

Social Factors Affecting Second Language Acquisition and Learning of Polytechnic Students

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Abstract

Second language acquisition and learning are affected by many factors, including internal and external factors. While much research has been done on the impact of various social factors on second language acquisition and learning, little has been done to incorporate social factors with ESL learning for Malaysian polytechnic students, who are rarely studied in the research field. Thus, the focus strategy is to explore how motivation, personality, and socioeconomic background factors affect second language acquisition and learning among Malaysian polytechnic students. This study employs a descriptive quantitative research method using a non-experimental design. The data was obtained from 52 polytechnic students in Selangor using questionnaires. The findings revealed that the types of motivational factors that direct polytechnic students to learn the English language can result from intrinsic and extrinsic tendencies. Furthermore, the students showed an inclination toward extroversion personality factors, including energetic learning, prompt and explicit feedback, oral interaction, and being proactive in learning English as a second language. Moreover, the study has revealed that factors such as income, education qualification, and the occupation level of the learners are the main contributing factors attributing to socioeconomic status. Overall, this study highlighted the significance of social factors in assisting students to acquire and learn a language. By addressing the gap, the study contributes valuable insights on how motivational, personality, and economic factors interplay in Malaysian tertiary education context which guides targeted pedagogical approaches.

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition, Second Language Learning, Motivation, Personality, Socioeconomic

Introduction

Language acquisition is a cognitive process whereby individuals acquire a language through social interaction and demonstrate proficient usage. This process is quite similar to

the acquisition of one's native language. Language acquisition enables individuals to communicate efficiently, representing a natural phenomenon featured by spontaneous usage rather than deliberate and intensive learning.

On the other hand, language learning is a process that is often achieved inside a structured environment, mainly in educational institutions. During language learning, individuals tend to prioritise acquiring explicit knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and other systematic aspects of the language. As such, many factors affect second language acquisition and learning, including internal and external factors. Internal factors encompass several aspects, such as the learner's personality, attitude, motivation, personality, and socio-economic background. External factors typically encompass the political, economic, and cultural milieu. While much research has been done on the impact of various social factors on second language acquisition and learning, not much has been done to incorporate motivation, personality, and socioeconomic factors into the studies. Even though polytechnics make a major contribution to Malaysia's higher education system, it has not received enough attention in SLA research, particularly in how student's social context shape their language learning. Besides, very few studies provided insights into social factors involving Malaysian students. Thus, the present study intends to explore these overlooked factors and aims to shed light on learners whose academic and professional future relies on their English language competence.

In exploring how motivation, personality, and socioeconomic background factors affect second language acquisition and learning among polytechnic students, the following research questions were constructed:

- i. What are the types of motivational factors that affect students to learn the English language?
- ii. What are the personality factors that affect students learning the English language?
- iii. What are the socioeconomic factors that affect students learning the English language?

Literature Review

Motivation

Motivation can be defined as an intrinsic mechanism that propels an individual to engage in an activity and sustains their effort to achieve a predetermined objective. Motivating learners as an internal impetus can facilitate the learning process and inspire and guide learner's learning. Undoubtedly, motivation is a significant factor in the process of acquiring a second language. To some degree, the learning efficacy is directly impacted by the learner's level of motivation. Learners who possess a strong sense of motivation consistently engage in active participation when acquiring a foreign language. Conversely, learners lacking motivation invariably adopt a pessimistic approach toward the learning process and dedicate comparatively less effort and time to acquiring a second language.

There are four types of motivation: Intrinsic, Extrinsic, Instrumental, and Integrative motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal drive that learners possess, which stems from their inherent desire to acquire the language. This motivation is characterized by a willingness and enjoyment in the process of language acquisition (Fandiño et al., 2019). Additionally, this particular form of motivation has been found to significantly enhance learner's level of academic achievement (Zhao, 2021). In contrast, according to Ai et al.

(2021), extrinsic motivation is characterised by the pursuit of external rewards, such as food, money, or recognition, which serve as environmental stimuli. Thus, it might be driven by a propensity to avoid retribution.

