

Motivation and Achievement in Learning French as a Foreign Language in Malaysia

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The teaching and learning of some of the most widely spoken foreign languages such as English, Japanese, Mandarin and French are given emphasis in many education systems throughout the world. Similarly in Malaysia, opportunities are provided for students to learn foreign languages especially at tertiary institutions. This paper presents a study that investigated Malaysian undergraduates' motivation and achievement, as well as the relationship between the two variables in learning FFL. The study involved 213 undergraduates who took French as a foreign language (FFL) in a public university. The motivation data were collected using an adapted version of Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) and students' grades for the elective French course provided the achievement data. The results show that both integrative and instrumental motivation contribute towards the undergraduates' decision to learn FFL but they are more motivated to learn for instrumental reasons compared to integrative reasons. The achievement results show that more than half of the student population obtained very good to good grades in the FFL assessment. However, the Pearson correlation test results show that there is no statistically significant correlation between the two types of motivation and achievement. The paper ends with discussion on some implications of the findings on the teaching and learning of French as a foreign language such as the need to expose the learners to the target language community.

Keywords: French as a foreign language (FFL), foreign language learning, language achievement, motivation

INTRODUCTION

One of the obvious and salient consequences of the global development towards the 21st century is undoubtedly the very fact that borders between countries are ending. In such an interconnected world, being able to speak one or more international languages such as Mandarin, Spanish, Arabic or French is an asset for it is required to get well-paid jobs (Bastürk & Gulmez, 2011). As a result, creating and encouraging foreign language education have always been a worldwide concern. In line with this and being aware of how important knowing some widely spoken languages is, the Malaysian government established several initiatives in promoting foreign languages learning at secondary schools and tertiary institutions (Zubairi & Sarudin, 2009).

However, despite this awareness of the higher authorities of the country, research studies on foreign languages seem to be lacking in Malaysia particularly with regard to the learning of French language. Thus, this study aims at investigating the reasons why Malaysian students learn French as a foreign language at university level and their achievement in the target language.

1.1 Background of Study

In today's interconnected world, knowledge of foreign languages is believed to be important in almost all domains of life. Consequently, competence in only one language (mother tongue) is considered 'old fashioned', and according to Crystal (1997), being proficient in some of the most widely spoken languages (e.g. English, German, Mandarin, and French) is crucial as it reduces the "power of the language barrier" (p. 372). Bastürk and Gulmez (2011) highlighted that it is also an important requirement to get well-paid jobs.

As a result, nations around the world are deploying efforts in encouraging or boosting teaching and learning of foreign languages which are considered important in their education systems.

Over these past decades, numerous studies have investigated factors affecting the learning of second or foreign languages. Several factors such as motivation, attitudes and anxiety were found to be the determinant and important factors in contexts where second or foreign language learning is taking place (Deci & Ryan 1985; Dörnyei, 1998; Erhman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2002; Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert 1972; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994).

Another important background to provide is that previous studies have mostly focused on English as second or foreign language (Chalak & Kassain, 2010; Deneme, 2008; Dwaik & Shehadeh, 2010; Fewell, 2010; Johnson, 2001; Moskovsky & Alrabai, 2009; Root, 1999; Sadighi & Zarafshan, 2006; Vaezi, 2008; Wu, 2008) and only very few studies have investigated these factors in the context of other foreign language learning (Chan, 2011; Chan & Chi, 2010; Mat Teh, Amin Embi, Nik Yossof & Mohamod, 2009a; Newbill & Jones, 2012; Phonlobutra, 2010; Zubairi & Sarudin, 2009).

Also, as mentioned earlier, most of the studies focused on English instead of other foreign languages such as French. Besides, the limited studies on French were mostly carried out in countries like Canada where the language is widely used among the people. Hence, it appears that there is a need to conduct studies on French as a foreign language and learners' achievement in the language

2.0 Aim and objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to find out learners' motivation in learning of French as a foreign language as well as their achievement in the language. The research questions are as follow:

1. What motivates Malaysian students to learn FFL at university level?
2. How is the learners' achievement in learning FFL?

3.0 Significance of the Study

This research is to investigate Malaysian students' choice of learning French as a foreign language, and their achievement in the language. Its findings are expected to benefit not only students and teachers of foreign languages (particularly FFL), but also policy makers, Education ministries, and material designers.

