

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH

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Abstract: Improving learning outcomes has always been the target of the foreign language learning practices. The central role of students in the learning process had attracted researchers to conduct research in order to increase students' success in learning. Student motivation is considered one of the factors contributing to students' success in learning a foreign language. Although there is a large body of research on motivation in second/foreign language learning, most studies were undertaken in Western contexts. There is still only a relatively small amount of research on motivation in second/foreign language learning in Asian contexts, particularly in the Indonesian context. This study investigated the motivational factors that influence first year university students' performance studying English as a foreign language

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Abstract: Improving learning outcomes has always been the target of the foreign language learning practices. The central role of students in the learning process had attracted researchers to conduct research in order to increase students' success in learning. Student motivation is considered one of the factors contributing to students' success in learning a foreign language. Although there is a large body of research on motivation in second/foreign language learning, most studies were undertaken in Western contexts. There is still only a relatively small amount of research on motivation in second/foreign language learning in Asian contexts, particularly in the Indonesian context. This study investigated the motivational factors that influence first year university students' performance studying English as a foreign language (EFL) as their major. A questionnaire adapted from Gardner (1985), consisting of a range of motivational scales that have been widely used in studies on motivation, was utilized and students' demographic information was collected. The study

STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

There is a large body of research on motivation in foreign language learning in various contexts. These studies explored affective measures such as integrative and instrumental motivation, social factors, and employment opportunities and students' ability to adapt to academic requirements. Key findings of these studies revealed the role of affective measures in successful language learning. Instrumental and integrative motivations as aspects of the affective measure were also found to influence academic achievement as well as job prospects. In addition success in learning the language was also related to an individual's ability to adapt to the academic requirements.

Bacon and Fineman (1990) investigated the role of instrumental motivation in the foreign language learning. Using self-reporting instrument, they surveyed 938 first-year students taking

Spanish at two major Midwestern universities in the US to investigate their motivation as well as strategies for learning Spanish. Factor analysis was used to test the internal consistency of the survey instrument and to improve interpretation of data. Findings suggested that motivation played a role in strategy choice: non-instrumentally motivated learners were more likely to use global/synthetic strategies and avoid decoding/analytic comprehension. Svanes investigated the acquisition of Norwegian and motivation of 167 foreign students enrolled in classes of 'Norwegian for foreign students'. Findings revealed that European and American students studying at the University of Bergen were found to be more integratively motivated to learn Norwegian than Middle Eastern, African and Asian students who were found to be more instrumentally motivated. This suggested that both integrative and instrumental motivation existed in those who learned Norwegian. However, students of Asian, Middle Eastern and African backgrounds were more instrumentally motivated.

The fact that Asian students tended to possess more instrumental motivation in learning a foreign language was also shown by Teweles who investigated the levels of motivation in learning English of 40 freshman and sophomores at two national universities in mainland China and Japan. Participants responded to a 40-point attitudinal questionnaire and 6-point follow-up motivational intensity scale. The findings revealed that the majority of participants showed high motivation (87.5 percent of the Japanese and 95 percent of the Chinese) where instrumental motivation was higher to learn English. Lai also reported the instrumental trend of Asian students in learning English after investigating 200 undergraduates through interviews. Seventy percent of the participants indicated that the reason they had taken an English language course was to improve their English for career preparation.

Although several studies have showed that students learning a foreign language have a tendency to be more instrumentally

motivated, other studies showed the opposite tendency. For instance, Chou investigated attitudes and motivations of 285 university students toward learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Taiwan using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that participants showed more integrative motivation than instrumental motivation. Furthermore, findings also indicated that English major students scored higher in almost every aspect of the motivational variables than non-English major students. Hsieh also examined the influence of affective variables such as age, aptitude and motivation on 200 Taiwanese university students' performance in English. A questionnaire was used to measure the affective variables, and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was used to measure student performance. The study findings suggested that integrative motivation, aptitude and some aspects of personality had statistically significant effects on successful learning experiences. The studies Chou (2005) and Hsieh (2004) suggested that motivation together with other variables such as aptitude and personality measures were significantly related to successful language learning. These findings enhanced the finding of previous research by Niederhauser who drew examples from the South Korean context, argued that low motivation was the reason why many students at Korean university failed to reach their full potential as English language learners. Thus, students who are strongly motivated would have greater potential to be successful in learning languages.

