

# Motivational Factors for Learning Foreign Language at UiTM

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the motivations driving undergraduates at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) in Malaysia to learn foreign languages, addressing the challenges and issues associated with language learning in the country. Although foreign languages are introduced early in Malaysian primary schools, student motivation often declines as they advance to university, and achieving satisfactory language proficiency remains a challenge. Building on previous research, this study highlights the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in language learning. Integrative motivation, which involves a desire to connect with and understand foreign cultures, and instrumental motivation, which focuses on practical benefits such as career advancement, are identified as key factors. Additionally, the study underscores the significance of attitudinal motivation, which includes students' attitudes towards their learning environment, such as teacher effectiveness, course content, and peer interactions. These motivational factors are interconnected and collectively influence students' engagement and success in acquiring foreign languages, reflecting the complexity of language learning motivation. Using a quantitative approach, the study surveyed 254 students from a population of 2,590 enrolled in Arabic, German, French, and Japanese courses at UiTM, employing a questionnaire based on the Foreign Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire (FLLMQ-6). The findings reveal that the strongest motivators are the desire to become global citizens and to understand foreign cultures, with career and economic benefits also playing a significant role. However, students show less motivation to fully integrate into foreign cultures and feel uncomfortable speaking foreign languages in formal settings. In contrast, they are strongly motivated to learn foreign languages for the purpose of communicating with foreigners, indicating greater comfort interacting in informal settings. The study recommends creating supportive, low-pressure learning environments, incorporating culturally immersive activities, and providing real-world communication scenarios to better align with students' motivations. These insights are essential for refining language education policies and practices to better address the needs of diverse learners in a globalized context.

**Keywords:** motivation, foreign language learning, intrinsic & extrinsic motivation, integrative, instrumental, attitudinal

## INTRODUCTION

The teaching and learning of some of the most widely spoken foreign languages such as English, Japanese, Mandarin, and French are emphasized in many education systems throughout the world. Similarly in Malaysia, opportunities are provided for students to learn foreign languages, especially at tertiary institutions (Bodian, 2017). Knowledge of a foreign language (FL) is not just an educational complement but a requisite to achieve full professional and personal development (Rodríguez Muñoz et al., 2024).

Nowadays, learning a foreign language and understanding its culture have become crucial aspects for university graduates who want to enter the global job market, especially when considering employment opportunities abroad (Nyata, 2005). Although professionals may be skilled in many areas, communication with people from other countries depends on foreign language skills and cultural knowledge (Luis Miguel, 2024). Malaysia acknowledges that learning a foreign language is essential in efforts to develop human capital that drives the K-economy and competes on the international stage (Ainol Madziah & Isarji, 2009). Starting in June 1999, the management of Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) made the third language course a university requirement. Arabic, for example, was placed in the third group alongside Mandarin, French, Japanese, and other foreign languages (Musilehat et al., 2017). This enables UiTM students to learn and communicate in three languages: Malay as the first language, English as the second language, and a foreign language as the third language. At UiTM, students from various faculties make their own choice on the foreign languages offered, and the selection depends on their interests, preferences, and need to learn the language. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand and investigate UiTM undergraduates' motivations and why they decided to choose a particular language as their third language. It also allows educators to see students' actual tendencies in learning foreign languages, as well as to help them design better learning strategies to further enhance student motivation.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Foreign language learning is becoming increasingly important within the Malaysian community. With rapid advancements in the fields of economics, education, and technology, proficiency in foreign languages offers considerable advantages to both students and professionals. In addition to Malay and English, the Malaysian Ministry of Education, as outlined in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, encourages all students to learn additional languages such as Indian, Chinese, Arabic, French, and others (Hong, 2023). At the higher education level, foreign language courses are offered either as a requirement or elective, aiming to boost students' competitiveness in the job market (Che Mat & Goh, 2010; Point et al., 2021; Mansor et al., 2022). However, despite this policy push towards multilingualism, limited research has evaluated how well these initiatives have translated into actual improvements in foreign language proficiency and student motivation at universities like UiTM.

Issues surrounding foreign language learning, including languages such as Arabic, Japanese, Mandarin, and French, frequently surface in academic discussions. Various suggestions have been made to enhance students' language proficiency. Despite foreign language education beginning as early as primary school in Malaysia, research by Franchisca et al. (2024) highlights a decline in student motivation as they progress from primary to university levels. Moreover, foreign language proficiency among Malaysian students has not yet reached a satisfactory level, with ongoing challenges persisting (Jamil et al., 2020). Additionally, students' motivation and interest in mastering foreign languages vary significantly, influenced by a range of intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Tan, 2016; Derrick, 2021; Yaqoub et al., 2023). Examining these factors is essential for identifying the most effective strategies to improve foreign language learning outcomes in Malaysia.