For teachers, some practical advice will be provided on how to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their students so much so that they will be well equipped to know the need of each and every learner. Material designer will not be excluded from this trend. In fact, some suggestions and recommendations will be provided to them so that learners' needs could be taken into consideration while designing foreign languages books.

4.0 Motivation in language learning

During the past decades, motivation had been theorized by several researchers. It is believed to be useful in all levels of human activity for it determines the reasons why people intend to do some specific things rather than others. In other words, as pointed out by Johnson (2001) "in all areas of human activity, there are many reasons why people do things, and learning foreign languages is no exception" (p. 129). However, it comes as a surprise to notice that there is no consensus in defining this notion. Then, showing how important and complex the term motivation is, Dörnyei (2001) stated the following: "It denotes something of high importance. Yet, when it comes to describing precisely what this important 'something' might be, opinions diversify at an alarming rate" (p. 7).

Also, Dörnyei (1998) recognized this controversy by putting forward the following: "Although motivation is a term frequently used in both educational and research contexts, it is rather surprising how little agreement there is in the literature with regard to the exact meaning of the concept" (p. 117).

Moreover, the term motivation in education is differently defined. Gardner (1985), one of the pioneering researchers in Second Language Acquisition to focus on motivation defined the term according to four aspects: "goal, effortful behavior to reach the goal, desire to attain the goal, positive attitudes toward the goal" (p. 50). Root (1999) on the other hand defines motivation as a "language learning factor which acts as a driving force throughout the entire process, not simply at the beginning of the experience" (p. 52). The difference between the definitions of Gardner (1985) and Root (1990) lies in the fact that Gardner's (1985) definition of motivation is rather goal-oriented, whereas Root's (1990) definition implies that the desire to learn a language is guided by external factors throughout the learning process.

In the literature of Motivation, Gardner (1985) discovered through his research two main reasons for a second or foreign language learning which are called "orientations" (p. 54), they are integrative and instrumental motivation. The former refers to a positive attitude toward the target language community: for instance the desire of the learner to integrate and adapt to the speech community of the target language. As for the latter, it refers to the more functional reason for learning a language: for example, to get a job and to pass an exam. Deci and Ryan (1985) on the other hand, proposed another model of understanding motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. The former means that something comes from within the learner and is related to learners' identity and sense of well-being. Deci and Ryan (1985) also pointed out that learners are intrinsically motivated when they conceive learning as a goal in itself. For instance the learner learns the language because he or she finds interest or enjoyment in the task. On the contrary, extrinsic motivation comes from outside the learners. Learners are said to be extrinsically motivated when they attach learning process with rewards (grades, awards, honors, See Figure 1). The difference between

Deci and Ryan's (1985) definition and Gardner's (1985) is on the integrative and intrinsic motivation. For Gardner (1985), this type of motivation is related to the learner's desire to integrate in the society where the target language is spoken whereas Deci and Ryan's (1985) intrinsic motivation is rather the joy the learner gets in learning the target language. However, Gardner's (1985) instrumental motivation is similar to what Deci and Ryan (1985) called extrinsic motivation.

