

## The Motivational Factors that Contribute to ESL and MFL Learning among Diploma Students

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### Abstract

Learning a target language such as ESL and MFL will require a high level of motivation but what is the main factor that will motivate students to study the target language? This quantitative research aimed to identify the motivational factor which encouraged the students to pursue their learning in ESL or MFL. The three factors studied are the language itself, the learner, and the learning situation. Data were collected using an online survey involving 331 respondents from several higher education institutions in Malaysia. The data collected from the survey were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results showed that the language itself has become the strongest factor that motivates the students to learn ESL and MFL because the students justified that the knowledge in these languages will assist them for getting a job. In addition, results revealed that from the learner factor, the students genuinely interested to learn ESL and MFL themselves. This study also found that from the learning situation factor, there is a slight discrepancy between ESL and MFL. For ESL, the students stated that they enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak English while for MFL, they regarded the whole learning experience is enjoyable. Results produced from this study contributed in terms of the aspects that needs to be given more attention to such as the learner factor and learning situation factor as these factors can be improved in order to enhance language learning motivation in pursuing ESL and MFL.

**Keywords:** English as a Second Language (ESL), Language Learning Motivation, Mandarin as a Foreign Language (MFL), University Students

### Introduction

Language learning motivation is important for learning the second or even third language as it is vital to comprehend what are the motivations that keep students to be engaged with their language learning. The importance of motivation in language learning are identifying the frequency of language learning strategies, associating the occurrence of interaction with native speakers, recognizing the input received from learning the target language, connecting the students' performance in curriculum-related achievement tests, correlating their general proficiency level and linking the perseverance in maintaining the

target language skills after formal language study ended (Ely, 1986; Gardner, 1992; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; as cited in Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

According to Mackey (2014), there are three things which are important in language learning success. The first element is the learners' working memory which can be understood as how long you can retain the language information before it is produced through language tasks. The second element is the learners' associative memory which means the learner ability to connect the new language learned with the information which they have learned using their native language. The third element is the implicit learning mechanisms as in the ability to figure out patterns in information. She further added that apart from these three keys to language learning success, the language learning effort is further amplified with the other aspects such as aptitude (Gardner & Lambert, 1965), access to personalised instructions (i.e., instructions that has been tailored to match students' abilities and interests) and motivation (Dörnyei, 1994).

In this study, the second language is referring to English language (ESL), while the third or foreign language is referring to Mandarin Language (MFL). The underlying theory employed by this study is The Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation as introduced by Dörnyei (1994). The factors which are identified that can motivate language learning for English and Mandarin language are the language itself, learners and learning situation. Hence, this study attempted to identify the strongest factor that motivate students to learn either ESL or MFL. By identifying the factors that can motivate students to learn the target language, hence any required improvement can be taken to enhance factors that can be altered such as learners and learning situation.

This paper builds on the existing literature by providing an empirical assessment of the relationship between motivational factors such as language itself, learners and learning situation on learners' motivation while studying ESL and MFL. The contribution to the literature is twofold. Firstly, the aspects of these motivational factors were under studied before in the literature especially in Malaysian context. To illustrate, Mat Teh, Embi, Nik Yusoff and Mahamod (2009); Tan, Ooi and Ismail (2012); Muftah and Rafik-Galea (2013); and Tan, Ismail, Hoe and Ho (2016) studied the influence on the factor of language itself with the language learning motivation. For the relationship between learner and language motivation, these studies can be referred such as Choy and Troudi (2006); Yau, Kan and Cheng (2011); Jain and Sidhu (2013); Meyad, Roslan, Chong and Haji (2014); and Che Mat and Md Yunos (2014). On the other hand, the factor of learning situation which is mainly contributed by the instructor apart from the language course and learning in groups, these factors were previously conducted by Lau and Elias (2011); and Haw, Awang and Ahmad (2016).

Secondly, this paper documents how the language learning motivation between ESL and MFL is affected by the three stated motivational factors mentioned earlier. These previous studies are only looking at one of these dimensions without consideration for the other. Studying these motivational factors together using The Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation by Dörnyei (1994) allows a better understanding on how these factors affect the language learning motivation in these two target languages. Available empirical evidence suggests the motivational factors with only one target language (either ESL or MFL) and not many studies have compared the language learning motivation between

these two languages. Indeed, studying the comparisons between these two target languages will influence in seeing efficiency of these three factors on language learning. For instance, Humphreys & Spratt (2008) stated that the motivational dimensions may be interpreted differently in different settings and in relation to different languages, as different environments produce different sets of beliefs. This is considered the valuable criteria of why this comparison study between ESL and MFL is conducted in looking much closely the language learning motivation among its learners.