This study will specifically focus on the motivational factors affecting foreign language learning at UiTM, addressing the broader issues within foreign language education in Malaysia. While much of the existing literature offers a general overview of language learning, the unique challenges and motivations of UiTM students, shaped by their distinct academic culture and diverse demographics, have not been thoroughly explored. By examining UiTM's language learning environment, curriculum, and student experiences, this research aims to provide institution-specific insights that could lead to more effective strategies for enhancing language education.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Motivational Factors Components in Foreign Language Learning

Motivational factors enhance a learner's receptiveness to new information and influence their learning process, leading to variations in how individuals acquire and process knowledge (Seven, 2020). According to Gardner (1985:10), as cited in Seven (2020), motivation is a major factor in the successful language acquisition. It is considered goal-directed and is defined as "the combination of effort, desire to achieve the goal of learning the language, and favorable attitudes toward learning the language". Motivation is also the most varied influencing factor in foreign language learning, which can be controlled both from the outside, i.e., by other people (this is referred to as extrinsic motivation), and from within, i.e., by the person himself (intrinsic motivation) (Bushi, 2021). Language learning motivation consists of three components that are all necessary and sufficient conditions that an individual must possess for them to be considered a truly motivated language learner. These crucial elements are integrative motivation, instrumental motivation and attitudinal motivation. (Chien, Fu, Boon, Phong & Ying, 2021).

Integrative motivation causes learners to want to learn more about the target language culture, connect with members of the cultural group, and integrate into the target language group (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Studies have found that the desire to learn about foreign cultures is also a factor that increases students' motivation to learn the language. In addition to gaining knowledge about the culture, the desire to become a global citizen also drives students to further deepen their understanding of the foreign language (Bakhtiyarovna, 2021).

In contrast to integrative motivation, instrumental motivation is linked to the practical benefits or value derived from learning a new language, such as applying for a job, earning a higher salary, meeting university requirements, or reading technical materials (Lambert, 1974). Beyond the desire to immerse in a foreign culture, the necessity of learning a foreign language is also driven by career advancement (Zareian & Jodaei, 2015; Hubackova, 2016; Bakhtiyarovna, 2021), offering advantages such as higher salaries and better positions. This is because learning a foreign language is seen as an added value, providing students with a competitive edge in the job market. Furthermore, it opens opportunities for students to work abroad or in international companies that require foreign language proficiency.

Meanwhile, attitudinal motivation is associated with self-efficacy. This type of motivation is divided into three components: teacher-specific, course-specific, and group-specific. The teacher-specific component relates to factors such as the teacher's personality and the teaching methods employed. The course-specific component involves factors related to the subject itself, including the syllabus, learning tasks, and course learning outcomes. The group-specific component pertains to aspects of the classroom environment, such as the use of a reward system, learning objectives, and other related factors (Chien et al., 2021; Bakhtiyarovna, 2021).

Motivational intensity refers to learners' effort in L2 learning, which impacts the goals, self-efficacy, and effectiveness of and attitudes toward language learning (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). A learner is integratively motivated to learn the language because he/she appreciates, admires, is interested to interact with, and wishes to be accepted as a member of the community eventually. Dornyei (1998) puts stress on the influence of motivation, which is considered key to learning a second language and one of the biggest factors affecting language learners' success. Therefore, motivation is crucial in foreign language learning to keep it consistent and achieve learning goals. Without motivation, learners will not persist in all the hard work needed to acquire the language (Chien et al., 2021).

## **B. Foreign Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire (FLLMQ-6)**

Motivation plays a critical role in the acquisition and mastery of foreign languages, serving as a driving force that influences learners' engagement and persistence. Understanding what motivates individuals to learn a new language is essential for developing effective teaching strategies and fostering successful language learning experiences (Franchisca et al., 2024). Motivation in language learning is often categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Intrinsic motivation arises from an internal desire to understand and connect with a new culture or to achieve personal growth, while extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards such as career advancement or academic requirements (Zhong, 2024).