On the other hand, motivation and success in language learning have been also related to social factors. Canagarajah reported contradictions between the decreasing motivation of 13 female and 9 male Tamil university students in an English for general purpose course and their verbal affirmations of their motivation. He argued that there was a contradiction reflected in the conflict between cultural integrity and socioeconomic mobility. Gan, Humphreys and

Hamp-Lyons' study also showed the role of social factors and success in foreign language learning. They investigated the relationships between self-directedness for language learning and English language learning attainment among university students on the Chinese mainland and in Hong Kong. They obtained the data through interviews, diaries, and follow-up email correspondence with nine successful and nine unsuccessful second-year EFL students at two Chinese mainland universities where their data was collected. There were six categories constructed from the qualitative data using grounded theory methodology. The finding suggested that the different levels of success in foreign language learning were caused by variability in internal cognition and emotion and social context among other things.

In addition, the ability to adapt to the academic requirements and individual learning efforts complemented motivation as an important factor for successful language learning. For example, Macaro and Wingate found that success in the language course was due to the ability of participants to adapt to the academic requirement and to be well-prepared for their studies as well as being instrumentally motivated. In this study, Macaro and Wingate investigated a sample of 19 state-educated students in their first year of a German course at Oxford University. They investigated students' motivation for studying German through a semi-structured interview. The findings of a study conducted by Ushida revealed that students' motivation and attitudes influenced their efforts to learn the second/foreign language. Ushida investigated the role of students' motivation and attitudes in second/foreign language learning within an online language course involving a group of 34 students who enrolled in French and Spanish language online courses. The respondents were requested to complete two AMTBs. The first AMTB was completed at the beginning of the term and the second at the end of the term. At the next stage, twelve students consisting of highly motivated and less motivated students in each class, based on

the result of questionnaire, were selected for the semi-structured interviews.

The studies reviewed in this section provide evidence of the importance of integrative and instrumental motivation in foreign language learning. Social factors have also been found to influence the motivation of students in learning a foreign language. Besides these, the ability to adapt to academic requirements and learning efforts enhanced the learning experience. Within Asian contexts, there was an inclination for students to be instrumentally motivated when they chose to study English. However, most studies in Asian contexts were conducted in either China or Japan. The project describe in this paper, therefore, focused on investigating university students' motivation in learning English as their major in Indonesia. Several variables adapted from Gardner's AMTB were used to obtain data for the purpose of this study and information related to students' academic performance was also collected.

METHODS

A. Participants

There were 126 students from the English Department, Manado Sate University in Minahasa who participated in the study. The students were in the first year of their university studies and from three different programs. These were the English education program, the non English education program and the English for Business program. There were 43 male students and 83 female participants aged 18 to 23.

B. Instruments

The main instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts.

Part one gathered personal background information such as name, class, gender, parents' occupation and income. The second part was based on Gardner's motivational scales that have been widely used in studies on motivation in second/foreign language learning . Gardner's scales, which were used in the questionnaire for this study, were

- Scale One : Integrative orientation (4 items)
- Scale Two : Instrumental orientation (4 items)
- Scale Three : Motivational intensity (8 items)
- Scale Four : Attitude toward learning English (10 items)

To ensure that comprehension of the questions was not a problem, the questionnaire was developed in a parallel bilingual format, Indonesian and English, allowing students simultaneous access to both language versions. This helped to ensure that any unfamiliar concepts and vocabulary in one language were available in the other. The students were asked to rate on a Likert-type five-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” at one end to “strongly agree” at the other end. The scales in the questionnaire were designed to measure their motivation towards learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

Test analysis was performed for each scale to check the reliability of these scales of integrative and instrumental orientations, motivational intensity and attitudes toward learning English in the questionnaire. The results were examined and only three items (item 6,7,8 see Table 1) in scale Motivational Intensity were found to be less correlated with other items in the same scale with item total correlation of .0 to -.1. These items were then removed from the scale. This left the motivational intensity scale with 5 items. The overall alpha for the four scales ranges from .66 to .82. The test item results showed that the scales had good internal consistency reliability. Table 1 shows the average of inter-item correlations among the variables:

Scale	Ave. Inter-item corr.	Alpha
Integrative orientation	.227	.536
Instrumental Orientation	.182	.469
Motivational intensity	.331	.469
Attitudes toward learning English	.210	.723

Table 1:
Internal consistency reliability

Pearson product moment correlation was computed to find out which correlation among the variables was significant.