Integrative motivation is referred to as the desire to acquire a new language for the goal of social and cultural integration. This type of motivation stems from the individual's aspiration to be accepted by a community speaking a different language and to assimilate into a foreign culture or society (Bagheri Nevisi & Farhani, 2020). Instrumental motivation is mostly influenced by pragmatic considerations relating to professional and academic pursuits (Ai et al., 2021). These include passing an exam, securing employment opportunities, or attaining greater income levels.

Personality

Another important factor that affects the success of language learning is personality traits. Personality is a psychological term that refers to the individual's character in daily life, which ranges from being closed-minded and hard to interact with to being open-minded and friendly (Noviana & Oktaviani, 2022). Paradilla et al. (2021) explained that personality is the characteristics that are able to influence a person's way of thinking, feeling, and behaving. In short, personality refers to individual variability as it is consistent over time but might change due to situational variation.

The Big Five personality traits are one of the most recognised psychological frameworks that are used to describe human personality. This framework factorised individuals based on five traits which are openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Nateghian & Mohammadnia, 2022; Šafranĳ & Katić, 2019). The extraversion in the Big Five refers to the extent to which a person is outgoing, social, assertive, and energetic. These extraverted traits are closely associated with extroverted individuals since they are generally more sociable, enjoy interacting with others, and gain energy from social situations. The way to distinguish extraversion from extrovert is by looking at extraversion as a broader personality trait, while an extrovert is an individual who possesses high levels of extraversion. Introversion, on the other hand, represents individuals who are more reserved, and quiet, and may prefer solitary activities.

Many studies were done to look at the two prominent personality types, which are extrovert and introvert in non-native speakers' language learning. Freiermuth and Ito (2020) studied the way personality contributed to their willingness to communicate in English as a second language learning. It was found students with extraverted personalities showed an increased willingness to communicate in English thus reflected in a new positive attitude towards second language learning. On a similar note, Šafranĳ and Katić (2019) investigated the relationship between personality traits of the Big Five and willingness to communicate. It was also found that only four traits which were Extraversion, Agreeableness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect, had significant positive relations with willingness to communicate. On the other hand, Nateghian and Mohammadnia (2022) found that both extroverts and introverts appreciated error corrections from their lecturers or lecturers as a way to improve their speaking.

Socioeconomic

As defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary, socioeconomic is of, relating to, or involving a combination of social and economic factors. It is the social science that analyses the effect of economic activities in shaping social progress. In other words, it evaluates how modern societies evolve, fester, or relapse due to their local or global economy. Socioeconomic status (SES) involves not only income and occupation but educational achievements as well. The socioeconomic status (SES) of a family is positioned on the educational level of the family, income level, occupation, and social status in society, and each person or family has their own socioeconomic status in society (Akram et al., 2021).

A family's income level is one factor determining the socioeconomic (SES) status of the family. One of the main focuses of the study conducted by Danquah (2020) was to investigate the influence of students' socio-economic background concerning their achievement in English within Senior High Schools in West Akim, Ghana. Among the objectives included determining the general socio-economic background of the students. After examining one of the factors, namely the income level of the participants' families, Danquah (2020) discovered that 28.3% of the participants' families reside in the low-wealth index category, while the majority, accounting for 46.8% of the participants, belonged to the middle wealth index category. This data, bifurcated with other contributing factors such as education and occupation, revealed that higher socioeconomic background contributes significantly to the academic achievements of English learning, the income of the family is one of the attributes. Furthermore, this result provides valuable insights into the economic background of the participants and can prove helpful in understanding the overall socio-economic landscape of the study population.

The research study conducted by Abbasian et al. (2020) to analyse the role of socioeconomic status and parental education in foreseeing EFL learners' receptive skills performance revealed a substantial correlation between the two factors. The author used samples of 300 English language learners to examine the interrelationship between SES of family, parental education background, and listening and reading comprehension. Evaluating the result of the research, it was affirmed that the highest parental education proficiency was the highest predictor of reading comprehension and listening skills. Parental educational priorities and social status also altered second language literacy skills (Abbasian et al., 2020).