## **Literature Review**

### *Integrative Motivational Subsystem*

Integrative motivational subsystem can be defined as an auspicious attitude toward the target language community; possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use of the language (Gardner, 1985). According to McDonough (1981), there are two aspects of integrative motivation which are a general desire for wider social contact and a desire to belong to a community by acquiring the psychological characteristics of the target language community. From this premise, Tan, Ooi and Ismail (2012) found that the learners in their study generally have an interest in the foreign language to strengthen friendship, but do not desire to integrate into the target community. This situation seems to reflect the socio-political environment in Malaysia which encourages close rapport between the different ethnic groups of people. In another different study conducted by Mat Teh et al. (2009), they concluded that the respondents in their study were moderately motivated and tended to have stronger integrative motivation than instrumental motivation or effort to learn and use the Arabic language. Religion could possibly be an explanatory factor here. As Muslims, the learners in this study have been taught to respect the Quran. This finding indicates that social-religious factors may influence learners' motivational orientations for foreign language learning. In other words, this type of motivation would arouse the learner of certain language with a strong interpersonal quality, as the urge to learn the language comes from the learners themselves.

### *Instrumental Motivational Subsystem*

A distinct understanding of instrumental motivational subsystem by Gardner (1985) is a more functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement. To demonstrate, based on the research findings by Muftah and Rafik-Galea (2013), pre-university learners are more instrumentally motivated in their English language learning concerning of getting a good job, their future career, making a person more knowledgeable, give them a chance to work globally as well as show the learners' need to understand English-speaking films, videos, television or radio and their need to read English books and to communicate. Qualitatively, Tan et al. (2012) illustrated that the learners in their study are strongly motivated to take up the Mandarin course because they believe Mandarin will help them in their future career and their interests in learning the language which fits the description of language to serve utilitarian purpose.

However, there is no fine line that can separate learner's motivation in learning a language between integrative and instrumental motivation. In other words, learners can use either integrative or instrumental motivation interchangeably. For instance, in qualitative research that uses mainly educational artefacts such as written essays, Tan et al. (2016) attempted to gain insights on learners' motivation towards learning Mandarin. They derived

nine categories from the essays which are Future Career, Communication, Future Self, Interest, Friendship, External Influence, Culture, Academic Requirement, and Travel. Thus, these themes can be divided according to instrumental and integrative notion, whereby future career, external influence, academic requirement, and travel are the elements for instrumental motivation and communication. Conversely, elements such as future self, interest, friendship, and culture can be classified under integrative motivation. It shows that instrumental and integrative motivation co-exists with one another.

### *Learner Level*

#### (a) Need for achievement

Learner's need for achievement motivates them to accomplish any task related to the language, even though at certain times, learners will face some difficulties while completing it (Zenzen, 2002). Apart from that, some learners would consider the value of the task before completing it before having the need to make their learning a success. Without value, which comes in the form of valence, incentive value, attainment value, task value, achievement task value and so on (Atkinson & Raynor, 1974; as cited in Maehr, 1974), the learners will choose not to perform the task even if they are capable of doing so. Meyad, Roslan, Chong & Haji (2014) showed a positive relationship between achievement (independent variable) and motivation (dependent variable) in learning Arabic grammar. Despite Arabic grammar is perceived as difficult by most learners, they are still able to succeed in Arabic grammar, due to high motivation to learn the foreign language.

While these studies (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Vallerand, 1997; Noels, Pelletier, Clément & Vallerand, 2000; Yau, Kan & Cheng, 2011; Cortright, Lujan, Blumberg, Cox & DiCarlo, 2013) unanimously correlate achievements with intrinsic motivation, Wang (2008) took a different yet invigorating approach by discussing achievement in the light of extrinsic motivation. The finding from Wang's (2008) study indicated that autonomous extrinsic motivation correlated positively with intrinsic motivation and achievement, while controlled extrinsic motivation correlated negatively with them. Autonomous extrinsic motivation can be understood as internal fulfillment regulation, whereby learners who possess this kind of extrinsic motivation have recognized the importance of English learning and internalized it into their self-value system. As a result, they tend to put forth more effort, search for more appropriate strategies, and employ autonomous learning, which leads to greater achievement. On a different note, controlled extrinsic motivation or in other words, external utility regulation decreases autonomy and causes EPLOC (external perceived locus of causality). Thus, it correlated negatively with intrinsic motivation. This language learning is illustrated through learners' inclination to learn English mainly because of external factors, such as to graduate, or to pass an English or Mandarin examination. The downside of controlled extrinsic motivation is if students do not get prompt rewards, they probably will not persist in learning the target language.