However, Gonzales & Lopez (2016) do not categorize motivational factors in foreign language learning into intrinsic and extrinsic types but instead identifies six distinct factors: (1) the desire to communicate and affiliate with foreigners, (2) the desire to become a global citizen, (3) the desire to integrate with other cultures, (4) the desire for career and economic enhancement, (5) the desire for self-satisfaction in learning, and (6) self-efficacy. Factors (1), (2) and (3) are categorized as integrative motivation, while factor (4) is classified as instrumental motivation, and factors (5) and (6) are considered attitudinal motivation (Chien et al., 2021).

## **C. Past Studies on Motivational Factors in Foreign Language Learning**

Numerous studies have explored the motivational factors in foreign language learning. Among these studies, Chien et al., (2021) conducted research to investigate the motivational orientation such as an integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, and attitudinal motivation for learning Mandarin as a foreign language among undergraduates in a Malaysian public university. The subjects were four hundred and twenty-three Malay undergraduates who enrolled in a level three Mandarin course. A 30-item five-point Likert scale questionnaire which integrated Gardner's socio-educational model and Dörnyei's framework of second language (L2) motivation was used to gather data on the respondents' integrative, instrumental and attitudinal motivations. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Results indicated that generally the students were highly motivated to learn Mandarin as a foreign language. They were both integratively and instrumentally motivated but were more oriented towards attitudinal motivation in learning Mandarin as a foreign language. Moreover, the students were more inclined towards the teacher-specific than the course-specific and group-specific sources of attitudinal motivation in learning Mandarin. Therefore, the next study aims to investigate the factors of motivational orientation among Malay undergraduate students who are taking foreign languages such as Arabic, German, Japanese, and French at UiTM.

Generally, students' motivation levels are high at the beginning of the learning session but gradually decline after some time of studying a foreign language (Bakhtiyarovna, 2021). Consequently, Bakhtiyarovna (2021) conducted a study to identify the motivations contributing to foreign language learning and to determine the factors leading to the decline in students' motivation levels. The study employed a qualitative approach, with interviews as the research instrument. The selected sample consisted of two students with different socio-economic backgrounds. The analysis of the interview data revealed two primary motivations that contribute to foreign language learning: instrumental motivation and attitudinal motivation. In contrast, the factors contributing to the decline in students' motivation levels were identified as teacher quality and teaching methods, class environment, and the lack of utilizing multimedia in foreign language learning.

The study conducted by Zhong (2024) aimed to analyze the key factors influencing foreign language learning. This qualitative study gathered various literature reviews as the primary data source. The analysis revealed that students' levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation vary according to social background and cultural factors. Students with high intrinsic motivation are better able to master foreign languages. Extrinsic

motivation, such as the teaching methods used by instructors during lessons and the classroom environment, also contributes to improved language mastery. The researcher also proposes several methods to enhance both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Notably, teachers are instrumental in offering authentic language materials and facilitating opportunities for students to practice the foreign language within the classroom. Additionally, the study identified a strong positive correlation between motivation maintenance strategies and success in foreign language learning.

This study will focus on the motivational factors influencing foreign language learning among students at UiTM, addressing the challenges identified within the broader context of foreign language education in Malaysia. While much of the existing literature provides a general perspective on language learning across the country, the unique motivations and challenges faced by UiTM students, shaped by their distinct academic environment and diverse demographic composition, remain underexplored. By examining UiTM's foreign language learning context, curriculum, and student experiences, this research aims to offer institution-specific insights that can contribute to more effective strategies for improving language proficiency and student engagement (Abdul Raup et al., 2023). An understanding of these motivational factors is crucial, as teachers and educational institutions can develop more effective strategies to enhance student motivation and performance by being aware of what drives students' learning.

## METHODOLOGY

The design of this study employs a quantitative method using a questionnaire as the primary instrument. The quantitative method was implemented through a survey, and the numerical data collected were analyzed using statistical tests (Chua, 2011). The population for this study consists of 2590 students enrolled in foreign language courses as their third language, specifically in Arabic, German, and French, and Japanese at MARA University of Technology, Selangor Branch. A total of 254 students were selected randomly as the sample for this study based on the Krejcie and Morgan Table (1970). The objective of this study is to examine the factors that motivate UiTM students to learn foreign languages. Therefore, a questionnaire was developed by adapting 'The Foreign Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire (FLLMQ-6)', which has been applied for collecting data (Gonzales & Lopez, 2016). Among the motivational factors applied in the FLLMQ-6 are the desire for career and economic enhancement, the desire to become a global citizen, the desire to communicate and affiliate with foreigners, the desire for self-satisfaction in learning, self-efficacy, and the desire to be integrated with other cultures. From these 6 factors, there are a total of 40 question items.