According to the review conducted by Hasanah et al. (2019) on the research steered by OGO, English as a second language is significantly influenced by numerous social factors, with parental occupation being one of the most noteworthy factors. Furthermore, the study emphasised the importance of understanding the underlying social dynamics that play an essential role in using English as a second language, particularly in contexts where it is not the dominant language. This study, conducted with 240 middle schoolers in Akure Ondo Regional Government, Nigeria, evaluated how parental work impacted the use of English in the classroom. The aforementioned proposition theorises that parents with high educational proficiency may not necessarily exercise English as the language of choice for daily communication within their households. Given that society is a microcosm of the larger world, such a state is likely to have a discernible effect on their children's academic performance as they are often seen as a reflection of their parents (Hasanah et al., 2019). Concerning occupation, another alluring finding that the author derived from the study is the

linguistic codes and verbal development of the middle class, accentuating their complex conceptual hierarchies compared to the lower working classes.

Besides the three common socioeconomic factors, other underlying attributes are considered in SES. For instance, Pradhan and Sreenivasan (2021), along with education and financial constraints, highlighted that household responsibilities hinder some students' education. Pradhan and Sreenivasan (2021) further elucidated the growing significance of ESL globally, both professionally and economically. Intriguingly, while Hasanah et al. (2019) focused on sociolinguistics aspects, the factors evident from the study also relate to socioeconomic context. As the main finding of Hasanah et al. (2019) revealed, parental work and education have a significant effect on students' use of the English language in the classroom, the authors accentuate parental interaction and involvement as well. Noting the need for parental involvement, Hasanah et al. (2019) stressed the need for parents to provide support by equipping the student with the necessary materials for education. Reiterating this means only parents with higher income levels can facilitate such means for the students. Preceding this discussion, Rahmayani et al. (2022) also asserted the paramountcy of providing sufficient resources such as study rooms, books, and learning materials which may be only possible in a higher SES.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive quantitative research using a non-experimental design. The participants were chosen using convenience non-probability sampling among polytechnic students in Selangor. The set of questionnaires for this study was adapted from Sabboor Hussain et al. (2020), Nateghian and Mohammadnia (2022), Noviana and Oktaviani (2022), and Nyamubi (2019). The data was obtained using questionnaires. According to Basturkmen (2010), questionnaire surveys are useful to obtain information quickly and cost-effectively. The link to the online questionnaire was sent to the class representatives through a social network application and snowballed to other classmates who were the identified participants of this study. Hence, a total of 52 students responded to the survey and the data was analysed descriptively using quantitative calculations such as frequency counts and percentages.

Findings and Discussion

Demographic Background

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Students

Variables	Frequency (Number of Students)	Percentage (%)
Age		
18	4	8
19	22	42
20	24	46
22	1	2
24	1	2
Gender		
Male	25	48
Female	27	52

Variables	Frequency (Number of Students)	Percentage (%)
Parents' highest education level		
Tertiary	27	52
Secondary	18	35
Primary	4	7
No formal education	3	6
Family household income		
Less than RM 5,000	36	69
RM 5,000 to RM 9,999	11	21
More than RM 10,000	5	10
Parent's occupation		
Public	14	27
Private	18	35
Self-employed	13	25
Day labourer	3	6
Unemployed	4	7

As shown in Table 1, the participants involved in this study range from 18 to 24 years old, with 20 years old being the age mode. In terms of gender, it is almost equally balanced with only a slight advantage on females. The finding also revealed a contradicting relationship between education level and household income. It is striking that the majority (52%) of parents of the students obtained tertiary education but most of them (69%) earned less than RM 5,000 per month which is the lowest income category. In addition, with regards to the highest contribution of parent's occupation, 35% of them work in the private sector followed by 27% in the public sector, and 25% are self-employed. With a significant percentage of the private sector and self-employment types of occupation, it is surprising that the family income is still relatively low because these occupations are normally viewed as having better pay.