#### (b) Self-confidence

From the motivational factor of learner, this factor also taps into the realm of self-confidence whereby students' motivation is affected by other sub-factors such as language use anxiety, perceived L2 competence, causal attributions, and self-efficacy. Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1994) have abstracted Foreign Language Classroom Motivation which comprised of tri-componential approach to Foreign Language Behaviour and Competence which are (1)

Integrative Motivation, (2) Linguistic Self-Confidence and (3) Appraisal of Classroom Environment. Out of three components proposed, only linguistic self-confidence will be discussed further in this section.

According to Clément et al. (1994), self-confidence influences second language proficiency both directly and indirectly through the learners' attitude and effort expanded on learning English. The direct course indicates the aspects of contact with second language and its users provide the learners with skills readily applicable in the classroom, or in other words contact with members of the second language community but with considerable amount. The indirect course specifies a contact with the second language culture through the media. For example, with the world languages such as English.

Without sufficient contact either direct or indirect with the source of target language, this will further decrease their self-confidence in using the language and demotivate students from learning second language successfully. Muftah and Rafik-Galea (2013) have identified several demotivating factors such as few opportunities to access English or to interact with others using English, few chances to communicate with English native speakers, not encouraged to speak English during their secondary studies, insufficient chance to learn English especially in listening and speaking skills, and a lot of time spent on grammar learning. In a qualitative study conducted by Choy and Troudi (2006), their findings suggest that Malaysian learners overall do not have enough exposure to English. Many may have poor attitudes towards the language because they do not understand the culture or the nuances of the language. The language is perceived as a necessity for survival in the Malaysian society. Learners learn the language because they must, not because of a love and interest for it. The cause of this attitude could be the result of poor fundamentals in school and lack of a supportive sociocultural environment.

Apart from lack of direct or indirect contact with the source of second language, anxiety can also decrease self-confidence among students. Che Mat and Md Yunos (2014) pointed that their respondents from rural area are affected by anxiety which could become a possible factor of their fear in language learning at school. This will increase the chance of demotivation among rural areas learners to learn second language. On the same token, Jain and Sidhu (2013) concluded that anxiety has negative impact on attitude and motivation among the tertiary learners in learning English as a second language with regards to discipline, gender, and language proficiency. The results from their study indicated that the increasing level of anxiety will also create negative attitude and decrease the level of motivation of the learners regardless of discipline, gender, and language proficiency. This shows that some learners tend to have high level of anxiety when their conscious mind comprehended that they will be facing certain language task. It should be noted that learners lose interest in studying, especially English even in primary school because of low self-esteem, poor self-confidence, and a lack of motivation to learn from language instructors.

#### *Learning Situational Level*

In this section, another component from the theory of Foreign Language Classroom Motivation as proposed by Clément, Dörnyei and Noels's (1994) which is appraisal of classroom environment is discussed as it is related to this motivational factor as proposed by Dörnyei (1994). Clément, Dörnyei and Noel correlate classroom environment with group

cohesion as it is associated with positive evaluation of the learning environment, thus forming a broader “perceived classroom situation” cluster. They also stated that classroom environment emerges as a motivational subsystem independent of integrative motivation and self-confidence. A good classroom atmosphere promotes learners’ involvement and activity while moderating anxiety and promoting self-confidence. In a language classroom, learners are expected to bring a level of self-confidence and anxiety related to any language tasks as instructed by the language instructors and thus the quality and quantity of learners’ self-confidence will influence classroom comportment, achievement, and anxiety. Clément, Dörnyei and Noel also claimed that when a learner is being active in class, it means that he or she believes that he or she is also able to use English outside the classroom as well. Despite the minimal contact either through direct or indirect source of second language, what the learner has experienced in language classroom can be a vital source of negative experiences with actual consequences which can leave certain amount of affective impact on learners and eventually, leads them down to suffer from language anxiety. Furthermore, Gardner (2001) constituted the aspect of attitudes towards learning situation in his theory of motivation. In a classroom context, Gardner (2001) incorporated elements such as attitudes towards the language instructors, classmates, coursework, activities associated with the course, and all other relevant language learning situation.