TABLE 1 Questionnaire Construct

	FLLMQ	Item
1	Desire for career and economic enhancement	8
2	Desire to become global citizen	8
3	Desire to communicate and affiliate with foreigners	6
4	Desire for self-satisfaction in learning	6
5	Self-efficacy	6
6	Desire to be integrated with other cultures	6

The FLLMQ is a five-point Likert-type scale consisting of 40 items, with responses ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree). For the descriptive analysis, the data were examined using basic statistical measures such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and score distribution (Chua, 2011). The results of this study were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26 (SPSS v.26). To determine the level of this



study, the researcher applied the mean score interpretation framework by Jamil (2002) as follows:

TABLE 2 Mean Score

Mean score	Interpretation
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.66	Moderate
3.67 – 5.00	High

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A set of questionnaire was developed and distributed to 254 students enrolled in foreign language courses as their third language, specifically in Arabic, German, and French, and Japanese at MARA University of Technology, Selangor Branch. Table 3 below presents the questionnaire for section A, demographic profile.

### A. Demographic Profile

TABLE 3 Demographic Profile

DEMOGRAPHY	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	60	23.6%
Female	194	76.4%
<b>FACULTY</b>		
Academy of Language Studies	70	27.6%
Faculty of Accountancy	149	58.7%
Faculty of Law	35	13.8%
<b>FOREIGN LANGUAGE</b>		
Arabic	74	29.1%
French	15	5.9%
German	143	56.3
Japanese	22	8.7%

Table 3 above shows the demographics of the respondents for this study. There are 60 male students (23.6%) and 194 female students (76.4%) participating in this study. Three faculties within the social sciences group were selected, where these students are taking a foreign language as their third language at UiTM Shah Alam. There are 70 students (27.6%) from the Faculty of Language Studies, 149 students (58.7%) from the Faculty of Accounting, and 35 students (13.8%) from the Faculty of Law. Among the foreign languages studied in this research, 74 students (29.1%) are taking Arabic, 15 students (5.9%) are taking French, 143 students (56.3%) are taking German, and 22 students (8.7%) are taking Japanese.

### B. Motivational Factors for Learning Foreign Language at UiTM

TABLE 4 Factor 1: Desire for Career and Economic Enhancement

NO.	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
B1Q1	I learnt FL to improve my chances of getting a good job.	3.85	0.864	High

B1Q2	I learnt FL to get a high-paying job.	3.74	0.931	High
B1Q3	I learnt FL because FL proficiency will have financial benefits for me.	3.86	0.959	High
B1Q4	I learnt FL for training in my future job.	3.80	0.917	High
B1Q5	I learnt FL to have better job opportunities after graduation.	4.02	0.893	High
B1Q6	I learnt FL because FL gives me more opportunities after graduation.	3.98	0.887	High
B1Q7	I learnt FL because FL gives me an edge over other applicants for a job.	3.96	0.875	High
B1Q8	I learnt FL because FL is another way of enriching me for my future career.	3.99	0.857	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.89</b>	<b>0.787</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 4 above presents the results for the first motivational factor for learning a foreign language. The overall mean for the first factor, which is the desire for career and economic enhancement, is high at 3.89 with a standard deviation of 0.787. Among the items, B1Q5 has the highest mean value of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 0.893. This item indicates that (learnt FL to have better job opportunities after graduation.). Additionally, item B1Q8 (learnt FL because FL is another way of enriching me for my future career) also has a high mean value of 3.99 with a standard deviation of 0.857, and item B1Q6 (I learnt FL because FL gives me more opportunities after graduation) has a mean value of 3.98 with a standard deviation of 0.887.

The study results show that the factor providing the most motivation to students is the desire for a bright future with better job opportunities due to the advantage of mastering a foreign language. In Malaysia, which has various collaborations with foreign countries, as reported by Berita Awani on 21/01/2024, as of December 2023, the Companies Commission of Malaysia has recorded nearly 5,000 registered international companies. Malaysia has recognized the significance of mastering a third language to cultivate human capital that supports the knowledge economy and enhances competitiveness on the global stage. The employers require workers who are not only proficient in their native language but also capable of speaking a second or third language, often offering relatively high salaries (Han & Embong, 2024). This also motivates students, as seen in item B1Q2 (I learnt FL to get a high-paying job) which has a high mean value of 3.74. As noted in Liwiński (2019), salaries for those with foreign language skills are higher, such as in Spanish (32%), French (22%), and Italian (15%) compared to native language proficiency (11%). Therefore, career and economic factors are significant motivators for students to learn foreign languages.

