

MOTIVATION OF EFL STUDENTS AT TERTIARY LEVEL

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Abstract: This paper discusses about motivation of EFL students at tertiary level. This study used a survey method. The participants of this study were 323 students in a private university in Palembang. A questionnaire assessing motivation was used in this study. A 51-item questionnaire used in this study was an adapted version of Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy's instrument used in their study. Some of these items were added based on the theory of socio-education (Gardner, 1985, 1988, 2000, 2001; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1991, 1993). The result of this study showed that the main motivational components that underlie the students to learn English are instrumental orientation, intrinsic orientation, and integrative orientation.

Key words: *motivation, EFL students, tertiary level*

English is one of the most important subjects in schools around the world, including Indonesia. Indonesian students study English for at least seven and a half years on the average: one year in elementary school, three years in secondary school, three years in high school, and one semester in university.

At present, many high school graduates continue their study in English Study Program to develop their English further. One of the reasons could be motivation to be proficient in English as according to Hoy and Miskel (1991), when a person prefers choosing an activity among different forms of activities, motivation could be one of the reasons that makes the person chooses the activity. Therefore, this reflects a high level of motivation among these students to achieve proficiency in English although the motives of the students may vary. Some students may be motivated by instrumental reasons as to get a job. Social pressures as well as pressure

from parents are probably factors for some other students. However, no matter what motives these students have, motivation plays a crucial role in learning a language as Ihsan and Diem (1997) say that the major determiner of language learning success is motivation. In addition, Oxford (1994) says that motivation is not only important in getting students to engage in academic activities, but also important in determining the instruction conducted in the classroom. That is why good teachers have to understand students' motivation as Oxford (1994:4893) states

An understanding of students' characteristics—what psychologists call 'individual differences'—is very important to successful instruction in a second or foreign language. Effective teaching demands that teachers must comprehend at least some of these differences, including those typical of age and gender, as well as students' aptitude, learning styles, motivation, and

personality. Such knowledge helps teachers design and tailor the activities conducted in the classroom.

It does seem clear that understanding students' characteristics, such as motivation, helps teachers design the instruction. Teachers need to respond to individual differences in educational processes, and adjust their action to students' characteristics.

In Indonesia, especially in Palembang, the opportunity to use English with native speakers is rarely available to students. This seems to be the main factor which makes English difficult to learn (Ihsan and Diem, 1997). However, according to Chamot (1987), difficulties in learning English are not only true for students who learn English as a foreign language (EFL), but also for those who learn English as a second language (ESL). Now, if this is the case, there must be factors besides the lack of native speakers that encourage this problem in learning English.

According to Dardjowidjojo (1995), teachers of EFL in Indonesia realize that there are many external factors that commonly cause EFL students to fail in learning English. Among these are big classes, geographical location of the schools, supplementary textbook availability especially in the library, access to a language laboratory, and teachers' qualifications. Each of these conditions is related to the others, and has made the problem of English teaching even more complicated for an individual EFL teacher to solve.

Personal characteristics, such as age, gender, motivation, and language background, also influence students' success in EFL learning as Oxford (1994) says that students' characteristics need to be considered when analyzing why English seems difficult to learn because an understanding of students' characteristics is very important for a

successful instruction in a second or foreign language.

All of the above information provided a background for doing a study on students' motivation. This study identified what really motivates students to learn English.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The methodology used in this study was survey method. The aim of this survey method was to identify the main components of motivation causing the students to learn English.

Descriptive statistics was used to answer the research question.

Sample and Sampling Method

This study was carried out in the English Education Study Program, at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education in Universitas PGRI Palembang. The reason for selecting this program/faculty/university was because the researcher has been associated with the institution as an instructor, so the researcher could get access easily and comfortably. Besides that, this would give the researcher a first-hand experience of the students' psychology and attitude towards English learning; thus, making her stance on teaching more credible.

Generally, the sample speaks Palembang language as their mother tongue (L1) and Indonesian for formal communication (L2). English is the first foreign language for them, and the medium of instruction used in the English Education Study Program is English.