Motivation

Table 2

Data analysis of the student responses (motivational factor)

Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA
%	%	%	%	%	%
Whenever I come across difficulties in learning English, I usually ask my lecturer or classmates to explain them.	2	2	23	48	21
If I find something difficult in English, I usually try to find the reason for its difficulty and finally find a solution to understand it.	2	0	21	64	21
If I find something conflicting or strange in the teaching material in my English language class, I usually ask my lecturers to explain the reason.	2	0	25	46	25
I think learning English is important and it provides me with opportunities to excel in my academic life.	2	0	4	37	54
I usually participate in ESL classroom activities to achieve high grades in the exams.	2	6	31	39	21
I usually feel happy and excited when I achieve high grades in English on exams or class tests.	4	0	2	48	50
I feel confident when I can independently read and comprehend a newspaper article or a book in English which is not part of my course.	4	2	2	46	42
I usually like to participate in classroom activities because English language lecturers use a variety of methods to make the lesson interesting.	0	2	19	54	27
I take an interest in learning English because the material is exciting and enjoyable.	2	0	21	48	25
I feel quite comfortable in my English language class and I am fully satisfied with the facilities provided to me and other students in my class.	2	2	17	67	17

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

To investigate the types of motivation among polytechnic students, 10 questions were presented from the 30-question survey to the 52 participants who responded. As demonstrated above in Table 2, the survey had responses on the Linkert scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. When the data was analysed, out of the 10 questions, some questions had a major significance that needed to be highlighted. As such below are the questions that appear to have noteworthy variations based on the responses.

The first question “Whenever I come across difficulties in learning English, I usually ask my lecturers or classmates to explain them”, 48% of respondents agree and 21% strongly agree to this question. This data indicates that 69% of students opine on seeking help from their lecturers or classmates when encountering difficulties in learning English. Similarly, the question “If I find something difficult in English, I usually try to find the reason for its difficulty and finally find a solution to understand it”, depicts a percentage of 64 agree and 21% strongly agree as responses. It gives a picture that, students have a proactive approach to overcoming

difficulties. Both these questions demonstrate a positive inclination toward learning the English language, whether it is getting assistance from their lecturers and peers, or finding solutions to understand difficult concepts. The responses to these questions relate to individuals' attitudes toward challenges in learning English, but they also draw different aspects of motivation. The first question implies a method that is driven by external factors, demonstrating that the students are motivated by the support and assistance they receive from others. This indicates that the students are extrinsically motivated. On the other hand, the latter question shows an inclination towards internal motivation. The students have a proactive approach to comprehending challenges by independently trying to find the solution for the difficulty caused. This implies an intrinsic motivation fueled by an inner aspiration to overcome the challenges.

Another significant question is "I think learning English is important and it provides me with opportunities to excel in my academic life" to which 37% agree and 54% strongly agree as responses. The responses indicate students believe that learning the English language is a key factor in excelling academically. Consequently, the question "I usually feel happy and excited when I achieve high grades in English on exams or class tests" has also a positive response with 48% agreeing and 50% strongly agreeing. This data reveals that students have a positive emotional feeling toward achievement, which in turn creates motivation to study hard and the desire for excellence. Another question that adds to the result demonstrated above is the question "I feel confident when I can independently read and comprehend a newspaper article or a book in English which is not part of my course". Participants responded with 46% agreeing and 42% strongly agreeing. This shows that attaining proficiency as an autonomous reader in a second language is a significant achievement in a student's academic journey. It boosts learners' confidence and empowers them to delve into various books of their interest in the target language. All of these three questions suggest a collective combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. When we analyse the first question discussed it reflects intrinsic motivation, where students express the importance of learning the English language to be successful in personal and academic development. The second question reflects both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation where positive emotional experiences driven by personal satisfaction suggest intrinsic motivation and the desire to achieve higher grades connect to the extrinsic motivation component, resulting in the external reward of good grades contributing to positive emotions. The last question depicts intrinsic motivation where they feel confident when they can read materials other than what is provided in their classroom.