TABLE 5 Factor 2: Desire to Become Global Citizen

NO.	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
B2Q1	I learnt FL because FL allows me to understand other cultures.	4.09	0.810	High
B2Q2	I learnt FL because FL is one way of learning another culture.	4.07	0.838	High
B2Q3	I learnt FL because FL broadens my view of other cultures.	4.09	0.795	High

B2Q4	I learnt FL to appreciate more foreign people.	4.04	0.828	High
B2Q5	I learnt FL because FL will allow me to understand other cultures.	4.15	0.817	High
B2Q6	I learnt FL because FL is important for me to understand other cultures.	4.08	0.840	High
B2Q7	I learnt FL because FL gives me self-confidence to understand other cultures.	4.04	0.816	High
B2Q8	I learnt FL to be more educated about other cultures.	4.14	0.858	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>4.08</b>	<b>0.735</b>	<b>High</b>

The results in Table 5 show that the overall factor of the desire to be a global citizen has a high mean value of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.735. The item with the highest mean value for this factor is B2Q5 (I learned FL because FL will allow me to understand other cultures), with a mean of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.817. The second-highest mean value is for item B2Q8 (I learned FL to be more educated about other cultures), with a mean of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 0.858. The third-highest mean values are for items B2Q1 (I learned FL because FL allows me to understand other cultures) and B2Q3 (I learned FL because FL broadens my view of other cultures), both with a mean of 4.09.

This factor refers to understanding foreign cultures through language learning. A study by Sari et al. (2023) suggests that mastering a foreign language is not just for cross-cultural interactions but also for understanding the global community. The results of this study indicate that learning a language is indeed about understanding other cultures. As Yu (2020) stated, culture and language have always been considered two fundamental and inseparable aspects, if not the entirety, of the identity of a social group, nation, or state. Researchers found that learners who possessed a strong understanding of the cultural context of the language they were studying exhibited higher levels of proficiency and demonstrated greater confidence in using the language (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007).

TABLE 6 Factor 3: Desire to Communicate and Affiliate with Foreigners

NO.	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
B3Q1	I learnt FL to communicate with foreigners in their native language.	3.89	0.972	High
B3Q2	I learnt FL to speak to foreigners using their own language.	3.86	0.968	High
B3Q3	I learnt FL because it is easier for me to relate with foreigners.	3.88	0.905	High
B3Q4	I learnt FL because I am fascinated when I hear a foreigner speaking.	3.98	0.924	High
B3Q5	I learnt FL to go to the country where it is spoken.	3.85	0.989	High
B3Q6	I learnt FL because it is useful when I travel abroad.	4.12	0.886	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.92</b>	<b>0.792</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 6 above shows the third motivational factor for learning a foreign language, which is the desire to communicate and affiliate with foreigners. The item with the highest mean value is B3Q6 (I learned FL because it is useful when I travel abroad) with a mean of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.886. This result



indicates that students who learn foreign languages can use their skills when traveling abroad, facilitating communication with foreigners. Additionally, the second-highest mean value is for item B3Q4 (I learned FL because I am fascinated when I hear a foreigner speaking), which has a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.924. The third-highest mean is for item B3Q1 (I learned FL to communicate with foreigners in their native language) with a mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.972.

A study by Ainol Madziah & Isarji (2009) also states that in Malaysia, particularly at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and UiTM, students are motivated to learn foreign languages because they enjoy hearing foreigners speak and want to respond in the foreign language. The ability to communicate in a foreign language enhances students' self-confidence and can create a distinguished personal aura, earning them respect among the public for their multilingual abilities (Irma, 2019). Therefore, the third factor, which is the desire to communicate and affiliate with foreigners, also has a high overall mean value of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 0.792. It is one of the key motivators for students to learn foreign languages.