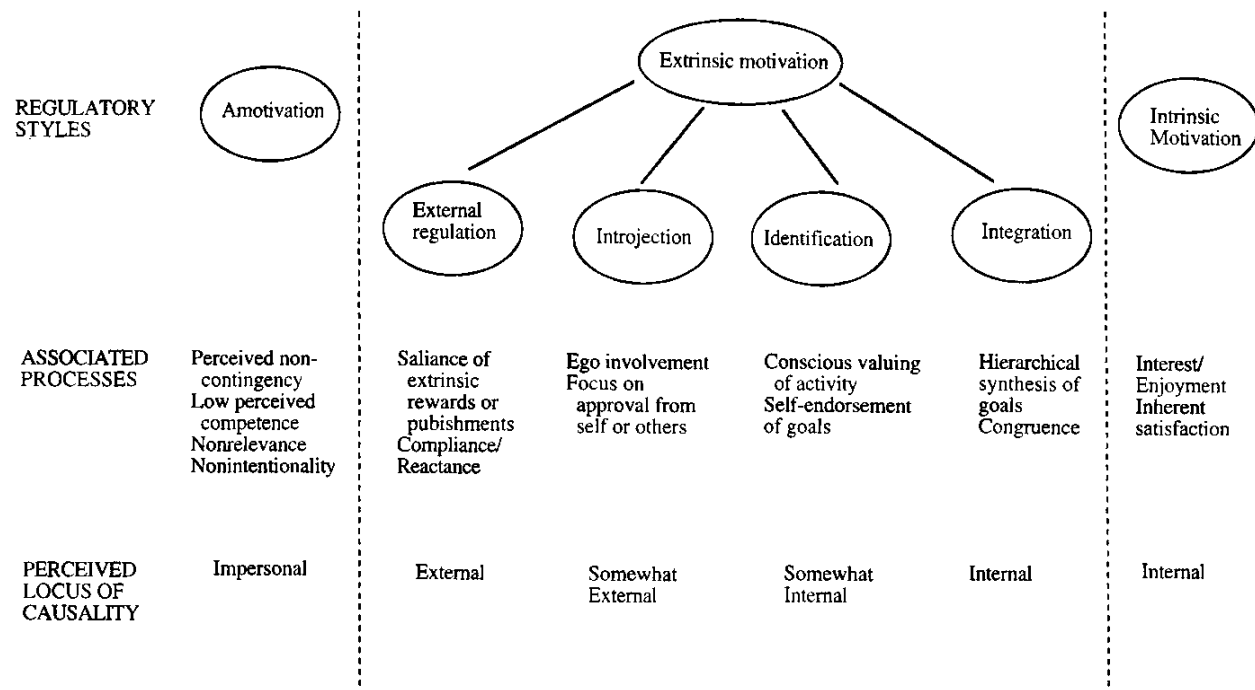


Figure 1. Taxonomy of human motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

During the past decades, researchers have conducted empirical research all over the globe to find out learners' motivation in learning a particular foreign language. As mentioned earlier, Gardner and Tremblay's (1994) investigation on motivation revealed the existence of two orientations: instrumental and integrative. Their studies strongly suggested that 'integratively' motivated learners were successful in learning languages than those who are instrumentally motivated (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). The investigated language in their study is French in a context where the language is learned as a second language. Dörnyei (1994) on the contrary asserted that in a foreign language learning setting, instrumental orientation would have a greater influence on language learners.

In the same token, Erhman, Leaver, and Oxford (2002) suggested that intrinsically motivated learners find reward in the enjoyment of learning activity itself and achieve a feeling of competence in doing a task in any context where foreign language learning is taken place. In the same perspective, Walqui (2000), found a strong correlation between intrinsic motivation and success (good grade) in language learning than extrinsic one in similar foreign language learning contexts.

In light with the definitions of motivation made by researchers such as Gardner and Lambert (1972), Dörnyei (1994), Erhman et al. (2002) or Walqui (2000), it appears that the term motivation is

defined differently according to researchers. That is, as pointed out by Dörnyei (2001): “It denotes something of high importance. Yet, when it comes to describing precisely what this important ‘something’ might be, opinions diversify at an alarming rate” (p. 7). Also, the same controversy is noticed in the literature regarding the different concepts types of motivation. For instance, Walqui (2000) found intrinsic motivation to be a predictor of success in a foreign language learning setting whereas, for Gardner and Lambert (1972) found integrative motivation to be linked to learners’ achievement in learning a foreign language.

As mentioned in section 1.1, in the literature of foreign languages learning study and learning, English appeared to be one of the most widely studied foreign languages. This could be understood by the fact that the language has become an important medium of communication all over the world.

4.1 Studies on motivation of learning English as a foreign language

Studies on English as a foreign or second language have gained interest throughout the world. This can be noticed throughout the literature. Such an interest can be understood by the power that the language enjoys in the international level. As a result, the primary concern of researchers in the field of foreign languages learning is to find out the affective factors such as motivation in relation to the study of English. Below are a few reported studies on motivation to learn English language.