C. Students' Academic Performance

Information related to students' academic performance in English subject was also collected in addition to the questionnaire. The grades of students taking part in the study were collected in order to complement the questionnaire results in computing the correlation with the variables used. The grades were obtained from the Secretary of the English department for these students. The indicator of their performance was the final grades they obtained in English-related subjects in the first semester. These subjects were Speaking 1, Listening 1, Reading 1, Structure 1, Pronunciation Practice and Dictation. These grades were the accumulation of the results of the mid semester and final semester examinations, a structured assignment task, an independent assignment task and attendance. As the grades were on all on the same scale and the standard deviations

for these subject grades showed similar distributions, the scores could be summed and the mean could be calculated to obtain one score for each student representing the average academic performance across English subjects for university students (see Figure 1).

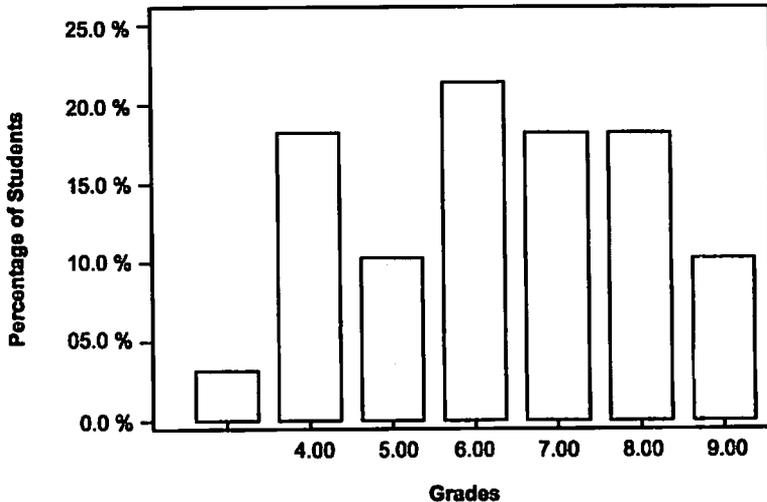


Figure 1:
Overall Students' Academic Performance

The mean of female students grades is slightly higher ($M=6.36$) than those of the male students ($M=6.30$), as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2.

School	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
UNI	M = 6.93 SD = 1.863 N = 43	M = 7.07 SD = 1.682 N = 83	M = 7.03 SD = 1.682 N = 126

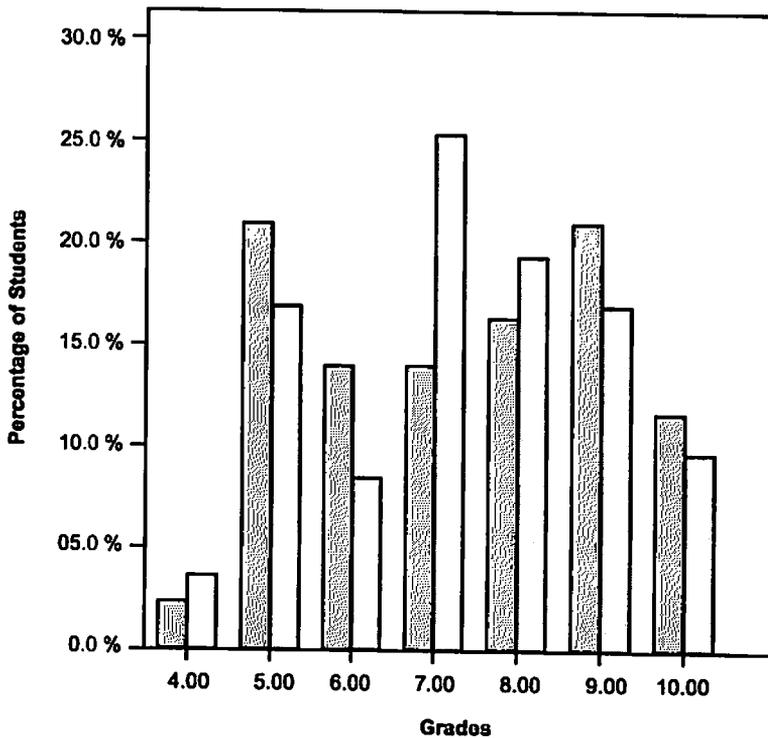


Figure 2:
Grades based on Gender

RESULTS

A. Participants' Backgrounds

The participants of this study came from various high school² backgrounds.