The researcher selected a sample that was representative for the population because it was not feasible to take the whole population to be included. Students of English Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education in one of the private universities in Palembang were the sample of this study. The rationale for

selecting those students as the sample was because they were students who have clear goals for learning English since they were majoring in English. The total number of the population can be seen in the following table.

Table 1
Total Population

No.	Semester	Number of Students
1.	I	596
2.	III	501
3.	V	479
4.	VII	442
	Total	2018

Source: FKIP Universitas PGRI Palembang

In this study, the researcher chose stratified random sampling since the population embraces a number of distinct categories, i.e., semesters. A stratified random sampling allows the researcher to take into account the different subgroups of people in the population based on specific characteristics (Jackson, 2008).

The researcher took the sample from all of the classes ranging from the first year to the fourth year of study. Since there is only one academic session (odd session), the semesters taken for the sample were from semester I, III, V, and VII. The procedures of the stratified random sampling are as follows:

- (1) The total sample size taken from the whole population uses the following formula (Wiseman, 1999; Yahaya et al., 2006):

$$S = \frac{x^2 N P (1 - P)}{d^2 (N - 1) + x^2 P (1 - P)}$$

Note:

S: sample size

x^2 : chi-square value of 1 degree of freedom at significance level of 0.05 (3.841)

N: population size

P: population ratio (estimated at 0.5 for the maximum sample size)

d: degree of accuracy (0.05)

- (2) The population was stratified and partitioned into groups based on semesters.
- (3) To get the percentage of each partition (i.e., semester), the number of each partition was computed out of the total population.
- (4) The percentage above was multiplied with the total sample size.

The calculation of the sample is as follows.

- (1) Total population (N) = 2018

$$S = \frac{x^2 N P (1 - P)}{d^2 (N - 1) + x^2 P (1 - P)}$$

$$= \frac{3.841 \times 2018 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \times (2018 - 1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}$$

$$= \frac{1937.784}{6.002} = 322.85$$

Therefore, the total sample size was 323 students.

- (2) The total population:
 - Semester I = 596
 - Semester III = 501
 - Semester V = 479
 - Semester VII = 442
- (3) The percentage for each semester:
 - Semester I = $2018 \div 596 = 29.53 \%$
 - Semester III = $2018 \div 501 = 24.82 \%$
 - Semester V = $2018 \div 479 = 23.73 \%$
 - Semester VII = $2018 \div 442 = 21.9 \%$
- (4) The total sample size for each semester:
 - Semester I = $29.53 \% \times 323 = 95$ students
 - Semester III = $24.82 \% \times 323 = 80$ students
 - Semester V = $23.73 \% \times 323 = 77$ students
 - Semester VII = $21.9 \% \times 323 = 71$ students

Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this study was an adapted version of Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy's instrument used in their study. A 64-item questionnaire was constructed, on which students indicate their agreement

or disagreement with various statements on six-point Likert-scales (strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree, and strongly agree). Six-point scales were used to eliminate neutral responses.

The items on motivation, as suggested by Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy (1996), were based on the theory of self-determination (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Feldman, 1989). However, some items, i.e. items concerning instrumental and integrative orientation, were added based on the theory of socio-education (Gardner, 1985, 1988, 2000, 2001; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1991, 1993), so that the wordings could precisely describe the EFL contexts in Indonesia. The components (i.e. seven components) of motivation investigated in this study are as follows.

(1) Thirteen items about intrinsic orientation (i.e. item No. 1 – 13):

- I enjoy learning English very much.
- Learning English is a hobby for me.
- Learning English is a challenge that I enjoy.
- If the fees for the English program were increased, I would still enroll because studying English is important for me.
- My attendance in the class will be good.
- I plan to continue studying English for as long as I can.
- After I graduate, I will probably continue studying English to a higher degree.
- I often think about how I can learn English better.
- I can honestly say that I really put my best effort into trying to learn English.
- Studying English is fun.
- Even if there were no homework, I would try to study outside of the class.
- I like studying English.

- I really want to learn more English in this program than I have done in high school.