In a fascinating study conducted by Bernard (2010), she examined twenty language activities which can either motivate or demotivate a student by employing a factor analysis using Varimax rotation whereby six factors have emerged from her study. The first factor, Personalised Language Use is represented times when the language was used to communicate about a learner’s life or interests in either spoken or written form, even if that language use was very simple. The examples of language activities are speaking about your life or interests using the language and writing about your life or interests using the language. The second factor, Exclusive Use of the Language included doing few translation exercises and the language instructors speaks in the second or foreign language at a high percentage of the time. Regardless of how much speech or writing a learner *produced* in the L2, this variable captures the amount of English (or more specifically, the lack thereof) that a learner heard or read in the classroom. The examples of language activities are doing translation exercises, and the frequency of the language instructor speaks in the language. The third factor, Deep Language Use includes activities related to reading longer selections in the language, as well as producing more complex writing and speech. This index indicates more advanced comprehension and manipulation of the language. Some of the language activities which can be conducted are read longer selections in the language (i.e., literature, poetry, stories), have class discussions using the language, role-play or create dialogues with the language and do large projects such as write stories or reports, make videos, and give presentations. The fourth factor, Mechanics includes activities that either teach, reinforce, or measure mastery of the mechanics of the target language. The language activities that can be conducted are the language instructor gives lectures, either in English or in the language, take quizzes or tests and learners repeat things the language instructor says, or do call and response exercises. The fifth factor, Fun includes exposure to and use of the language in a non-drill format, such as through music, games, or film. For instance, the language activities are sing or listen to songs in the language, play games using the language and watch movies or television. The sixth factor, Cultural Exposure measures the extent to which learners participate in cultural activities or interact with native speakers of the language. The language activities which can

be done under this factor are do cultural activities (learn dances, make food, celebrate holidays), talk with native speakers (people who grew up speaking the language), not including the language instructor and do worksheets or exercises out of the textbook or workbook. However, there are also some language activities which do not belong to any of the stated factors. Those language activities are read in the language (includes reading directions, simple sentences, questions), use authentic materials (newspapers, magazines, movies, cartoons, and so on that were originally made for people who grew up speaking the language, not for the learners who are learning the language) and use technology such as MOOC, flipped classroom, blended learning or mobile phone apps (not including TV programmes or movies).

Bernard (2010) explains these activities from the viewpoint of motivation whereby applying activities from the factor of Personalised Language Use, for instance using the language to talk about one's own life or interests, even superficially, is a predictor of how motivated the learner will be about learning the language. Activities associated with Personalised Language Use satisfy the need of learner autonomy as autonomy is a basic psychological need and is positively associated with intrinsic motivation (La Guardia, 2009; as cited in Bernard, 2010). When learners are allowed and encouraged to speak and write about things that are important to them and applicable to their own lives, this is a form of choosing what to do such as what to write or speak about; language instructors who allow this kind of choice are indirectly showing their support for learners' perspectives and ideas. When a language instructor implements activities from the Fun factor, learners are motivated about the language class. Consequently, classroom activity from Fun factor is a significant predictor whether the learners plan to continue studying the language. Renninger, Bachrach & Posey (2008; as cited in Bernard, 2010) suggested that incorporating both Fun activities and Personalized Language Use into the classroom may trigger the situational interest that is the first stage in interest development so that learners will be influenced to continue their study in target language. On a brief note, the factor of Exclusive Use of the Language, learners will become more extrinsically motivated while performing the language tasks.

### *Cause Specific Motivational Components*

Courses specific motivational components are related to the syllabus, the teaching materials, the teaching method and the learning tasks, and can be well described within the framework of four motivational conditions proposed by Keller (1983) and subsequently by Crookes and Schmidt (1991): intrinsic interest; the relevance of the instruction to the learner's personal needs, values, or goals; expectancy of success; and satisfaction in the outcome of an activity and the associated intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

#### (a) Language instructors' specific motivational components

Language instructors' specific motivational components concern the language instructors' conduct, personality and teaching style, and include the affiliative motive to please the language instructors, authority type (authoritarian or democratic teaching style), and direct socialisation of learner motivation (modelling, task presentation, and feedback). A language instructor's role in a language classroom is undeniably important as Haw, Awang & Ahmad (2016) highlighted the issue of lacking trained Mandarin language instructors. This situation has become a threat to language learning motivation for Mandarin students because this condition would affect their rights for mother tongue education and contributes to the

decline of quality and efficiency of Mandarin language learning, due to the loss of professionalism.

In addition, language instructors' support in language classroom is also perceived as the most important dimension in order to boost learners' motivation with their language learning. In the study conducted by Lau and Elias (2011), their respondents who are among Form Four learners stated that affiliation is a crucial aspect in their language classroom apart from language instructors' support, rule clarity, task orientation, involvement, and lastly, the order and organization. Affiliation measured the level of friendship that learners feel for one another in their classroom, and this can be achieved when a language instructor plays his or her role to create a harmonious learning atmosphere among the learners despite the chance of competitiveness may exist at some extent.

A language instructor's responsibility could also determine the intrinsic or extrinsic motivation experienced by students. There was an inverse relationship occurred when learners are highly involved in the classroom, thus their intrinsic motivation is likely to decrease (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007; as cited in Lau & Elias, 2011). This is because different learners might lack the abilities to understand the content despite their effort to understand the content of their course as meticulously as possible. The learners might feel their weakness in language abilities are exposed while learning English language courses such as ability in learning literature, ability in learning grammar, ability to comprehend, ability to write in English, and so on. Therefore, even though learners have intrinsic motivation to learn, however, the lack of understanding may result when they are facing the problem in ability.

