

Motivational Orientation towards Learning English: The Case of Indonesian Undergraduate Students at University Utara Malaysia (UUM)

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ABSTRACT

Realizing motivation is a part of the key aspects in effective English learning as a EFL in Indonesia, there have been many scholars investigating the motivation of Indonesian university students who major in English studies. However, Empirical researches discussing motivation toward learning English of Indonesian students studying abroad from different disciplines are uncommon. Employing Gardner's instrumental and integrative motivation, this research aims to examine the major motivational level toward Learning English of Indonesian undergraduate students who are studying at the University Utara Malaysia (UUM). 20 items of a questionnaire were administered to 89 students from different disciplines. This study reported that the students were highly motivated both in integrative and instrumental motivation. However, they had more integrative motivation than instrumental motivation. In terms of integrative motivation, students learned English because they believe that it can give them the chance to interact with a diverse range of individuals. However, in terms of instrumental motivation, students much concentrate to learn English for their long-term objectives, such as succeeding in their careers and jobs.

Keywords: *integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, English learning*

INTRODUCTION

As an international language, English has a lot of scholars who study how motivation affects learners' performance in learning English. Almost all of them have been unanimous that motivation is essential to learn English both as an ESL or EFL. One of the influential scholars whose works focus on motivation in a second language is Gardner, (1985, p. 10), Motivation is the result of making an effort, having a strong desire to learn a language, and having positive thoughts about language learning.

Gardner, (1985) believes that by having favorable orientation or motivation toward learning English, learners will find the strategy that will guide them to solve the problems found in the learning process which will eventually lead to successful language learning. Gardner stress on efforts and desire of language learners to learn a language. The two elements of motivation cannot be separated from each other, so a motivated learner is a learner who can prove his or her desire in learning English

by producing a good and consistent effort to learn the language.

Gardner (1985) divided orientation into two basic parts; integrative and instrumental motivations. Integrative motivation refers to language learning for intrinsic purposes and cultural enrichments. However, the term instrumental orientation relates to studying a language to achieve more defined or realistic targets.

Furthermore, Instrumental motivation reflected the practical importance that language learning puts, such as increasing one's job potential, getting a better job, and other practical purposes. Additionally, this is described as the desire to gain economic or social rewards by learning a foreign language. On the contrary, integrative motivation represents the 'will or desire of the learners to resemble prominent individuals from the community of speakers of the "other" language.

Motivation is a fundamental aspect of learning (Brewer & Burgess, 2005 as cited in Faraj, 2019). In addition, EFL or ESL teachers should recognize students' motivation as an essential part of learning, not use their feeling to judge their students' lack of motivation, (Ellis 1994 as cited in Faraj, 2019).

Similarly, Sukri et al., (2021) stated that Learning success is significantly

impacted by how important motivation is. Moreover, the same opinion is also stated by Erniyati & Putra, (2022) regarding the role of motivation in EFL or ESL learning, they believe that the success of English learning greatly depends on the students' motivation.

Due to literature review above, it can be concluded that motivation should be the main aspect considered by teachers in English learning. Even if the material is challenging to understand, motivated students will find it easy. On the contrary, despite the material being simple, students with a lack of motivation will find it difficult to understand. Based on that, identifying students' motivational levels is essential as the shake of designing appropriate learning according to students' orientation in learning and then it will assist students in achieving learning objectives. It is by Lebcı et al., (2022), who state that motivation has a strongly positive correlation with students' academic performance.

Accepting the importance of motivational orientation in fostering L2 learning, numerous scholars have researched this field. Each offers a different view on motivation and how it is applied in the classroom. Firstly, Khorsheed, (2021) examined the importance of integrative orientation in English learning as an EFL,

focusing on Syrian non-English major university students. As a result, students possessed a positive attitude in English learning and a high level of integrative orientation.

Secondly, Anwar et al., (2020) investigated the motivational orientation of Indonesian Students in junior high schools studying English as an EFL. The results of this study were in terms of instrumental motivation, respondents were certain that learning English promotes their career forward movement. Additionally, pertaining to integrative motivation, the students believed that learning English is a gateway that can connect them to the cultural norms of English native speakers.