Kimura, Nakata and Okumura (2000) are among those researchers who conducted research on English language in general and the reasons why students decide to learn the target language. In effect, Kimura, Nakata, and Okumura’s (2000) study was conducted in Japan with regard to the types of motivation displayed by 1,027 students from different learning contexts, that is the students were from junior high school, senior high school, junior college and university. Their ages ranged from 14 to 35 years old. The results indicated that Japanese EFL students had intrinsic, integrative as well as instrumental reasons to learn the target language. In other terms, Japanese students were found to be engaged in English language learning for integrative motivation such as: making friends with other people in order to be able to interact with them in English. Besides, Japanese students’ instrumental motivation resided in the fact that they claimed to learn English because of some practical reasons such as job opportunities or for study purposes. In this study, the researchers have used a combination of questionnaire adapted from Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy (1996), Clément et al. (1994), Dörnyei (1990), Miyahara et al. (1997), Tremblay and Gardner (1995). Based on the findings, Kimura, Nakata, and Okumura (2000) suggested that more studies should be carried out in the country with regard to students’ motivation in learning English as a foreign language especially “the relationships among motivational factors” (p. 61).

Basically, the findings of this study seem to be valuable for two main reasons. Firstly, the number of participants is rather sufficient to generalize the results. Secondly, Kimura, Nakata and Okumura (2000) have included different learning settings in their investigation (from junior high school to university level).

Similarly, Vaezi (2008) conducted a survey in the Iranian context to explore students’ motivation towards learning EFL. Similarly to most of the previous study dealing with motivation, a modified version of Gardner’s (1985) AMTB was used as an instrument. A total of 79 Iranian EFL students participated in the study and according to Vaezi (2008) the mean age of the students is 19 years old. In the light of the results, Vaezi (2008) discovered that Iranian students learned English mostly for instrumental reasons. They were reported to study the target language because they believed that they would gain more respect if they know the language and would also be more successful in their study or work. In addition, it was also found that students had some integrative motives to learn English mostly because knowing the language will make them comfortable to speak English whenever they meet new people who speak the

language. Scientifically speaking, the number of participants in Vaezi's (2008) study is rather small to draw any conclusive decision about the reason why Iranian students learn English language. This study could be rather called a case study. Although the sample is rather small, it is an interesting study because it looked at learning of English in the Arab world. In the same perspective, Moskovsky and Alrabai's (2009) study in Saudi Arabia regarding students' motivation (particularly intrinsic motivation) towards learning EFL showed that most of the 55 Saudi students who participated in the survey had a high instrumental motivation to learn the language. That is, Saudi students learn English because they would like to get good jobs, to be able to communicate with other people when they travel abroad etc. It was also discovered that Saudi students learned EFL for intrinsic reasons. In addition, the participants were from different learning backgrounds (intermediate school, technology institute, secondary schools and universities.) and their ages varied from 12 to 27 years old. The researchers used a modified version of the questionnaire developed by Schmidt and Watanabe (2000). And according to Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009), the results of the study implied that teachers should get learners more motivated in learning English knowing that Saudi learners had positive attitudes towards learning the target language. The authors also stressed on a positive exploration of internet as a motivation factor in a foreign language learning context. Similarly the work done by Vaezi (2008), Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009) should not have overgeneralized the findings from a small sample of the students over the whole population of Saudi Arabia. Another weakness of this study seems to be the fact that it aimed at looking only at the intrinsic motivation of Saudi students in their attempt to learn English as a foreign language.

In the Palestinian context, Dwaik and Shehadeh (2010) administered an investigation to explore among other types of motivation that students displayed in learning EFL. The participants were university students and their ages ranged from 18 to 21 years old. Most of the 127 learners stated that they learned English for extrinsic reasons. In other terms, they learned the target language because they would like to obtain degree in English for their future jobs and also to fulfill academic requirements. In the same perspectives, the authors realized that "Western models of motivation" (p. 352) were not applicable to Palestinian context. Thus, Dwaik and Shehadeh (2010) proposed another model taking into consideration the types of motivation among Palestinian students. In other words, in addition to the traditional Extrinsic/instrumental motivation, Dwaik and Shehadeh (2010) suggested "Required motivation" (learning the language to meet university compulsory requirements) and "Machiavellian motivation" (learning the language to protect or distance oneself from target culture and to maintain one's identity) (p. 354). By the way, the researchers recommended the consideration of integrative motivation by teachers and the introduction of "positive cultural information" (p. 355) could be a good option. The researchers have used both quantitative and qualitative methods to find out Palestinian students' motivation. The questionnaire consisted of a mixture of several motivation questionnaires with some added items to fit the context and an interview with a small sample of the participants was conducted. Although the number of participants seems to be small, this study will be very useful for the present one. And the reason is that as stated earlier, one of expected outcomes of this study is to provide recommendations at the end of the investigation. Dwaik and Shehadeh (2010) have highlighted that the traditional model of motivation, "Western models of motivation" (p. 352) were not applicable in the Palestinian context, and thus, they proposed another model taking into consideration other learning contexts. This is a good recommendation because learning contexts differ from one another. Consequently, the researchers should take each and every context into account while designing research questionnaires.