(2) Nine items about extrinsic orientation (i.e. item No. 14 – 22):

- Studying English is a waste of time.
- I do not enjoy learning English, but I know that learning English is important for me.
- I wish I could learn English in an easier way, without going to class.
- The main reason I am taking English program is that my parents/spouse/employer want me to improve my English.
- I want to do well in English because it is important to show my ability to my family/employer/friends/others.
- It is important for me to do better than other students in my class.
- My relationship with the teacher in the class is important for me.
- One of the most important things in the class is getting along with other students.
- I put off doing my homework/assignment until right before the due date.

(3) Eleven items about instrumental orientation (i.e. item No. 23 – 33):

- English is important for me because it will broaden my view.
- Being able to speak English will add to my social status.
- I am learning English to become more educated.
- I need to be able to read/understand books/magazines/newspapers/novels/movies in English.
- If I learn English better, I will be able to get a better job.
- Increasing my English proficiency will have financial benefits for me.
- If I can speak English, I will have a marvelous life.

- English is important for me because it will make me more knowledgeable.
 - English will be useful for me in getting a good and high-ranking job in Indonesia.
 - I study English because I want to be an English teacher.
 - English class is important for me because if I learn English well, I will be able to help my children learn English.
- (4) Nine items about integrative orientation (i.e. item 34 – 42):
- I am learning English because I want to spend a period of time in an English speaking country.
 - I want to learn English because it is useful when travelling in many countries.
 - I want to learn English because I would like to emigrate to an English speaking country.
 - English helps me to think and behave like English native speakers.
 - I would like to make British/American friends.
 - I would like to communicate with people in other English speaking countries.
 - I am studying English because I would like to live abroad in the future.
 - English will help me to better understand the English native speakers and their ways of life.
 - I really like to emulate/imitate the English native speakers.
- (5) Nine items about expectation of success (i.e. item No. 43 – 51):
- English class will definitely help me improve my English.
 - I expect to do well in the class because I am good at learning English.
 - If I do well in the class, it will be because I try hard.
 - If I do not do well in the class, it will be because I do not try hard enough.
 - If I do not do well in the class, it will be because I do not have much ability for learning English.
 - If I learn a lot in the class, it will be because of the teacher.
 - If I do well in the class, it will be because this is an easy class.
 - If I do not learn well in the class, it will be mainly because of the teacher.
 - If I do not do well in the class, it will be because the class is too difficult.
- (6) Six items about attitudes towards Americans and British, and their culture (i.e. item No. 52 – 57):
- British/Americans are conservative people who cherish/hold customs and traditions.
 - British/Americans are very friendly people.
 - Most of my favourite actors and musicians are either British or Americans.
 - British/American culture has contributed a lot to the world.
 - I am interested in British/American lifestyles and cultures.
 - I am interested in lives and cultures of English speaking countries.
- (7) Seven items about self-confidence (i.e. item No. 58 – 64):
- I feel comfortable if I have to speak in my English class.
 - It does not embarrass me to volunteer answer in my English class.
 - I like to speak often in English class because I am not afraid that my teacher will think I am not a good student.
 - I am not afraid if other students will laugh at me when I speak English.

- I do not have difficulty concentrating in English class.
- I think I can learn English well because I perform well on tests and examinations.
- I am good at English.

Validity and Reliability Analysis of the Questionnaire

Before administering the questionnaire to the sample of the study, the researcher gave the questionnaire to students in another university in order to get its validity and reliability.

In order for the students to answer the questionnaire items seriously, the completion process of the questionnaire was conducted in a single class session. During the completion process, the researcher attended physically to monitor and to help the respondents to understand difficult parts.

The results of the validity and reliability analysis showed that the following items were not valid.

- (1) One item on intrinsic orientation (i.e. item No. 5):
 - My attendance in the class will be good.
- (2) Four items on extrinsic orientation (i.e. item No. 18 – 21):
 - I want to do well in English because it is important to show my ability to my family/employer/friends/others.
 - It is important for me to do better than other students in my class.
 - My relationship with the teacher in the class is important for me.
 - One of the most important things in the class is getting along with other students.
- (3) All items on expectation of success (i.e. item No. 43 – 51):
 - English class will definitely help me improve my English.
 - I expect to do well in the class because I am good at learning English.