Therefore, by having affiliation in the classroom as stated earlier, this is the strategy which can be used by language instructors to inculcate extrinsic motivation in encouraging peer-based learning, as this strategy can reduce the fear of evaluation faced by learners when they are expected to perform in certain language skills. Thus, this shows language instructors' role in enhancing extrinsic motivation among learners could encourage them to take part in classroom activities and execute their responsibility as good learners.

#### (b) Group specific motivational components

Finally, group-specific motivational components are related to the group dynamics of the learner group (for an overview, see Dörnyei and Malderez, 1997, in press; Ehrman and Dörnyei, 1998) and include goal-orientedness, the norm and reward system and classroom goal structure (competitive, cooperative, or individualistic).

### **Methodology**

This quantitative study utilized a questionnaire which consists of three parts: Part A, Part B and Part C. Part A of the questionnaire gathers information on the respondents' demographic profile. A purposive sample of 331 students (Male = 87 and Female = 244) from a few higher education institutions (HEIs) were chosen as respondents for this study. The respondents aged between 18 to 26 years old were from various Diploma and Degree programmes. The demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1.



Table 1

*Demographic Profile of Respondents*

Profiles	Students	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	87	26.3
	Female	244	73.7
Age	18 – 20	281	85
	20 – 26	50	15
HEIs	Kolej Profesional MARA	16	4.8
	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak	11	3.3
	Universiti Teknologi MARA	304	91.8
English Proficiency (Based on SPM)	A+	3	0.9
	A	49	14.8
	A-	27	8.2
	B+	47	14.2
	B	56	16.9
	C+	40	12.1
	C	53	16.0
	D	32	9.7
	E	10	3.0
	Not stated	14	4.2
Mandarin Proficiency	Level 1	142	42.9
	Level 2	167	50.5
	Level 3	22	6.6

The 15-item questionnaire was adopted and adapted based on previous study conducted by Zubairi and Sarudin (2009). Part B of the questionnaire investigated the tenets related to motivational factors for learning Mandarin while Part C investigated the tenets related to motivational factors for learning English language. Using the Likert scale of one to five (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree), the respondents identified the extent that each item relates to them.

The data collected from the survey were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics in SPSS. The mean score was measured using the Mean Score Interpretation Table designed by Al-Khasawneh and Al-Omari (2015; as cited in Khong, 2017) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

*The Mean Score Interpretation Table (Al-Khasawneh & Al-Omari, 2015)*

Levels	Mean Score
Low motivation	1.0 – 2.49
Medium motivation	2.5 – 3.49
High motivation	3.5 – 5.0

The main research question of this study identified the motivational factors that influenced Malaysian university learners to study either ESL or MFL based on the work of Dörnyei (1994) on the three main factors of motivation which are language, learner and learning situation. Mean and standard deviation were analysed on the corresponding items for each of the factors. The motivational factors and its measuring items are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3

*The questionnaire items categorized into the three motivational factors*

Orientations	Items
Language level	item 1, 3, 8, 9, and 12
Learner level	item 2, 4, 7, 13, 14, and 15
Learning situation level	item 5, 6, 10, and 11

## Results

Research Question: What is the strongest motivational factor among university learners in ESL and MFL Classroom in Malaysia?

### *Generic Motivational Factors*

Table 4

*Mean and Standard Deviation for three types of motivational factors*

Motivational factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
Learner	4.338	.482
Learning situation	4.388	.517
Language	4.573	.446

Table 4 above shows the descriptive statistics of the three types of motivational factors that triggers the learners to learn either English or Mandarin. The findings presented in mean and standard deviation. According to Table 4, the motivational factor of language has the highest mean of 4.573 (SD = .446) which indicated that the nature of language itself that will make learners to become motivated in learning the language. Another motivational factor that encourages the university learners in this study to learn English and Mandarin is the learning situation (M = 4.388, SD = .517) and learner (M = 4.338, SD = .482).

Table 5

*One-way ANOVA for three types of motivational factors*

Motivational factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Learner level	Between Groups	70.486	65	1.084	46.132	.000
	Within Groups	6.229	265	.024		
	Total	76.715	330			
Learning situation	Between Groups	76.160	65	1.172	25.442	.000
	Within Groups	12.204	265	.046		
	Total	88.364	330			
Language level	Between Groups	59.098	65	.909	35.975	.000
	Within Groups	6.697	265	.025		
	Total	65.795	330			

Table 5 illustrates the result of one-way ANOVA among three motivational factor which influence learners to pursue the target language. The finding shows ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $F = 35.975$ ) for Language factor, ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $F = 25.442$ ) for Learning Situation factor and ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $F = 46.132$ ) for Learner factor. Since for all motivational factors it is  $p < 0.05$ , hence there is a significant difference between the three motivational factors.

