

**Students' Perception on Their Motivation in Learning English
(The Analysis Students' Motivation Based on Maslow's Concept)**

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi siswa terhadap kebutuhan motivasi mereka dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggris. Kebutuhan mempelajari Bahasa Inggris penting untuk diidentifikasi para para pemangku kepentingan pendidikan yang mengelola program pembelajaran siswa dapat mengetahui layanan yang relatif tepat diberikan kepada para siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode gabungan. Dua instrumen diberikan untuk memperoleh persepsi siswa tentang kebutuhan motivasi mereka serta menemukan faktor penentu / faktor yang mungkin mempengaruhi motivasi mereka. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa percaya pada pentingnya belajar bahasa Inggris. Namun, hasil tersebut juga menunjukkan bahwa belajar bahasa Inggris mereka hanya instrumental dan bukan demi membangun hubungan atau tinggal di komunitas berbahasa Inggris. Mereka juga menganggap bahwa walaupun bahasa Inggris penting untuk membantu dalam mewujudkan impian, mereka menganggap bahwa keterampilan lain juga penting untuk mewujudkan impian mereka.

Kata Kunci: *persepsi siswa, motivasi, pembelajaran, Bahasa Inggris*

Abstract

The present study aims at analyzing the students' perception toward their motivational need in learning English. The need to learn English is important to be identified so that the education stakeholders catering the students' learning program can possibly figure out the relatively suitable service given to the students. The present study used mixed method. Two instruments were administered to elicit the students' perception on their motivational need as well as finding the determinants /factors which might have affected their motivation. The research findings indicated that the students mostly believed in the importance of learning English. However, at the same time they also indicated that their learning English was a mere instrumental and not for the sake of establishing relationship or living in an English speaking communities. They also considered that while English is important to help them realize their dream, they considered that other skills are also important for actualizing their dream.

Keywords: *students' perception, motivation, learning, English*

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INTRODUCTION

Scholars have believed that with the advancement of technology, the use of English has also been inseparable since they need to create more terms which is commonly accepted by international world. The fact on the use of English by internet users indicated the important role of English in their cyber world (Sinno, 2008).

The need to analyze people's motivation in using or learning English is important so that the people's need on the language can be described. Such description will finally help education stakeholders or other linguists to figure out the need underlying the students' purpose to learn English.

For instance, previously there have been some scholars who postulated most people tend

to learn English for instrumental purpose rather than integrative purposes, thus confirming the need of English as a tool which facilitate the learners to achieve their specific objectives (see e.g, Alptekin, 2002).

The present study aims at analyzing the learners' motivation on learning English in order to allow the researcher and other education stakeholders to figure out the needs of the students, thus leading to a much better program to cater the students' need and satisfy their demands or expectation toward a certain English learning program.

Firstly, Robbins and Judge (2013, p. 202) define motivation as the processes that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal. Secondly, Smith (as citing from Entwistle)

defines motivation as differences between learners in the amount of effort they put into their learning (2011, p. 13).

Similarly, other scholars such as Brown (2001), and Oroujlou and Vahedi (2011) have also reinforced that motivation is reasons to do something thus largely concerns with the process, effort, or goal that will be achieved by someone.

In terms of external factors, scholars (see e.g., Baker, 1992; Brown, 2001) have long confirmed that basically someone will be driven to do something because there are some expectation of reward which might occur due to his/her effort.

Scholars believe that most students will do something or be driven to do something due to the expectation of reward or pleasant consequence that might emerge due to his or her effort (see e.g., Brown, 2001; Firwana, 2010).

In relatively different concept, Maslow (as cited in Robbins & Judge) perceived that basically a person will generally be driven to act not only because of the external factor, but mainly because he or she has a need to be fulfilled (2013, p. 203).

The main concept of motivation in which humans tend to work not only because of the availability of reward or benefits but mainly because they have the needs for some reward or the benefits.



Figure 1.
Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
(Robbins, & Judge, 2013, p. 203)

In short, there are several stages of needs which are generally fulfilled by humans with regard to their effort.

1. **Physiological:** These needs are considered as the very basic needs, thus related to the need of bodily needs such as hunger, thirst, shelter, sex, and other physiological needs.

2. **Safety:** These needs are related to further needs that humans should fulfill after their bodily needs are met. The second needs are related to security, protection from physical and emotional harm.
3. **Social:** These needs are related to further stages of humans' needs to be fulfilled and are related to affection, belongingness, acceptance, and friendship.
4. **Esteem:** These needs are related to further stages of human's needs which should be fulfilled such as self-respect, autonomy, achievement, status, recognition, and attention.
5. **Self-actualization.** These needs are the drive to become what the people are capable of becoming, such as being trusted professional, or having certain self-fulfillment capacity. In short, the last stage is the realization of what one has in mind which might covers lots of aspects in someone's life.

The use of Maslow's concept is to predict the need of the students so that the specific service given to the students can be clearly predicted. If the students' need can be clearly described, then the future of English training or learning can be specifically tailored based on the students' demand, thus leading to more effective process.

The present study focuses on formulated problems as the followings:

- a) What are the students' motivational drives based on Maslow's hierarchical concept?
- b) What are some determinants which might have affected their motivational drive in learning English?

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in the present study was mixed method in which the researcher used both questionnaire to find what the participants/respondents' mind on their motivational drive, and further be continued with interview in order to support the validity of the questionnaire (see e.g., Creswell, 2008).