In addition, Chalak and Kassain (2010) depicted the various socio-psychological orientations of Iranian English as Foreign Language (EFL) undergraduates towards English. The study also focused on the motivation of the students and their attitudes towards the target language and its community. The participants were 108 Iranian students aged between 21 and 30 years old. Students were given a questionnaire adopted from Gardner's ATMB to fill in. The findings revealed that Iranian students are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. They are also both instrumentally and instrumentally oriented. Based on the findings, Chalak and Kassain (2010) advised teachers to work on students'

personalities in order to help them achieve their goals. Teachers were also recommended to elaborate lessons that can gain students' attention in order for them to participate actively in classrooms. It appears the recommendations provided by the researchers could help teachers of foreign languages in their classrooms. Recently, Zhao (2012) explored the reasons why Chinese non-English majors learn English as a foreign language in China. A total of 124 Chinese students were involved in the investigation. They were in their first and second year of university studies. However, their ages were not mentioned in Zhao's (2012) study. A modified version of Gao et al. (2004) was used as an instrument. Zhao (2012) concluded that Chinese students were engaged in English language learning mostly for both extrinsic and instrumental motivation. In fact, as discovered by Zhao (2012), Chinese students learn English for practical reasons, such as to get better jobs. This is because they are not at all exposed to the speech community to have integrative motivation. Finally, Zhao (2012) advocated the promotion of all types of motivation especially intrinsic and integrative. Yet, Zhao (2012) was convinced that the best way to do so is showing to students some films or TV shows related to English culture. The merit of this study is the fact that Zhao (2012) had suggested teachers to show some cultural facts of the English speaking world to students, knowing that Chinese people are not at all exposed to the speech community. This recommendation is undoubtedly a good one to create integrative awareness among students. However, the population of The Republic of China is such that results derived from a small sample (124) are not enough to overgeneralize. In short, similarly to many studies previously mentioned, the present study aimed at using a modified version of Gardner's (1985) ATMB to deal with Malaysian students' motivation to learn French as a foreign language at university level.

4.2 Studies on motivation of learning other foreign languages

In addition to the learning of English as a foreign language, other international languages such as Mandarin, Japanese, Korea, Spanish etc. have gained scholars' attention over the past few decades. In effect, several studies have been conducted around the world regarding the study and/or the learning of those languages.

Johnson (2001) had the merit to conduct a research in various parts in the world in order to find out the reasons why people engage themselves in foreign languages learning. In that attempt, five learners from five different countries (China, Australia, India, Wales and Hungary) were involved in the study. First of all, Johnson (2001) observed the reasons why Zhang, a Chinese student from Sichuan province learned English. He is a bachelor holder in Business who wants to do a master degree in Britain, the United States or Australia. Since one of the admission criteria of those universities is to have a good command of English, Zhang decides to learn the language. Secondly, as far as Mike is concerned, that is learner Number two, he is an Australian citizen who took Spanish as a foreign language because he got married to a Spanish girl he met in Sydney and after few months Mike planned to visit Carmen's parents in Spain. He needed Spanish because neither of his in-laws speaks English. Thirdly, learner three is an Indian Tamil girl who was involved in learner Hindi, another language in India because she wanted to apply for a job and knowledge of Hindi was required for it is the lingua franca of the area where she stayed. Learner four is Bryn, a Welshman who lives in Wales, and who is learning Welsh as a foreign language. Bryn has no competence in the language of his own country simply because his parents always speak English to him and his education is entirely done in English. Therefore, he decided to learn the language of his roots, Welsh, to understand his own culture. Finally, Johnson (2001) reported the learning motivation of a Hungarian lady, Amna, a scientist who engaged herself in learning English to improve her linguistic skills simply because the university where she worked was about to host an international conference and the language of communication will be English.

Through these five characters, Johnson (2001) depicted some of the many reasons why people learn a foreign language. Similar to Gardner and Lambert (1972), Johnson (2001) found that integrative motivation was likely the one which was linked to success in a foreign language learning setting. Thus,

the conclusion derived from this study suggested that learners like Bryn that is those who display integrative motivation, “often do succeed at language learning” (p. 130).