Thirdly, Halim et al., (2020) this study examined primary school students' motivations and perceptions of learning English through *Kahoots!* and *Quizizz*, online quiz-game platforms. A survey questionnaire was addressed to 60 primary school students and then the data were quantitatively analyzed. The results highlighted that the participants possessed a high motivational orientation and positive attitude toward English learning using *Kahoots!* and *Quizizz* as the games had fun and competitive features that can inspire and pique students' interest in fully engaging in the learning process

Another research on the root causes of Indonesian high school students' orientation had been investigated. Sukri et al., (2021a) found that the factors were the roles of gender, teachers' methods, and students' types of motivations, communicative ability, and systems of the school. Another finding of this study highlighted those male and female students possessed different motivational orientations. Females had high integrative motivation compared to males. However, males have a high instrumental motivation compared to females.

The next study on investigating students' motivation was conducted by Mehdi et al., (2022). This study investigated Indian management-major students' motivation in learning English. A survey questionnaire was distributed to 80 business school students in India. This study found that the major motivation of the respondents is instrumental since they were driven to improve their English in order to find better employment and earn more money. This research suggested that knowing the students' motivation level assists teachers to design relevant materials for students by students' orientations in learning English.

Additionally, a comparative study on English learning motivation was conducted by Sun et al., (2022). This study

compared the English learning motivational orientation of Chinese students with non-English disciplines and English discipline. a semi-structured interview was used to get the data. from 4 English and 6 non-English major students. This study revealed that Goal-oriented was more prevalent among English major students, but means-orientation was more prevalent among students from non-English disciplines.

Due to the study review above, it shows how integrative and instrumental motivations have been investigated by many scholars. However, comprehensive research on investigating the motivations of Indonesian non-English students who study abroad is unexplored. Therefore, this study examines the motivations of Indonesian undergraduate students from different fields of study at the University Utara Malaysia (UUM). To contribute significant insights, this study offers the following research objectives;

1. To investigate students' level of integrative motivation toward English learning.
2. To examine students' instrumental motivation toward English learning
3. To know the major motivational orientation of Indonesian bachelor students toward English learning.

METHOD

The numbers of Indonesian undergraduate students who are actively studying at UUM are around 300 students. However, the respondents of this survey research were 89 students only, or 30% of the total number of students. The samples were determined according to (Arikunto, 2006. p. 122 as cited in Paramitha, Suci, (2017).

To obtain the data, this study adapted a questionnaire by Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) with its scales (Khan & Takkac, 2021, Akbulut & Altay, 2021, Delgado-Gonzalez & Herrera-Rivas, 2021). This questionnaire consists of 20 items which are divided as the initial ten items investigate students' integrative motivational orientation and other 10 items examine students' instrumental motivation to learn English. Additionally, this questionnaire consists of 5 points of agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree liker scales. To minimize misunderstandings and obtain respondents' more precise data, the questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Indonesia before administrating to respondents.

The pilot study was conducted to test research instruments whether are appropriate to use in the actual data collection or not. The questionnaire was

distributed to 30 respondents for a pilot study. The reliability of the questionnaire was examined by the researcher using SPSS 26. The outcome demonstrated that the questionnaire had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.889.

Table 1 Checking the Survey's Reliability

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of motivation
Integrative Valid N (listwise)	89	4.09	,824	High

A questionnaire with strong reliability has a Cronbach's Alpha score of at least 0.6 (Sekaran, 2010, as cited in Wulandari, 2018). As a result, the research's questionnaire was valid and suitable for inclusion in the main study. Lastly, to assess the data of the main study, this research utilized SPSS 26 to answer the objectives of this research.

DISCUSSION

Students' Integrative Motivational Level

To indicate the level of motivation, this research uses three mean scores level; 1 – 2.2 mean scores (low), 2.3 -3.6 (medium), and 3.7 – 5 (high). The following tables present the data of mean score and individual items of integrative motivation

Table 2 a test of integrative motivation's mean score

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.889	20

Based on the table above, the mean frequency score of students' integrative motivation is 4.09 with Std. Deviation = ,824. Therefore, it can be indicated that students were highly motivated in integrative motivation toward learning English

Based on the result of students' individual items of integrative motivation, it reports that students had the high motivation of all 10 items of integrative motivational orientation in English learning. Furthermore, *Studying English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with varied people* (mean = 4,25 and Std. Deviation = 0,908), item was the highest mean score in the integrative motivation level.