*Motivational Factor 1 (Language Itself): ESL*

Table 6

*English learning motivation from Language factor*

Language Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
Learning English will help me to participate in the activities of English cultural groups.	4.625	.612
Learning English will allow me to meet and converse with a variety of people.	4.695	.534
If I were to visit English speaking countries, I would like to be able to speak English.	4.698	.539
I will need English for my future career.	4.764	.472
I think English will someday be useful in getting a job.	4.804	.441

Table 6 showed that English will help the learners to get a job was rated highest mean of 4.804 (SD = .441). Applying English for future career came as the second highest mean of 4.764 (SD = .472). The lowest mean 4.625 (SD = .612) was recorded from the statement participating English language activities. From the perspective of viewing language as a motivational factor, Malaysian university learners in this study stated that by learning English language, the language will help them in getting a good job and helping them further with their career. However, learners are not learning English with the main objective of participating in English language activities. This shows that learners are unaware that when they are joining English activities, this will help them to practice the language outside their classroom. The frequent practice of language will further help them to be acquainted with the language, hence making them become more comfortable to use English anywhere including when they join the workforce in the future.

*Motivational Factor 1 (Language Itself): MFL*

Table 7

*Mandarin learning motivation from Language factor*

Language Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
It will help me to participate in the activities	4.317	.721
I will need Mandarin for my future career.	4.366	.698
If I were to visit Chinese speaking countries, I would like to be able to speak Mandarin.	4.381	.767
It will allow me to meet and converse with a variety of people	4.456	.670
I think Mandarin will someday be useful in getting a job.	4.622	.582

Table 7 above shows the mean and standard deviation of language learning motivation of Mandarin with regards of language as motivational factor. This table showed also that the highest item of the above-mentioned dimension is "I think Mandarin will someday be useful in getting a job." which has the mean of 4.622 (SD = .582). The lowest item of the

aforementioned dimension is "It will help me to participate in the activities." which has the mean of 4.317 (SD = .721). Similar to English language, Malaysian university learners are motivated from the language factor as they viewed Mandarin as the instrument in assisting them in finding a job after they completed their studies. Similarly, to English language, the learners also think that participating in Mandarin language activities is not their purpose of learning Mandarin. It also shows that the learners are reluctant in showcasing their language ability through language activities outside the classroom.

*Motivational Factor 2 (Learner): ESL*

Table 8

*English learning motivation from Learner factor*

Learner Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
I think English will make me a more knowledgeable person.	4.710	.517
It is important for everyone to learn English language.	4.728	.515
I want to read the English literature of its culture in the original language.	4.486	.728
Other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of English language.	4.520	.681
People will think highly of me.	4.236	.890
I would really like to learn English language.	4.713	.533

Table 8 above shows the mean and standard deviation of English language motivation experienced by university learners with regards of learner factor. This table shows that the highest item of the above-mentioned dimension is "I would really like to learn English language" which has the mean of 4.713 (SD = .533). The lowest item of the aforementioned dimension is "I think English will make me a more knowledgeable person" which has the mean of 4.710 (SD = .517). This finding shows that learners really wanted to learn English language based on their own initiative, but they are indifferent whether they are knowledgeable if they are learning English. It shows that learners do not think that they will excel in their studies although they are motivated to learn English.

*Motivational Factor 2 (Learner): MFL*

Table 9

*Mandarin learning motivation from Learner factor*

Learner factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
People will think highly of me if I learn Mandarin.	3.840	.892
I want to read the Chinese literature of its culture in the original language.	3.855	.900
Other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of Mandarin.	3.982	.809
It is important for everyone to learn Mandarin.	4.167	.816
I think learning Mandarin will make me a more knowledgeable person	4.347	.677
I would really like to learn Mandarin	4.471	.662

Table 9 above shows the mean and standard deviation of Mandarin learning motivation experienced by university learners with regards of learner factor. This table shows that the highest item of the above-mentioned dimension is "I would really like to learn Mandarin" which has the mean of 4.471 (SD = .662). The lowest item of the aforementioned dimension is "People will think highly of me if I learn Mandarin" which has the mean of 3.840 (SD = .892). Similar to English, learners are motivated to learn Mandarin because they genuinely want to learn the language and they are apathetic of how other people like their language instructors or their classmates will perceive them if they are learning Mandarin.