Additionally, the question "I usually like to participate in classroom activities because English language lecturers use a variety of methods to make the lesson interesting", shows 54% of respondents agreeing and 27% strongly agreeing. This indicates that the majority of the participants have a positive attitude to participate in classroom activities because of the interesting teaching methods employed by the lecturers. However, a minority of 19% of the participants have a neutral response to this question, which may be interpreted as some aspects of teaching methods being appreciated while having reservations about others. This reveals that the students enjoy the activities conducted in the classroom thus showing signs of intrinsic motivation. Similarly, the other question, "I feel quite comfortable in my English language class and I am fully satisfied with the facilities provided to me and other students in my class", reports a percentage of 67 agree and 17% strongly agree. This suggests that the

students are generally satisfied with the classroom environment, the methodologies lecturers employ and the materials provided. Student satisfaction with the provision of classroom facilities plays an important role in learning to occur. Thus, creating an environment where students' motivation to learn is enhanced.

The aforementioned evaluations of the student responses demonstrate that motivation serves as an effective factor in second language acquisition and learning. It encourages learners to attain their objectives through persistent effort and determination. Two major types of motivation emerged from the results. Some of them were inbuilt or intrinsic while others were compelled by external or extrinsic sources. The amount of motivation in both types cannot be quantified using any specific standard, however, it may be assessed by considering factors such as their enthusiasm for learning, drive for personal growth or success, social validation, and contentment with their learning environment.

Personality

The questionnaire consists of 10 questions to investigate the students' extroversion personality traits. The options in the questionnaire were constructed of 5-Likert scale options of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The scales of strongly disagree and disagree indicate a low level of extroversion, while neutral represents the average level of extroversion, and agree as well as strongly agree options signify a high level of extroversion. As extroversion personality traits contradict to introversion, a low level of extroversion means that the individuals are inclined to a high level of introversion personality, and vice versa. However, the findings of this study are presented by focusing on the extroversion personality in English language learning.

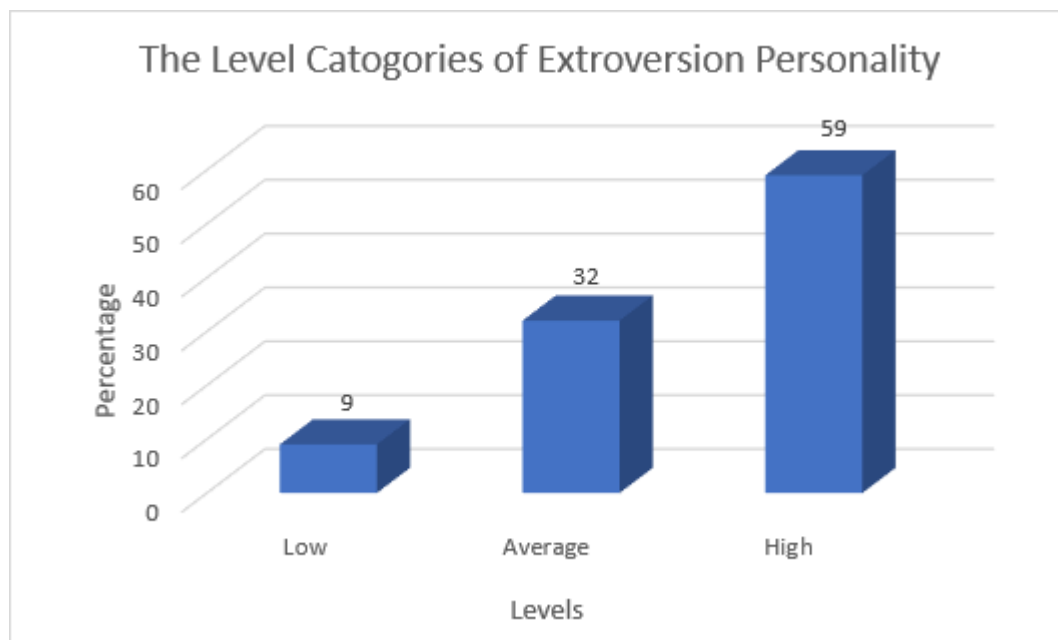


Figure 1 The Degree of Students' Extroversion Personality

Figure 1 above shows that the students were grouped into low, average, and high categories of extroversion based on their self-rating to the questions on personality traits. It can be seen that 59% of the students fall under the high extroversion category and 32% of