Study Program	Frequency	Percentage
SMU-IPA	30	23.8%
SMU-IPB	52	41.3%

Study Program	Frequency	Percentage
SMU-IPS	20	15.9%
SMK	24	19%
Total	126	100.0%

Table 3:
Students' Educational Studies Backgrounds

Based on the combined income of parents per month, the majority of the parents (87.54%) earned 2 million rupiahs (roughly A\$150-A\$300 in June 2006) or less, the rest earned higher than 2 million rupiah (see complete figures in Table 4).

Income (In Rupiah)	Frequency	Cumulative	Percentage
Less than 1 million	60	60	47.62%
1.01 – 2 million	44	104	34.92%
2.01 – 3 million	13	117	10.32%
3.01 – 4 million	3	120	2.38%
4.01 – 5 million	3	123	2.38%
5.01 – 6 million	0	123	0
Over 6 million	3	126	2.38%

Table 4:
Description of Parents' Monthly Income

² In the Indonesian education system, there are two types of senior high school: general high school (SMU) and vocational high school (SMK). In general high school (SMU) there are three programs: natural sciences program or Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam (IPA), social sciences program or Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) and languages program or Ilmu Pengetahuan Bahasa (IPB).

Ninety-eight percent of the participants used Manadonese dialect as their home language and only about 64 percent of the participants could speak one of any local languages in Minahasa.

B. Motivation and academic performance

Pearson product moment correlation was performed in order to examine the correlation among variables to establish whether there was a significant correlation between students' motivation and their academic performance. First, the mean of each scale including all cases was calculated. This was done to develop a general description of how the data was distributed.

Variable	M	SD	Gr	IntO	InstO	MotI	Att
1. Grades	7.29	1.22					
2. Integrative Orientation	4.08	.520	.200*				
3. Instrumental Orientation	3.45	.548	.215*	.339**			
4. Motivational Intensity	3.91	.548	.018	.282**	.447**		
5. Attitudes toward Learning English	4.42	.318	.119	.375**	.309**	.469**	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Table 5:

Coreletion Matrix with Mean (M) and Standard Deviates (SD)

The computation of correlation matrix in Table 5 shows that the four variables were correlated with each other. The correlation coefficient between these variables ranged from $r = .282$ to $.469$ (at 0.01 level). Student academic performance represented by grades was only correlated with Integrative Orientation with $r = .200$ (at 0.05 level) and Instrumental Orientation with $r = .215$ (at 0.05 level).

Because these scales were highly correlated each other factor analysis was performed to check the scales independency. Table 6 presents the results of factor matrix for the four scales used in this study.

Scale	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Integrative Orientation	0.968	—	—	—
Instrumental Orientation	—	0.958	—	.207
Motivational Intensity	—	—	0.225	0.943
Attitudes toward Learning English	—	—	0.951	0.220
<i>Eigenvalues</i>	1.00	1.00	0.99	0.99
<i>% Variance</i>	25.138	25.074	24.970	24.818
<i>Cum % Var.</i>	25.138	50.212	75.182	100.00

*Values less than 0.25 are eliminated for clarity

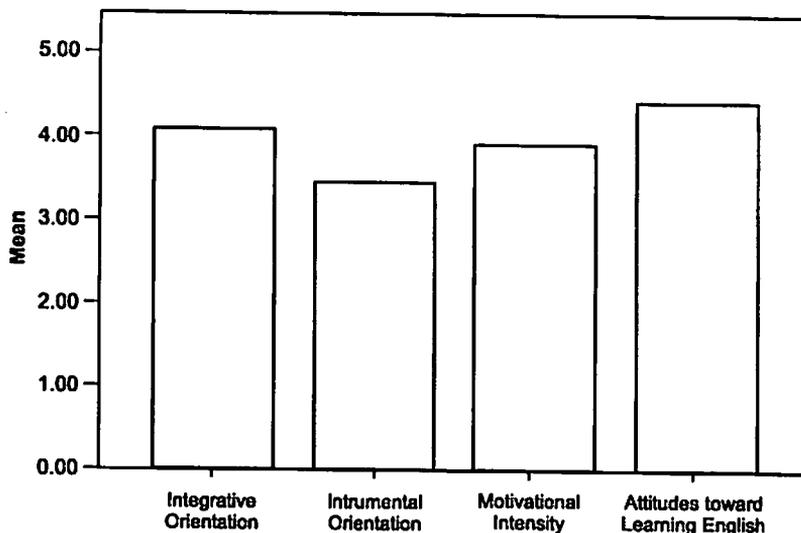
Table 6:
Varimax rotated factor matrix for UNI students

The results of factor analysis suggested that each of the scales was independent and therefore reliable for use in this study.