*Motivational Factor 3 (Learning Situation): ESL*

Table 10

*English learning motivation from Learning Situation factor*

Learning situation factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
My friend(s) encouraged me to learn English language.	4.420	.760
My language instructors(s) encouraged me to learn English language.	4.586	.697
I enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak English.	4.604	.601

Table 10 above shows the mean and standard deviation of English language motivation experienced by university learners with regards of learning situation factor. This table shows that the highest item of the above-mentioned dimension is "I enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak English" which has the mean of 4.604 (SD = .601). The lowest item of the aforementioned dimension is "My friend(s) encouraged me to learn English language" which has the mean of 4.420 (SD = .760). The finding from this study also indicated that learners are motivated to learn English because of the enjoyment in meeting and listening to people who speak the language. In correlation to learner factor, the finding from the aspect of learning situation shows that the learning motivation among university learners in this study are not

affected or influenced by their friends' encouragement but their own enthusiasm to learn English.

*Motivational Factor 3 (Learning Situation): MFL*

Table 11

*Mandarin learning motivation from Learning Situation factor*

Learning situation factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
Learning Mandarin is an enjoyable experience	4.39	.711
My language instructors(s) encourage me to learn Mandarin language.	4.24	.797
My friend(s) encouraged me to learn Mandarin language.	3.97	.856
I enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak Mandarin.	4.27	.769

Table 11 above demonstrates the mean score and standard deviation for level of motivational factor for MFL in terms of learning situation factor. The findings indicate that item "Learning Mandarin is an enjoyable experience" shows the highest mean score of (M = 4.39, SD = .711) while the item "My friend(s) encouraged me to learn Mandarin language." shows the lowest mean score among other items in learning situation factor with (M = 3.97, SD = .856). Nevertheless, all items categorized under learning situation factor were at the high level of motivation as the mean score of these items are in the range of 3.5 – 5.0.

## Discussions

The results based on the main research question of this study indicated that the strongest motivational factor that influence university learners to learn either English or Mandarin is due to the nature of the language itself. The mean score of language as motivation factor is 4.573 (SD = .446) which is higher as compared to other motivational factors such as learning situation and learners themselves. Regardless on the nature of English or Mandarin, learners are motivated to learn the languages due to "I think the language will someday be useful in getting a job." for English (M = 4.804, SD = .441) and Mandarin (M = 4.622, SD = .582) respectively while they are less motivated when "Learning the language will help me to participate in the activities of the cultural groups." for English (M = 4.625, SD = .612) and Mandarin (M = 4.317, SD = .721) respectively. Based on these findings, it supports the concept of instrumental motivational subsystem as introduced by Gardner (1985) which is the functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement. Besides, the items with the highest mean scores indicated that the learners in this study are making consideration by looking at the perceived difficulty of the language itself before they decide to study the language based on their own motivation. Furthermore, the findings also showed that the learners are not making or being too dependent on factors such as learning situation or learners themselves that would motivate them to study the target language.

Learners perceive language factor as a strong cause that drives their motivation in language learning. In ESL classroom, the highest item is "Learning English will help me to participate in the activities of English cultural groups" (M = 4.625, SD = .612) while in MFL classroom, "It will help me to participate in the activities" obtained M = 4.317, SD = .721 as

the highest item. The result which notes more than 4 in the scale reflects their agreement towards the statement. The finding from this study is synonymous with previous study conducted by Tan, Ooi & Ismail (2012) as they explored that the learners are interested to learn foreign language to serve a certain purpose for instance, strengthening relationship with others but never having the intention to immerse in the community of the targeted language. The coherence of the findings from this study with Tan et al (2012) proves the main reason of learners to learn a language is instrumental, in order to fulfil a certain purpose or task.

In the perspective of the learner factor, the item "I think English will make me a more knowledgeable person." ranks the first among the list of items ( $M = 4.710$ ,  $SD = .517$ ) in ESL classroom while item "People will think highly of me if I learn Mandarin" is the first for MFL classroom ( $M = 3.840$ ,  $SD = .892$ ). Zenzen (2002) posits that learner's need of achievement pushes them to strive any task in relation to the language. Meyad et al (2014) agree to the study as their finding shows a positive relationship between achievement and motivation. This encapsulates the positive relationship between learners' perceived achievement and motivation. In this study, learners are observed to value achievement as to be seen knowledgeable and to be looked highly upon. With the drive to gain both values, they become highly motivated.