It can be concluded that as International students, every day interacts with students from different countries who study at UUM, Indonesian students are aware that English is a global language that they can use to communicate with other international students from different countries. So, they learned English because they believe that it can enable them to interact with a variety of people.

Students' Level of Instrumental Motivational

The following table presents the data of the mean score of instrumental motivation.

Table 3 a test of instrumental motivation's mean score

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of motivation
Instrumental	8	3,90	,818	High
Valid N (listwise)	9			

Based on table 3 above, the mean frequency score of students' instrumental motivational orientation is 3.90 with Std. Deviation =,818. Therefore, the students' strong instrumentally motivational orientation for studying English might be seen as a positive characteristic.

According to the result of students' individual items of instrumental motivation, the participants had a high level of motivation for all 10 items of instrumental orientation in English learning. Furthermore, an item of *Studying English is important because it will be useful in getting a good job with a hefty salary* (mean = 4,21 and Std. Deviation = 0,846) was the highest mean score in the instrumental motivation level.

Due to the data above, it might be said that the students' orientation to studying English was that they were highly aware that once they have good English proficiency, it provides them more opportunities to obtain a rewarding position that pays well. It is in accordance with (Lauder, 2008) who stated that the urgency of language to conduct business transactions and communicate with southeast countries and other countries around the world makes learning English an inevitable necessity, (Lauder, 2008). It is undeniable that English is predominantly used as technology's primary language, education, politics, business, science, and tourism.

Students' Major Motivational Level toward Learning English.

According to table 2, table 3, and the description above, the results showed that Indonesian undergraduate students at UUM were highly motivated both in integrative and instrumental motivation. However, they were more motivated towards learning English in integrative with a mean = 4.09 than motivated in instrumental with a mean 3.90. This finding is consistent with previous studies which stated that in learning English, Indonesian undergraduate students are more motivated in integrative orientation than motivated in

instrumental orientation, (Zanghar, 2012 & Arapova, 2017).

According to this study, integrative and instrumental motivations are the main purpose for the students in learning English although there is a little bit of difference in terms of the level. It suggested that English teachers from the university need to design appropriate learning material and methods which promote students' integrative and instrumental motivation in English learning.

Interestingly, integrative motivation is fundamental to participants' needs as university students since English is the main medium of instruction in a classroom at University Utara Malaysia. As a university having many international students from more than 50 countries in the world, its students must have good English speaking skills. Therefore, Indonesian undergraduate students were well-aware of the urgency of English speaking skills on that campus. Therefore, it suggested that teachers need to teach or design learning material that focuses on practical communication skills.

This study concludes that Indonesian undergraduate students are well aware of studying English as integrative motivation such as, having many friends or conversing with people from different countries. Those purposes to learn English are in accordance with what they

commonly need during studying at University. They generally have friends from different countries whom they socialize with. Therefore, they need to have good English communication competency skills in both spoken and written English to converse or socialize with friends from different countries.

Although Indonesian undergraduate students are more motivated in integrative orientation than in instrumental motivation, they still had highly instrumental orientation to learn English. Based on the data above, they much concentrate to learn English for their long-term goals, such as advancing in employment and careers. This implies that university design programs or teachers teach English by promoting students' communication skills both spoken and written according to students' field of study. This does not only assist students to have good English communication skills for daily conversation, but also it helps students better communication skills in their field of study.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this research is to investigate Indonesian undergraduate students' major motivational orientation toward English learning at UUM. The results showed that the students were extremely motivated in both integrative and instrumental although the students have more integrative than instrumental motivation. This implies that university English teachers teaching international students are required to design material or methods which promote students' spoken and written communication skills used for both daily life and professionalism

This study is limited to investigating the motivational level of overall students. To give more comprehensive findings, a similar study that investigates students' motivation based on gender is needed. Additionally, further research is encouraged to design learning material or strategies which can improve students' motivation in learning English.

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