The mean comparison of these four variables indicated that only Attitudes toward Learning English and Integrative Orientation had the means of 4 or higher (see Figure 3). Similar results also appeared in female and male groups (see Table 7).

Scales	Male N=43	Female N=83	Total N=126	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	SD
Integrative Orientation	4.0465	4.0934	4.0774	.52006
Instrumental Orientation	3.4593	3.4398	3.4464	.53629
Motivational Intensity	3.8419	3.9398	3.9063	.54827
Attitudes toward Learning English	4.3372	4.4675	4.4230	.31778

Table 7:
Comparison of Means of Four Variables based on Gender



DISCUSSION

The scales used in this study have been widely applied in various studies in the area of motivational research. With reference to Indonesia, no studies undertake in this country have used these scales before, however the internal consistency reliability of the scale is highly satisfactory (α ranged from .66 to .82).

There were two scales which had means of 4 or greater: Integrative Orientation ($M = 4.08$) and Attitudes toward Learning English ($M = 4.42$). Between integrative and instrumental, the results showed that the motivation of these university students was more integrative than instrumental, with $M = 4.08$ and $M = 3.45$. (maximum score of 5), respectively, with no difference between male and female students. This is interesting because in Indonesia, English is not a language of communication in the community, nor the medium of instruction in formal education. English is a foreign language learned in schools. Usually in a country where a foreign language is solely a subject in school, the motivation of students who learn the language

tends to be instrumental as they learn the language to enable them pursue careers or for social recognition .

Having more integrative motivation shown by the students can be interpreted as the students seeing themselves not just as member of one country but beyond their community. They considered themselves as part of this global world where English is considered as the international language. Western movies and songs which are available and easily accessible by students was also another factor which stimulate them to having more interest to be part of this global world and therefore support them to be integratively motivated in learning English, as written by several students in the questionnaire when they were asked to write any comments regarding their studying English.

The computation of the correlation matrix shown in Table 5 shows that the four variables were correlated to each other. The correlation coefficient between these variables ranged from $r = .282$ to $.469$ (at 0.01 level). Student academic performance represented by Grades had only correlated with Integrative Orientation with $r = .200$ (at 0.05 level) and Instrumental Orientation with $r = .215$ (at 0.05 level).

The correlation matrix showed that there is a significant correlation between students' academic performance and Integrative Orientation with $r = .200$ (at 0.05 level) and Instrumental Orientation with $r = .215$ (at 0.05 level). This suggests that if the students are highly motivated they will work harder to achieve better academic performance. This result suggests that encouraging students to study hard and motivating them will impact on their performance. Teachers and the school environment can play an important role in motivating students to study English well.

This study found no significant difference between male and female students in terms of their academic performance. This may suggest that both female and male students were performing equally

well in the subject and they were equally motivated in learning English.

What could be learned from this study? For university, specifically for the English department, in order to prepare trained English teachers with high quality, it is important to develop students' motivation and to encourage them to develop positive attitudes about English so that when they go into teaching profession they could apply similar thing to their students. For students who would choose different career path, at least they would be kept motivated themselves or share their view on motivation to other colleagues.

For students, knowing how important it is to be motivated in order to gain success should increase their awareness of the need to be more dedicated in their learning, in particular in EFL learning. This would lead them to improve their academic achievement. In the long term, they may consider it useful in coping with the demand in their future career.

CONCLUSION

The study suggests that students' motivation in studying English as their major in the English department was more integrative ($M=4.08$) than instrumental ($M=3.45$). This indicates that the reason for studying English have expanded and are not just about career development but encompass the desire to have more opportunities to converse with English speaking people and gradually have the ability to participate in the English speaking people community.

The result of the Pearson product moment correlation computation showed that there was a positive significant correlation between students' academic performance and their motivation to study English. The higher their motivation in studying English is, the better their academic performance. This may suggest that curriculum designers and the teacher need to develop a curriculum which

accommodates activities in and out the classroom in order to stimulate students' motivation to learn English.

These findings supported as well as extended many previous research studies in motivation and second language learning (Gardner 1990, 1991; Gardner and Clement 1990; Gardner and Lysynchuk 1990; Gardner and Tremblay, 1994; Gardner, Tremblay, and Masgoret 1997) as the findings strengthened the information related to the role of motivation in second language learning. These findings also showed a significant correlation between motivation and academic achievement which made motivation a more substantial factor to successful English language learning.

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