them are in the average group. The prominent personality percentages reveal that they are indeed extroverted students.

Table 3

Descriptive Analysis of Personality Factors

Questions	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
I get excited by a long discussion in language class.	2	31	52	13	
I work best in groups in language class.	4	0	48	33	15
I would rather give a speech in front of the class than listen to my classmates' speeches.	7	10	50	23	10
I find it easy to speak loudly in language class.	2	15	40	31	12
I like to spend time with my classmates from language class.	2	4	40	38	16
I want my lecturers to correct all of my errors when I speak English.	2	0	19	46	33
I feel embarrassed when the lecturers correct me in front of other classmates.	10	23	40	23	4
When my lecturers correct me, I want him/her to tell me what I got wrong and provide the correct form immediately.	2	0	15	48	35
I try to correct and practice my errors after the lecturers correct me by repeating after him/her.	2	0	13	62	23
I remember the errors I made and the corrections my lecturers gave me for a long time.	2	4	17	58	19

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N= Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

The survey responses on the personality factors are presented in Table 3 and several findings are worth to be discussed. For the first question in this subsection “I get excited by a long discussion in language class”, the findings show that a majority of 52% of respondents agree and 13% strongly agree with this statement. This points out that a total of 63% of the students enjoy arguing and debating their thoughts with others. This finding supports the personality attribute of extroverted individuals of being energetic. In contrast, 48% of students rated neutral for question two “I work best in groups in language class”. Similarly, the question “I would rather give a speech in front of the class than listen to my classmates' speeches”, also records high neutral responses of 50%. Their indifference to these two questions indicates that even though extroverted students enjoy discussing in English classes, they do not always purely prefer group work and being the centre of attention. This finding suggests the need to vary teaching and learning approaches or classroom activities among monogenous types of personality students. Their reluctance to give a speech also does not reflect the assertive quality of extroverted persons. In fact, these responses contradict the findings from previous studies by Freiermuth and Ito (2020) and Šafranĳ and Katić (2019) that associated extroverted students with their positive willingness to communicate. It can also be inferred that the family's economic background may indirectly influence their extrovert attribute in speaking. Due to the fact that the majority of them come

from the lower income class and are often seen as detached from being proficient in English, they might have lower confidence to speak in the English language in front of others as expected from the common extroverted students.

Another noteworthy question is “When my lecturers correct me, I want him/her to tell me what I got wrong and provide the correct form immediately”, which received positive responses of 48% agree and 35% for strongly agree. This indicates that a total majority of 83% of students learn better through prompt feedback and explicit means of teaching from their English lecturers. Besides, this shows that extroverted students value oral interaction which helps to clarify any ambiguity that might occur in non-verbal cues in order for them to learn the target language. They also do not view the corrections made during speaking as intrusive as they have a better ability to handle chaos as compared to introversion type of students. Consequently, for the question “I try to correct and practice my errors after the lecturers correct me by repeating after him/her”, 62% of the students rated agree and 23% of them rated strongly agree to the statement. This shows that a total of 85% of the students take proactive measures to learn the language by practicing the correct forms as demonstrated by the lecturers. This provides the understanding that extroverted students are always seen as proactive individuals who enjoy interaction with others. Thus, they retain the right language input in their cognitive mind better.