TABLE 7 Factor 4: Desire for Self-Satisfaction

NO.	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
B4Q1	I enjoy learning FL when my friend gives me some books on FL.	3.61	0.991	Moderate
B4Q2	I enjoy browsing websites that deal with FL on the Internet.	3.56	1.015	Moderate
B4Q3	I like learning FL because I have friends who have enjoyed studying it.	3.72	1.057	High
B4Q4	I enjoy watching movies on TV and DVD especially if they are in FL.	3.72	1.012	High
B4Q5	My classmates are having a good time learning FL with me.	3.90	0.969	High
B4Q6	I enjoy learning FL in order to pass an entrance examination.	3.97	0.957	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.74</b>	<b>0.787</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 7 above presents the fourth motivational factor for learning a foreign language, which is the desire for self-satisfaction. The study results show that the overall mean is relatively high at 3.74, with a standard deviation of 0.787. The item with the highest mean is B4Q6 (I enjoy learning FL in order to pass an entrance examination) with a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.957. The second-highest mean is for item B4Q5 (My classmates are having a good time learning FL with me) with a mean of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 0.969. Additionally, item B4Q3 (I like learning FL because I have friends who have enjoyed studying it) and item B4Q4 (I enjoy watching movies on TV and DVD, especially if they are in FL) also have high mean values of 3.72.

Self-satisfaction is described as the happiness that comes from having positive feelings about oneself and life. This contentment is achieved through fulfilling meaningful work and personal goals (Ryff, 1989). Additionally, students experience satisfaction when they are able to understand information and content found on the internet, as well as watch films in the foreign language without the aid of subtitles (Datulio, 2023). This sense of self-satisfaction is a significant factor contributing to students' motivation to master a foreign language. It has a positive impact on both individuals and communities when self-satisfaction motivation is applied throughout the learning process (Donlevy et al., 2019).

TABLE 8 Factor 5: Self-Efficacy

NO.	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
B5Q1	I can relate well in my FL class.	3.79	0.815	High
B5Q2	I enjoy learning FL because I feel I am good at it.	3.67	0.954	High
B5Q3	I feel comfortable speaking in my FL classes.	3.43	0.970	Moderate
B5Q4	I enjoy learning FL even if it is difficult.	3.85	0.923	High
B5Q5	I feel delighted when my teacher notices how I am progressing in my FL class.	3.98	0.893	High
B5Q6	I believe I have the ability to learn FL.	4.02	0.866	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.78</b>	<b>0.752</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 8 presents the fifth motivational factor for learning a foreign language, which is self-efficacy. The overall mean for this factor is high, with a mean score of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.752. The item with the highest mean score is B5Q6 (“I believe I have the ability to learn a foreign language”), with a mean of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 0.866. The second highest item is B5Q5 (“I feel delighted when my teacher notices how I am progressing in my foreign language class”), with a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.893. Although the overall mean for this fifth factor is high, one item, B5Q3 (“I feel comfortable speaking in my foreign language classes”), has a moderate mean score of 3.43 and a standard deviation of 0.970.

The findings from this fifth factor indicate that students possess self-efficacy in learning a foreign language, meaning they believe they can successfully learn it. However, the study also shows that students have lower self-efficacy when it comes to communication skills, particularly in speaking the foreign language. They lack confidence in applying their speaking skills in the foreign language. This issue could be linked to several factors, such as limited proficiency, anxiety when speaking, and a lack of a supportive learning environment for practicing speaking skills. Ahmad et al. (2019) found that students prefer to use their native language during classes rather than speaking in the foreign language. Therefore, even though self-efficacy in foreign language learning is high, instructors should place more emphasis on developing students’ speaking skills.

TABLE 9 Factor 6: Desire to be Integrated with Other Cultures

NO.	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
B6Q1	I learnt FL to live in a foreign land.	3.05	1.138	Moderate
B6Q2	I learnt FL to be able to interact with foreigners well.	3.72	1.008	High
B6Q3	I learnt FL because I am also interested in foreign cultures.	3.74	0.931	High
B6Q4	I learnt FL because FL will prepare me to live in a foreign country.	3.48	1.124	Moderate
B6Q5	I learnt FL to live with another culture.	3.41	1.081	Moderate
B6Q6	I learnt FL to be able to socialize with foreigners.	3.78	0.944	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.52</b>	<b>0.864</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Table 9 presents the results for the sixth motivational factor in foreign language learning: the desire to be integrated with other cultures. The findings reveal that all items have high to moderate mean scores. The item with the highest mean score is B6Q6 (“I learned the foreign language to be able to socialize with foreigners”), with a mean of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.944. The second highest mean score is for item B6Q3 (“I learned the foreign language to be able to interact with foreigners well”), with a mean of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 1.008. The item with a moderate mean score is B6Q1 (“I learned the foreign language to live in a foreign land”), with a mean of 3.05 and a standard deviation of 1.138. Another item with a moderate mean score is B6Q5 (“I learned the foreign language to live with another culture”), with a mean of 3.41 and a standard deviation of 1.081. Overall, the mean score for this factor is 3.52 with a standard deviation of 0.864. The study indicates that while other motivational factors in foreign language learning generally have high mean scores, the desire to be integrated with other cultures has a moderate score. This suggests that this factor is not the primary motivation for students at UiTM to learn foreign languages. Students are interested in understanding the culture of the language but are less inclined to live in a country where the language is spoken.