- If I do well in the class, it will be because I try hard.
- If I do not do well in the class, it will be because I do not try hard enough.
- If I do not do well in the class, it will be because I do not have much ability for learning English.
- If I learn a lot in the class, it will be because of the teacher.
- If I do well in the class, it will be because this is an easy class.
- If I do not learn well in the class, it will be mainly because of the teacher.
- If I do not do well in the class, it will be because the class is too difficult.

From seven components of motivation there are six components which are valid and reliable since the r coefficients of the components and the α coefficient ($\alpha = 0.606$) exceed the r table ($r = 0.22$). The six components are intrinsic orientation ($r = 0.462$), extrinsic orientation ($r = 0.501$), instrumental orientation ($r = 0.653$), integrative orientation ($r = 0.836$), attitudes towards Americans and British, and their culture ($r = 0.628$), and self-confidence ($r = 0.578$). The total number of these six components is 51 out of 64 items.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the quantitative data. The following table shows the result obtained from the SPSS 16.0 computation for the descriptive statistics which are listed based on ranking from the highest mean to the lowest one.

As shown in the table, the highest mean score of the motivational component for the sample of the study was instrumental orientation which was then followed by intrinsic orientation, integrative orientation, self-confidence,

attitudes towards Americans and British, and extrinsic orientation.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Motivational Components

	Min	Max	Mean
Instrumental orientation	1.272	6.000	5.072
Intrinsic orientation	2.416	5.916	4.978
Integrative orientation	1.222	6.000	4.468
Self-confidence	2.428	6.000	4.339
Attitudes towards Americans & British	1.500	5.666	3.896
Extrinsic orientation	1.000	5.200	2.981
Valid N (listwise)			

The result of the quantitative data indicated that three main motivational components that underlie the students to learn English are instrumental orientation (intrinsic orientation (and integrative orientation (. This finding was consistent with the finding of Kimura, Nakata, and Okumura's study (2000), who suggested that the main components of language learning motivation observed in EFL context is complex, consisting of intrinsic, integrative, and instrumental components. Rahman's study (2005) also demonstrated that instrumental orientation is the main motivational component for students to learn English.

The first two motivational components of the present study (i.e. instrumental and intrinsic orientation) were also consistent with the first two motivational components found in Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy's study (1996). However, integrative orientation, as the third motivational component in this study, was not found in their study. Instead, they found that extrinsic orientation is the third motivational component of the students to learn English.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Motivation plays a crucial role in learning a language. It is not only important in getting students to engage in academic activities, but also

important in determining the instruction conducted in the classroom (Oxford, 1994). That is why good teachers have to understand students' motivation because an understanding of students' motivation is very important for a successful instruction in a second or foreign language. Effective teaching demands that teachers must comprehend students' characteristics, at least students' motivation. Such knowledge helps teachers design and tailor the activities conducted in the classroom.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

A few limitations of this present study are worth addressing because they will provide agenda for future research.

First, the scope of investigation of this study was only limited to motivation of college students. Therefore, for future research, it would be of good value to investigate the motivation of students from various learning milieus, including elementary and high school students.

Second, the present study employed only ordinal-scale questionnaire to assess motivation. Therefore, for future research, it would be interesting to include another qualitative component by using interview and observation, such as ethnographic classroom observation, which can produce in-depth data to achieve more reliable results.

Finally, this present study did not aim to find out the link between varieties of motivational components and instructional preferences of the students. Future study could aim at this point that could give more insight into the instructional preferences of Indonesian students.

CONCLUSION

The finding from this study of EFL students supports a conclusion which has been made about language learning motivation. The result of the study indicated that the main motivational component that underlies the students to learn English is instrumental orientation. What have been defined as intrinsic and integrative motivation in ESL context was also found to be the second and the third main motivational component among EFL students.

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