The analysis mentioned earlier illustrates that personality plays a crucial role in second language learning. It shapes the way the students learn effectively, especially in the context of the classroom. The prominent extrovert personality factors found in this study include energetic learning, prompt and explicit feedback, oral interaction, and proactive. However, classroom activities are less significantly affected by the extrovert personality factor as most of the students take a neutral stance. Therefore, regardless of the students being extroverted learners, there are still differences that distinguish them from other groups of students with a similar personality type. Thus, lecturers need to play an active role and vary their classroom activities to cater to the different needs of students as extroverts are inclined to rely on direct interaction with others.

Socioeconomic

Table 4

Descriptive Analysis of Socioeconomic Factors

Questions	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
My parents encourage me to practice my English as much as possible.	2	0	29	44	25
My parents have stressed the importance of English	10	8	37	33	13
My parents think I should devote more time to studying English.	2	4	46	37	12
My parents feel that it is very important for me to learn English.	2	0	23	48	27
My parents feel that I should continue studying English all my life.	2	2	46	35	15
My parents give me study materials to support my English learning.	4	4	40	35	17
Young people in my area like learning English language.	4	4	38	40	13
I feel comfortable in my learning institution because I get basic services.	2	0	21	58	19
There are enough English books.	4	6	37	40	13
My parents follow up on my assignment.	8	8	37	27	21

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

Analysing the significant findings represented in Table 4, which consists of the responses on the socioeconomic factors, it is evident that there are notable findings to be discussed concerning socioeconomic factors and their impact on learning the English language. The survey questionnaire consists of 10 out of 30 questions specifically focused on the socioeconomic aspects of 52 respondents. The survey had responses on the Linkert scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree.

Evaluating the first question statement, "My parents encourage me to practice my English as much as possible", 44% of the respondents strongly agree, and 25% agree, which means a total of 69% of respondents' parents encourage their children to practice the English Language. This can be because 52% of respondents' parents had gained tertiary education and would be expected to be well-educated. However, a notable number of 29% reported neutral to the first statement. These results are consistent with Rahmayani et al. (2022) study, which highlighted the significance of parents' education as a crucial aspect of EFL learning.

Interpreting the second statement, "My parents have stressed the importance of English," a significant number of 37% of respondents, reported neutral, in comparison, 33% agreed with the statement. Similarly, to the third question statement, "My parents think I should devote more time to studying English," 46% of respondents reported neutral once again, while 37% agreed. The second and third question statements report neutral as the highest percentage can be assumed due to the majority of the respondents, 69%, being from low-income families, with family household income less than RM500. It is agreeable that the socioeconomic status of each family would be dissimilar from each other, and families of low

SES can face difficulties in their lives (Akram et al., 2021). With lack of necessities being one reason, providing basic facilities such as food, shelter, and clothes would be the utmost priority. What could be drawn further from such a situation in a family can be a lack of necessary means for educational opportunities. Hence, participants may feel sceptical about the statement and the majority choosing “neutral” can be assumed due to negative feelings associated with financially deprived families.

However, the results of the fourth question statement contrast the previous two statements, reporting that 48% of respondents agree and 27% strongly agree with the remark, “My parents feel that it is very important for me to learn English.” Perhaps this could be due to parents' expectation of their children to be competent in the English language when they could not achieve a successful education due to low income and low education qualifications. Interestingly, to the latter statement, 23% once again reported neutral. Correspondingly, 46% of respondents reported neutral to the statement, “My parents feel that I should continue studying English all my life,” and 40% reported neutral as well to; “My parents give me study materials to support my English learning.” The respondents' impartial response choice could be once again due to most of the participants originating from low-income families. According to Hosen (2021), economic resources, such as income and spending capacity, support students' English learning, and it can be drawn from the demographic profile of the students; parents' occupation and income level would be the contributing factors to these results.

