. So, when I entered IPG, I felt kind of nervous when I have to use English.*

Figure 12: Excerpt of Participant 1

*Interviewer: Did you have enough opportunity to speak English in your English class?*  
*Participant 2: I don't think that the opportunity that we have is enough because the time given in each class is like just one hour and then we have like 30 to 40 of us and then each of us rarely get the opportunity to speak English in class and maybe some of my classmates did not even get the chance at all.*

Figure 13: Excerpt of Participant 2

Based on Figure 12 and 13, it can be deduced that students were not given enough opportunity to use the English language in their class and not to mention outside of their class as said by Participant 3 when asked whether she practices speaking English outside of English class with the people surrounding or not:

*For the time being since I'm at home and studying online I don't speak in English much because my entire family speaks Malay but when I'm with my friends also I do speak English with them even when we're not in English class. As for my primary and secondary school yes sometimes, I do talk in English but it's not always it was just for fun.*

The less opportunity given to the students had led them to have less practice to utilize English language perfectly. This finding correlates to the role of output proposed by Swain (1995). Swain (1995) has proclaimed that a coherent output plays a significant role in L2 acquisition alongside exposing the language learners with a coherent input. Thus, giving the learners chances to recognize what they are unable to say and what they want to say in the target language if they are encouraged to speak or write in the L2 and given opportunity to do so.

**Conclusions**

As the researcher had already discussed the factors of fossilization in speaking English as second language among Malaysian undergraduates, the reader can get insights regarding the cause of fossilization in their speaking English as a second language to ensure that they will get to communicate perfectly without getting anxious with the other English speaker. Other than that, as the researcher utilized the qualitative data and the findings through the semi-structured interview, there was not much statistical data that shows the patterns of factors of fossilization in the second language acquisition (SLA). In addition, one of the limitations of this study is that there are only five Malaysian undergraduates that participated in this study, so the findings for this research cannot be generalized. Furthermore, all of the participants are Malay girls of the same age, 22, whose native language is Malay. Thus, the results are lack diversity in terms of background. Based on the implications, there are some recommendations that can be made for future studies. First of all, other researchers can try to do the same research by utilizing other research methods and designs such as quantitative studies with more participants to get a generalized finding. Other than that, the other researchers should consider a variety of ethnicities as many other ethnicities also use English as their second language. By doing the research on different ethnicity, the results will be more diverse as people of other ethnicities might face different kinds of difficulties in English as a second language.

Identifying the factors of fossilization among Malaysian undergraduates has various important implications for the fields of language acquisition and education. First of all, it highlights the unique difficulties Malaysian undergraduate students encounter in becoming fluent in spoken English. The study offers a thorough knowledge of the barriers to language learning in this situation by identifying elements including the influence of the first language (L1), the efficacy of language instruction methods, and psychological aspects like language anxiety.

Furthermore, this study helps close the current gaps in the literature of undergraduate fossilization in Malaysia. Although fossilization has been studied in the context of general language learning or in particular populations in the past, this study focuses on Malaysian undergraduates specifically and offers insights into their particular linguistic difficulties.

The results of this study also have important ramifications for language teachers and curriculum designers. Teachers can create focused interventions and instructional strategies to improve English language proficiency among Malaysian undergraduates by knowing the factors that lead to fossilization. This research can also be used by policymakers to inform language education initiatives that target Malaysian students' linguistic requirements.

In summary, the research on the factors that contribute to fossilization when speaking English as a second language among Malaysian undergraduates advances our knowledge of the difficulties associated with language acquisition in this setting and offers practical suggestions for raising English language proficiency among Malaysian students.

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