The subject of the present study was 50 students of the language college who were conveniently recruited (Frankel, & Wallen,

2006, p. 100). This consideration was taken since there would not be many students who were willing to participate in the present study.

Frankel and Wallen (2006) considered that convenient sampling could be used when there were not many people who would participate in the research.

A questionnaire regarding the students' motivation in learning English were administered. The use of Likert-scale was used in order to specifically identify the students' perception on their motivation in learning English.

Bohner & Wanke (as cited in Chung 2006, p. 87) assure that questionnaire is often considered as the simplest way to assess people's psychological aspects by having them answer on some questions on certain objects and mark the answers with a numeric response scale (Bohner & Wanke as cited in Chung 2006, p. 87).

In the process of data collection, the respondents will be asked to mark one of the responses ranging from "Agree", and "Disagree". The simplified choices were made so that the students could easily predict their motivation.

The questionnaire is developed in native language so that the respondents who are Indonesian are able to fully comprehend the meanings (see e.g., Astuti, 2015).

After the questionnaire is collected and analyzed the respondents were called for an interview. The interview process was conducted randomly but at the same day after the first data taking (i.e. questionnaire).

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

There are five items of questionnaire which were administered in order to elicit the students/respondents' perception toward their motivation.

- 1) I learn English so that I can fulfill my basic needs, for instance, I can find descent work.
- 2) I learn English so that I can have a better job which allows me to have a more secure life.
- 3) I learn English so that I can have many friends/partners either locals or overseas.

4) I learn English in order to improve my career or improve my career accomplishment in my life.

5) I learn English so that I can realize my dream.

In order to answer the questions, semi-structured interview was also conducted so that the students' perception toward their motivational needs can be identified. It is also important to note that other instrument can possibly support the validity of the present study (see e.g., Frankel, & Wallen, 2006). The interview conducted for the present study was conducted randomly to those having different/unique answers.

1) Interview statement supporting first item.

Based on the finding of the first items, basically most of the respondents believed that learning English could possibly help the students in finding the jobs that they wanted. Out of 50 students, there were 48 who tended to perceive that learning English could help them fulfill their physiological needs by having decent jobs.

However, for those who disagreed they tended to believe that learning English would not always help them find a job since they believed that there were other factors which enabled them to secure good jobs, such as having computer skills, having economics knowledge, and so forth.

For instance, one of the respondents being interviewed conceded that while learning English was important, he believed that other factors were important too as verbalized

"For me, English is important, however, I don't believe that I can get a job that I want if I depend on English solely".

2) Interview statement supporting second item.

Similarly, the second item of interview has also provoked relatively the same responses from the respondents. In short, despite the respondents' belief on the importance of English in supporting their effort in securing good job as indicated with 48 students saying "agree", the rest of the respondents considered that English

was not the only factor which allowed them to get the good job as verbalized

“I agree that English is important anyway we must also think of other factors in finding a job, and the most important is also our luck”

3) Interview statement supporting third item.

Based on the finding of the third items, it could be found that basically most of the respondents believed that learning English was important however, they did think that what they were learning was important for supporting some integrative aspect (i.e. social needs).

Of the fifty respondents, twenty of them disagreed with the items that learning English enabled them to have more friends either locals or foreigners.

For instance, one of the respondents critically responded that

“Despite being important, I have my own life, so it doesn’t depend on others who speak good or bad English”

The other respondent responded.

“For me, whether my friends are able to speak English or not, it is not important, besides, I don’t have any dream to live abroad”

4) Interview statement supporting fourth item.

Based on the finding of the fourth item, basically most of the respondents believed that learning English could possibly help the students in improving their career life.

In fact, of the fifty students, forty three students agreed with the above statement indicating the importance of English for their career advancement as verbalized.

“I strongly agree that most of good jobs or professions require good international skill, so learning English is one of the factors for that”

5) Interview statement supporting fifth item.

Based on the finding of the fifth item, most of the respondents were found to believe

that learning English could possibly help the students in realizing their dream as verbalized

“I agree with this statement since learning English can help us realize our dream, especially for those who dream to go abroad like me”

Basically learning English was considered important and most students perceived that their motivational need was related to the fulfillment of security, self-esteem, and self-actualization needs.

However, in terms of social needs, half of the respondents were found to indicate their disagreement since they believed that their life might not be related to the English speaking environment, thus confirming scholars who postulate that learning English at the present time was only for instrumental reason and not for integrative one (Alptekin, 2002), such as searching for better job, or career advancement only.

Lastly, the students were also found to believe that learning English could possibly help them realize their dream whatever the dream that they have.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Learning English for instrumental reasons Based on the findings, it could be concluded that the students tend to learn English only for their instrumental reason. Therefore it is important that the instrument which is used to trigger the students’ motivation should be powerful enough so that it can make the students move forward.

The need to associate between their effort to learn and the possible reward When necessary the teacher should also notify the students on the potentially upcoming reward so that they could be more spirited to learn English. Scholars believe that the association of reward and their effort will generally trigger the students to learn harder.

Further, the specific steps to accomplish their specific objective should also be elaborated so that they can specifically arrange their career or their objective as early as possible.

It is also important to vary the students’ competencies and skill as indicated with their perception that English was not only skill which

could make them survive in a currently fierce competitive world.

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