Analysing the next three question statements, which focus on respondents' learning institution, living area, and English book, 40% of respondents agree that young people in their area like learning English. A notable number of 58% reported feeling comfortable in their learning institution due to getting basic services, while 40% of respondents agree that there are enough English books available for them. Unfortunately, once again, attributing to parental roles, 37% of respondents reported neutral to the statement, “My parents follow up on my assignment.” Though only 52% of respondents' parents hold tertiary education qualifications, 35% hold up to secondary. This result could imply that many parents may not be competent enough to review their children's work. In addition, a staggering number of 35% of respondents' parents are in the private sector, so they may not have enough time to follow up on their children's work. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that almost half of the respondents, 48%, confirm that their assignment is monitored by their parents, which can once again imply that the result could be due to half of the respondents' parents holding tertiary education.

Upon examining the above interpretations, socioeconomic factors such as the family's income level could be the highest contributing component, while education level is the second highest and occupation is the third. Due to the significant number of neutral responses to the question statements attributing to parental encouragement and support, it can also be assumed that most students do not receive adequate assistance from their parents or families. While the above-mentioned three factors are commonly used to determine socioeconomic status, interestingly, other underlying attributes are considered in SES. For instance, in analysing the socioeconomic impacts, the study by Abbasian et al. (2020) suggested that learning institutions should initiate the involvement of ELL parents in their student's growth as this would lead to betterment in bridging strong coalitions with ELL

families. What can be indicated from the study conducted by Nyamubi (2019) is that SES does not only encompass parents' education, income, or occupation but also includes parental encouragement and support in a socioeconomic context.

Conclusion

This paper investigates the social factors affecting second language acquisition and learning. It explored how motivation, personality, and socioeconomic background factors affect polytechnic students' second language acquisition and learning. As such, from the questionnaire provided to the participants, it was found that the motivational factors that direct polytechnic students to learn the English language can result from intrinsic and extrinsic tendencies. The recognised intrinsically based motivational factors include their belief in the importance of learning English for academic success, the positive emotional response to high achievement, confidence gained from being able to independently read other materials, and the satisfaction with the experience of interesting teaching methodologies their lecturers employ to make learning enjoyable. Additionally, the extrinsically oriented motivational factors as their source of motivation toward learning the English language proposed reasons such as the support and assistance they receive from their lecturers and peers, the desire to excel in proficiency, and the contentment of a positive classroom environment.

In addition, it was also discovered that the majority of the students have average or high levels of extroversion personality. As such, the students showed the inclination towards extroversion personality factors, including energetic learning, prompt and explicit feedback, oral interaction, and being proactive in learning English as a second language. In contrast to extroverted individuals being social and outgoing, the students did not often enjoy group activities and giving speeches in front of others. The differences are significant for the lecturers to avoid generalising the fixed set of personality attributes among the same type of personality students when planning and carrying out English lessons.

Moreover, the study has revealed that factors such as income, education qualification, and the occupation level of the learners are the main contributing factors attributing to socioeconomic status. The family's income level could be the highest contributing component from the mentioned three factors, while education level is the second highest and occupation is the third. Due to the number of neutral responses to the question statements attributing to parental encouragement and support, it can also be assumed that most students do not receive adequate assistance from their parents or families. Examining the literature review, it is evident that several other underlying factors contribute to SES, such as parental interaction, parental involvement, parental support, and so on.

This study makes a meaningful contribution by focusing on Malaysian polytechnic students, who are often marginalised in traditional SLA studies, and examines the clear relationship between social factors and language learning in authentic educational settings. In this country, English proficiency is considered crucial for graduate employability, economic development, and global competitiveness. Thus, the findings confirm that education policy makers should consider the diverse experiences and factors such as motivation, personality, as well as socioeconomic background of young people when planning targeted interventions

or introducing new teaching and learning approaches to enhance students' English proficiency level.

Some recommendations for future studies, such as incorporating activities that align with students' interests and emphasising the inherent value of language proficiency, can be further explored. Additionally, lecturers should give importance to building a positive and supportive environment that encourages meaningful learning to take place by integrating a variety of different teaching methodologies. The limitation of the scope of this study that looks into the motivation, personality, and socioeconomic background factors of language learning as a whole suggests that future studies examine the impact of these factors on a specific language skill such as reading, writing, listening or speaking among diverse populations of students.

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