

The Influence of Iban Students' Motivation on the Achievement in the Malay Language Subject as a Second Language

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Abstract

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Learning Malay as a second language is not a simple process for non-native students, particularly Iban students. The study was conducted to look at the influence of Iban students' motivation on the achievement in the Malay Language subject as a second language. A survey was conducted among fifty Form 4 Iban students at a national secondary school in Betong, Sarawak. A total of 27 questions were included in the set of questionnaires utilised as the instrument for this study, which comprised motivational influence variables from one's self, family, environment, and peers. The data in this study was analysed using the descriptive and the inferential statistical methods via the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25. The study found that the level of motivating influence of Iban students was high. However, the Pearson's correlation analysis result showed that there is no significant association between the motivating influence of Iban students and their level of achievement in Malay Language's subject as their second language. Thus, motivation is not a dominant factor that influences the Iban students' achievement in the subject.

Keywords: *Motivational influence, Iban students, Level of achievement, Malay Language subject, Second language learning*

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a very important element in human life as a medium of communication and conversation and is used to convey information from one to another (Guzman & Lewis, 2020; Tursunovich, 2022). Humans use language as a medium to receive and convey important information to the surrounding society (Kamiliah & Mahamod, 2015; Handrianto et al., 2021). Zambri (2015) states that individuals can convey their feelings and thoughts more effectively if they are able to master speaking skills.

If viewed from the context of education in our country, the Malaysian education system places great emphasis on communication and language skills using Malay and English (Hashim, 2020; Aziz & Kashinathan, 2021). Malaysians place a great value on the Malay language, which serves as the country's national and official language. Article 152 of the Federal Constitution also states that Malay is the national and official language used in various public sectors in Malaysia. Malay language is also one of the core subjects that must be passed and studied by every student at every school level, as specified in the Education Act 1961.



Iban students are non-native Malay speakers but some of them enjoy the process of studying Malay as a second language (Nahar & Abd-Rahman, 2018; Ali et al., 2022). Nor and Mahamod (2016) note that while the Iban language has been classified as a dialect of Malay, it is difficult for Iban speakers to grasp if they lack fundamental knowledge and have had little exposure to Malay. Therefore, Iban students, in particular, will learn Malay as a second language by undergoing formal learning sessions at school (Riget & Campbell, 2020; Lee, 2021). Therefore, in order to increase second language proficiency among non-Malay speaking students such as the Ibans, it is critical for students to recognise the influence of motivation on the second language learning process as well as the relationship between motivation and their achievement in the Malay language subject as a second language.

Literature Review

Motivation is an abstract sort of inner power that cannot be seen with the naked eye. Typically, a person's motivation may be recognised in the acts he or she takes. Students who are motivated are more likely to participate actively in the teaching and learning process (Bakari & Sidek, 2006). A learning session with high motivation will be more meaningful, rewarding, and pleasurable. One of the strategies that is able to increase motivation among students when learning something, notably learning Malay as a second language, is to emphasise the notion of reinforcement (Rahman et al., 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2021).

Nizam et al. (2017) discovered that Bajau ethnic students were highly motivated to learn Malay as a second language. They discovered a difference in motivation between male and female students when learning Malay in the classroom, demonstrating that Malay language learning among non-native speakers, particularly Iban students, can be implemented with high motivation.

Ujai and Mohammad (2017) also analysed the social-motivational factor that influences Iban students in learning Malay as a second language. The findings of this study indicate that motivation has a significant effect on Iban students' ability to comprehend, acquire, and master Malay as a second language. Ganesan and Mohammad (2021) conducted a study to examine the motivation of Indian students to learn Malay as a second language. This quantitative study focused on Indian students learning Malay as a second language in Tamil vernacular schools. It was found that Indian students in Tamil vernacular schools were very motivated to learn Malay as a second language.