TABLE 10 Mean Score for Six Factors Foreign Language Learning Motivation

NO.	FACTORS	MEAN	SD	INTERPRETATION
1.	Desire For Career and Economic Enhancement	3.89	0.787	High
2.	Desire To Become Global Citizens	4.08	0.735	High
3.	Desire To Communicate and Affiliate With Foreigners	3.92	0.792	High
4.	Desire For Self-Satisfaction	3.74	0.787	High
5.	Self -Efficacy	3.78	0.752	High
6.	Desire To Be Integrated with Other Cultures	3.52	0.864	Moderate

Table 10 presents the overall mean scores for all six motivational factors in foreign language learning. The factor with the highest mean score is the second factor, the desire to become global citizens, with a mean of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.735. The second highest mean score is for the third factor, the desire to communicate and affiliate with foreigners, with a mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 0.792. The third highest mean score is for the first factor, the desire for career and economic enhancement, with a mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.787. The fourth factor is self-efficacy, with a mean of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.752. The fifth factor is the desire for self-satisfaction, with a mean of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 0.787. The sixth factor, the desire to be integrated with other cultures, has the lowest mean score of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 0.864.

This study provides valuable insights into the primary motivational factors influencing students’ foreign language learning at UiTM. The results show that the top motivators include the desire to become global citizens, career and economic enhancement, and the urge to communicate and affiliate with foreigners. Understanding these motivations can guide both curriculum development and instructional strategies, ensuring that language education aligns more closely with students’ aspirations and needs.

### 1. The Desire to Become Global Citizens: A Strong Motivator

The highest-ranked motivational factor is the desire to become global citizens, with a mean score of 4.08. Students express a strong interest in understanding and engaging with different cultures, viewing language learning as a pathway to broadening their worldview and enhancing cross-cultural competence. This aligns with global trends where foreign language proficiency is increasingly seen as essential for participating in an interconnected world. The study underscores that students are motivated not only by practical needs but also by intellectual curiosity and a wish to embrace cultural diversity. Educators can leverage this by

incorporating more cultural content, including intercultural communication exercises, cultural history lessons, and global case studies, into language courses. Doing so would resonate with students' interests and strengthen their engagement.

## **2. Career and Economic Enhancement: A Practical Incentive**

The second most influential factor is career and economic enhancement, with a mean score of 3.89. This reflects the growing recognition among students that foreign language skills can provide a competitive edge in the job market. Given Malaysia's international business ties, proficiency in foreign languages is highly valued by employers, offering tangible career benefits. This is especially relevant as companies expand globally, requiring employees with multilingual capabilities. The data suggest that students are acutely aware of these opportunities and see language learning as a strategic investment in their future. To align with this motivation, universities could integrate career-oriented modules, such as business language courses, job interview preparation, and industry-specific vocabulary training, into their foreign language programs. Additionally, establishing partnerships with multinational companies for internships and exchange programs could further enhance students' career prospects.

## **3. Communicating with and Affiliating with Foreigners: Building Social Connections**

The third factor, with a mean score of 3.92, indicates that students are driven by the desire to communicate with and affiliate with foreigners. They find personal satisfaction in being able to interact with people from different backgrounds, especially during travel or in social settings. The study reveals that while students may feel apprehensive speaking in class, they are more comfortable using the language in real-world scenarios where social pressure is lower. This finding is crucial as it suggests a gap between classroom practices and real-life language use. Therefore, it is recommended that language educators design activities that simulate real-life interactions, such as role-playing, informal conversation sessions, and interactions with native speakers. This would help bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application.