Finally, learning situation is strongly regarded as the motivational factor in language learning classroom. In ESL classroom, item "My friend(s) encouraged me to learn English language" gained the highest mean ( $M = 4.420$ ,  $SD = .760$ ) while in MFL classroom, "People will think highly of me if I learn Mandarin" gained the highest mean ( $M = 3.840$ ,  $SD = .892$ ). Crookes and Schmidt (1991) states that intrinsic drives are the relevance of the instruction to personal needs, values, and expectancy of success. The situation of a learner, for instance, the learners' personal needs to be respected by others and to be approved by their peers have become factors to enhance their motivation in learning the targeted language.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### *Summary of Findings and Discussions*

In summary, results from this study indicated the language itself as the strongest factor which motivates the students to learn either ESL or MFL. Among the language factor, the item "I think the target language (either English or Mandarin) will someday be useful in getting a job." has the highest mean for both ESL and MFL. In terms of learner factor, the item "It is important for everyone to learn English language." has the highest mean for ESL while item "I would really like to learn Mandarin." has the highest mean for MFL. As for learning situation factor, the item "I enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak English." has the highest mean for ESL while the item "Learning Mandarin is an enjoyable experience" has the highest mean for MFL. Based on the items with the highest mean, it shows that students become motivated to learn ELS and MFL because they are aware of the importance of being proficient in the target language will give them the upper hand while looking for a job.

### *Pedagogical Implications and Suggestions for Future Studies*

This study has produced results which contributed in terms of the aspects that need to be given more attention to such as the learner factor and learning situation factors as these factors can be improved in order to enhance language learning motivation in pursuing ESL and MFL. As for the learners, their language learning motivation can be improved by constantly

reminding them of their need for achievement such as to graduate, or to pass an English or Mandarin examination as to why they need for achievement such as to graduate, or to pass an English or Mandarin examination as to why they need to pursue ESL and MFL. Besides, self confidence among learners while learning ESL and MFL should also be boosted. The instructors can assist their learners by providing the learners with the skills readily applicable in the classroom. Moreover, learners will also be motivated to learn a language with the integration of second language culture through the use of media.

In terms of learning situation, language learning motivation among learners can be improved by promoting learners' involvement and activity while moderating anxiety and promoting self-confidence. Thus, planning language teaching activities in a language classroom should be carefully done as learners are expected to bring a level of self-confidence and anxiety related to any language tasks as instructed by the language instructors and thus the quality and quantity of learners' self-confidence will influence classroom comportment, achievement, and anxiety. For instance, as stated by Bernard (2010) earlier in Literature Review section, activities which encourage learners to talk about their life and experience in the target language will satisfy their autonomy as learners are in charge of the content that they share with others, thus learners will become motivated to learn language as their perspectives and ideas are heard and appreciated.

Results in this study have also several implications for instructors, curriculum designers and learning institutions to further motivate the students in learning the target language independently through online learning. For instructors, they need to cater their students' learning as students mostly choose to learn ESL and MFL to prepare them in getting a job in the future. Thus, bringing the real-world situation into the language classroom such as having a mock interview and writing a cover letter for applying a job in English or Mandarin will be beneficial for the students. Besides, the instructors can also vary their classroom activities to become more enjoyable, especially for Mandarin classrooms as the instructor should leverage the genuine interest of their students to study Mandarin.

As for the role of curriculum designers, they should take advantage of the main purpose students want to learn English or Mandarin due to their prospective professional job in the future. They need to consider suitable lessons which will motivate the students to learn while at the same time they are prepared with practical 21<sup>st</sup> century skills which are in line with the requirement of industrial revolution 4.0 (IR4). The students are already aware that English is an important language and hence engaging them through online medium to meet and speak in English will be necessary. However, in doing so, the curriculum planned must also consider other aspects such as language anxiety because this can demotivate the learners to perform in language classroom if they are uncomfortable to perform skills such as listening and speaking.

Results yielded from this study also assist the learning institutions to organize more webinars with the themes to motivate the students to pursue ESL or MFL further. For instance, there is a possible opportunity to collaborate between the higher education institution (HEI) with the state government to conduct program such as Graduate Enhancement Training in motivating the students to practice the language skills of English and



Mandarin at their workplace and this could be monitored systematically by experts from the HEIs using a system or proposed manual.

This present research, however, has faced several limitations that could be addressed in future study. First, the participants involved are restricted to the chosen HEIs. Hence, the result of this study cannot be generalized to the whole population of university students in this country. Secondly, the information based on the students' point of view is not available. Thus, this study can be replicated while employing qualitative design in order to identify if there are other opinions which can be categorized into motivational factors (i.e. language itself, learner and learning situation). For future research, it is suggested that a mixed method study on comparisons pertaining to language learning motivation of ESL and MFL can be conducted at other HEIs (provided the HEIs offer these two language courses). From that, it can be seen whether the students from other HEIs might yield different factors (based on these three motivational factors) that motivate them to study ESL and MFL and at the time, a broader perspective can be captured beyond the items which is used in the questionnaire.

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