Based on the previous research, it is possible to conclude that the aspect of motivation may influence the level of achievement of non-native Malay speakers, particularly Iban students, in learning Malay as a second language. This is due to the fact that this aspect of motivation is an internal strength that can only be seen through a person's actions. It refers to the motivation that may influence the Iban students' achievement in Malay language subjects in this study.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach through the use of a survey to obtain data on the influence of motivation among Iban students in

learning Malay as a second language. Data analysis was performed via a descriptive analysis for the influence of the Iban students' motivation meanwhile an inferential statistical analysis was run to determine the relationship between the level of students' motivation and their achievement in the subject of Malay as a second language.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study comprised Iban pupils in upper secondary, namely Form 4, at a national secondary school in the Betong area of Sarawak. The study sampled 50 students (N = 50) from the entire population. The determination of the sample for this study was done by using a purposive sampling technique. This purposeful sampling method was chosen in order to obtain feedback deemed appropriate to the objectives of the study.

Research Instruments

This study uses a set of questionnaires as a data collection instrument. This questionnaire was designed using the Google Form. This set of questionnaire contains two (2) main sections, namely Section A and Section B. Section A solicits demographic information of respondents, and Section B explores the influence of Iban students' motivation on their achievement in Malay as a Second Language. The survey tool was adapted from Ujai and Mohammad (2017) according to the suitability of this study. The survey was distributed online to accommodate the distance between the researcher and the respondents. It is also an easy manner of movement given the pandemic situation that limited our mobility.

Data Analysis

This study used the descriptive and inferential statistical methods to analyse the data obtained for the purpose of this study. A descriptive analysis was performed to analyse the data on the influence of motivation that impacts Iban students in learning Malay as a second language. For the interpretation of the descriptive data, the interpretation of mean scores proposed by Huang and Hew (2016) was used (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Interpretation of Mean Scores

Min score	The Interpretation Stage
4.00 to 5.00	Height
3.55 to 3.99	Medium high
3.00 to 3.54	Medium
< 3.00	Low

Note: Adopted from Hew and Huang (2016)

Inferential analysis was used to examine the relationship between students' levels of motivation and their levels of achievement in the subject of Malay as a Second Language. The Pearson correlation test was employed for the interpretation of the correlational relationship based on the Guilford Guidelines (Rodziah, 2004) as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Guilford Recommendations

Correlation coefficient (r) value	The Strength of Relationships
Less than 0.20	Very weak
0.20 to 0.40	Weak
0.40 to 0.70	Medium
0.70 to 0.90	Strong
More than 0.90	Very Strong

Note: Adopted from Rodziah (2004)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Influence of Motivation on Iban Students' Language Acquisition in Malay Language as a Second Language

Items from the set of questions were analysed which included the sections as follows: B₁ - Influence of motivation from self; B₂ - Influence of motivation from family; B₃- Influence of motivation from the environment, and B₄- Influence of motivation from peers. A thorough analysis of each item was performed. Table 3 below shows the overall results for each section in terms of mean score and standard deviation.

Table 3: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Data Based on B₁, B₂, B₃, and B₄ Data Analysis (N = 50)

Item No.	Item	Min Score	Standard deviation
B ₁	Self-influence of motivation	4.54	0.51
B ₂	Family influence of motivation	3.71	0.78
B ₃	The environment's influence on motivation	4.49	0.55
B ₄	The influence of motivation from peers	4.29	0.64

Based on Table 3 above, the overall results of the data analysis found that item B₁ has recorded the highest mean score, which is 4.54, with a standard deviation score of 0.51. It clearly shows that item B₁, which is the influence of self-motivation, greatly stimulates the Iban students' achievement in the subject of Malay as a second language. Item B₃, which is the influence of motivation from the environment, recorded the second highest mean score with a score of 4.49 with a standard deviation of 0.55. The environment also plays a role in influencing the motivation of Iban students to master the Malay language, which is necessary to ensure good achievement in the subject. Item B₄, i.e. the influence of motivation from peers, had the third highest mean score, i.e., 4.29, with a standard deviation score of 0.64. Item B₂, which is the influence of motivation from the family, recorded the lowest mean score, which is 3.71, with a standard deviation score of 0.78.