## **4. Self-Efficacy and the Need for a Supportive Learning Environment**

Although self-efficacy is a significant motivator, as seen in the mean score of 3.78, the study identifies a specific challenge: students report lower confidence in speaking the foreign language, especially in classroom settings. This hesitation can be attributed to fear of making mistakes, anxiety about being judged, and a lack of speaking opportunities. Research shows that creating a supportive and low-pressure environment can reduce such anxieties and foster a sense of community where students feel safe to experiment and learn from errors. Instructors could implement methods such as formative assessments, positive reinforcement, and peer-to-peer learning to encourage participation. Moreover, integrating technology, like language learning apps and online forums, could offer students more opportunities to practice speaking outside of class.

## **5. Desire for Self-Satisfaction and Enjoyment in Learning**

The motivation for self-satisfaction, with a mean score of 3.74, highlights the importance of intrinsic rewards in language learning. Students find enjoyment in activities like watching foreign-language films, browsing foreign websites, and engaging with peers who share similar interests. This suggests that the more enjoyable and personally relevant the learning experience, the more motivated students are to persevere. Therefore, educators could introduce more diverse, interest-based learning materials, such as music, films, and online content in the target language, to enhance engagement. Incorporating these elements into the curriculum can make language learning more fun and fulfilling, thereby sustaining long-term interest.

## 6. Desire to Integrate with Other Cultures: A Secondary Concern

Interestingly, the desire to integrate fully with other cultures received a moderate score of 3.52, indicating that while students are curious about other cultures, they are less driven by the need to live or fully immerse themselves in those environments. This suggests that students see foreign language learning as a tool for global engagement rather than as a pathway to migration or permanent cultural integration. Consequently, while cultural education is important, it may be more effective to focus on practical cultural knowledge, such as etiquette, social norms, and communication styles, rather than deep cultural immersion. Although self-efficacy scores are high, students still feel uncomfortable speaking a foreign language in class. Conversely, students score high on the factor of learning a foreign language to communicate with foreigners, indicating that they feel more at ease interacting with foreigners outside of the classroom due to reduced social pressure. Han et al. (2022) suggest that reluctance to speak in classroom settings can stem from shyness, fear of making mistakes, or anxiety about evaluation. In contrast, less social pressure when engaging with native speakers provides a more relaxed communication environment (Dincer & Dariyemez, 2020). This highlights the importance of creating a supportive learning environment to boost students' confidence in using the target language.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight several key motivational factors that drive students at UiTM to learn foreign languages. Among the six factors examined, the desire to become global citizens, with an emphasis on understanding foreign cultures, emerges as the strongest motivator. Students express a keen interest in broadening their perspectives and gaining cultural knowledge through language learning. Additionally, career and economic enhancement also play a significant role, as students recognize the value of foreign language proficiency in improving their job prospects and competitiveness in the global market. However, the relatively moderate score for the desire to integrate with other cultures suggests that while students are interested in understanding these cultures, they are less motivated to immerse themselves fully in foreign environments.

Interestingly, while self-efficacy scores are high, students still exhibit discomfort when speaking a foreign language in class, indicating that their confidence primarily lies in contexts outside of formal educational settings. This is further supported by the strong motivation to communicate and affiliate with foreigners, where students feel more at ease due to reduced social pressure.

These findings imply that to further enhance language learning outcomes, educational institutions should focus on creating more supportive and low-pressure learning environments that encourage active participation and speaking practice. Instructors can consider incorporating more culturally immersive activities and real-world communication scenarios that reflect the motivations of students to become global citizens and improve career prospects. Additionally, targeted interventions to reduce speaking anxiety in classrooms, such as peer support groups or conversational practice with native speakers, could significantly boost students' confidence and willingness to engage in foreign language use. By addressing these aspects, language programs can better align with the motivations of learners, ultimately leading to higher proficiency and satisfaction.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE

The study's results suggest several strategic actions for improving foreign language education at UiTM and similar institutions. Firstly, aligning language programs with students' primary motivations that is global citizenship and career advancement, can make these programs more appealing and relevant. Universities



should consider offering specialized tracks or certificates in business language, intercultural communication, and global studies, which directly tie into students' professional and personal goals.

In addition, creating low stakes speaking environments, offering opportunities for real-world practice, and integrating culturally diverse learning materials can significantly enhance students' language skills and overall experience. By addressing both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators identified in this study, language programs can not only increase student engagement but also contribute to producing graduates who are both linguistically proficient and culturally competent, ready to thrive in a globalized world.

These recommendations highlight the importance of a learner-centered approach that considers the diverse motivations of students and adapts teaching methods accordingly, leading to more effective and meaningful foreign language learning experiences.

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