The outcomes of this study have demonstrated that the impact of motivation is prominent in facilitating the acceptance of learning Malay as a second language among students who are not native speakers of Malay, particularly among

students from the Iban ethnic group. The outcomes of this investigation provide credence to the conclusions of the study done by Zuki and Mohamad (2017). In addition, this study also demonstrates that the effect of high motivation that originates from within is the dominant aspect among Iban students. This illustrates that the inspiration that comes from the students themselves tends to inspire them to comprehend and grasp the topic of Malay (Ujai & Mohammad, 2017; Handrianto et al., 2020; Saputra et al., 2021).

The findings of this study, on the other hand, are in contradiction to those of Abdul Rasid (2010) and Mohamad (2017), who both found that Chinese students are less motivated to learn Malay than their counterparts in the United States. The data also supports the claim, which demonstrates that the topic of Malay language is a tough and perplexing one to learn. This is not a new phenomenon among students who do not speak Malay. Non-native Malay speakers frequently express their dissatisfaction with the difficulty of learning the language.

The Relationship between the Influence of Iban Students' Motivation and the Level of Achievement in Malay as a Second Language

A Pearson correlation test was done to see the relationship between the influence of Iban students' motivation and the level of achievement in Malay as a second language. Table 4 below shows the results of the correlation test conducted.

Table 4: Relationship between the Influence of Iban Students' Motivation and Iban Students' Achievement in Malay as a Second Language

		Score for Motivational Influence	Iban Student Achievement Score in BM as a Second Language
Score for Motivational Influence	Pearson correlation (<i>r</i>)	1.00	0.11
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.45
	N	50	50
Iban Student Achievement Score in BM as a Second Language	Pearson correlation (<i>r</i>)	0.11	1.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.45	
	N	50	50

The correlation data contained in Table 4 shows that there is no significant relationship between the influence of Iban students' motivation and their achievement in the subject of Malay as a second language. Based on Guilford's guidelines, the relationship between the influence of Iban students' motivation and their achievement in Malay as a second language is very weak [$r(50) = 0.11$, $p > 0.01$]. A weak relationship between the two variables may exist due to sampling or sample measurement errors in this study. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the Iban students' achievement in Malay as a second language is not a direct result of their motivation.

The findings of the correlation data of the study have shown that there is no significant relationship between the influence of Iban students' motivation and their achievement in the subject of Malay as a second language. Thus, the null hypothesis of the study was accepted. A research done by Abdullah Musa (2004) found that there was no significant association between approbation in Malay and English as a second language at the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) level and motivation and attitude responses. The outcomes of this study corroborate the conclusion of our study. That is, attitudes and motivation are not the only main motivators that determine the degree of accomplishment of Iban students in Malay language topics, as evidenced by this study. A similar conclusion was reached by Mei and Yusuf (2017), who found that there was no statistically significant association between the amount of intrinsic motivation and academic accomplishment among PJJ USM students. However, the findings of this study contradict those of Mahamod and Shamsudin (2016), who found a substantial association between Iban students' motivation and achievement in Malay language topics at Sekolah Rendah Bintangor, Sarawak.

CONCLUSION

This study has focused on determining the impact of motivation on learners' second language learning acquisition. The level of achievement of Iban students in the subject of Malay as a second language is influenced by various factors, and motivation is one of them. In the context of this study, the influence of motivation has been divided into several sources namely oneself, family, environment, and peers. It is shown that these sources of motivation play a very important role in the level of achievement of Iban students in the subject of Malay as a second language. However, there is no significant relationship between the influence of Iban students' motivation and their level of achievement in Malay as a second language. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. The research has proven that the intended objectives have been attained satisfactorily. Although the data analysis shows that there is no significant relationship between the influence of Iban students' motivation and their level of achievement in Malay as a second language, it does not prove that the existing relationship is false. Future research on a larger sample size is recommended for similar exploration into the impact of motivation on students' language learning process. In conclusion, the influence of high motivation will help Iban students master the Malay Language well as achieve an excellent level of achievement in the subject of Malay as a second language.

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