In spite of the small number of participants in this survey, the merit of this research is its combination of different foreign languages in various learning contexts. In other terms, unlike the previous studies, Johnson (2001) has tried to discover the very reasons why people choose to learn a foreign language in different parts of the world. And the conclusion drawn from the findings showed that reasons for learning a foreign language vary from one context to another, from one language to another.

Besides, Chan and Chi (2010) conducted a study in Singapore to examine the learning goals of Korean as a foreign language at university level. The population of this investigation consisted of 80 Singaporeans enrolled in Korean level 1 in the National University of Singapore. Like the previous work, the authors also used Gardner’s AMTB. Results showed that Hallyu or Korean wave had contributed substantially to a strong interest in Korean language learning in Singapore. Career, achievement, academic exchange and foreign languages and cultures were also found to be factors which motivate students to learn Korean. As for recommendations, the authors suggested teachers to introduce some media-based materials such as Korean songs, movies and TV dramas in the courses to provide students with graphic insights into aspects of Korean culture and society. Similarly to Chan and Chi’s (2010) survey, the present attempts to include level 1 students only. Nevertheless, the main difference between both studies lies in the number of participants. The population involved in Chan and Chi’s (2010) study seems to be too small.

In the same perspective, Gonzales (2010) studied how motivation differentiates Filipino students in their learning of some foreign languages such as Chinese, French, Japanese and Spanish. Also, the study aimed to find out whether age, group, sex and so on could influence students’ motivation on learning those foreign languages. The participants were 150 Filipino students learning Chinese, French, Japanese and Spanish as a foreign language at university level. Unlike the previous studies, Gonzales used Filipino Foreign Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire (FFLLMQ) developed by Gonzales (2001) for data collection purpose. This questionnaire consisted of 50 Likert-items that measure motivational orientations. Gonzales (2010) found that Filipino students were instrumentally and extrinsically motivated. In other words, “they are highly motivated to learn FL because of economic and career opportunities, indicating that they are more instrumentally motivated, that is, they desire to learn FL for pragmatic gains such as getting a better job and even employment abroad” (p. 13). Furthermore, Gonzales (2010) discovered that female students are more motivated than their fellow males in terms of the desire to communicate or to affiliate with the target language speech community. And Filipino students were reported to learn French mostly in order to associate with French tourists while they were involved in learning Japanese for instrumental reasons (to improve their job opportunities).

The rationale behind the mentioning of this study is the fact that it has at least attempted to find out students’ motivation to learn French as a foreign language in a similar context, that is, in an environment where it has neither communicative nor official status. However, unlike several studies on motivation, Gonzales (2010) had used a different instrument for data collection purpose. Thus, researchers should also think about designing questionnaire items based on a given context. Filipino Foreign Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire (FFLLMQ) developed by Gonzales (2001) is seemingly an example to be explored and to be experimented to similar foreign language contexts.

In England, Williams, Burden, and Lanvers (2002) studied the motivation of secondary school students’ motivation to learn foreign languages such as German and French. 228 students were involved in the study. The methodology consisted of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire was first used followed by interviews. The study revealed among other findings that students are more motivated to learn German than French language. Also, it was discovered a decrease of motivation with age, and higher level of motivation among girls than boys.

In short, this study, had tried to discover the reasons why English secondary students decided to learn German or French. To come up with the results, Williams, Burden and Lanvers (2002) had implemented just like the current study, the piloting of the questionnaire items. To some extent, this study is useful because it enables the readers to know that learners, in some context, prefer to learn some languages over others. Nevertheless, it appears that the target population here is secondary school students contrary to the present study.

In the same respect, Newbill and Jones (2012) conducted a research in the USA to find out undergraduate students' motivation for studying French language as well as their intentions to continue learning the language. The participants consisted of 46 students taking an intermediate French course at a public university in the country. And Language Orientation Instrument (LOI) adapted from Clement and al (1994) was used throughout the study. Newbill and Jones (2012) discovered that those American students involved in the study were more likely to be intrinsically motivated in learning French. In fact, they studied French because they found the language enjoyable and important for them. Besides, students have also reported that they have chosen to learn French for it is useful for "their future travels" (p. 85).

Based on these results, Newbill and Jones (2012) advised teachers to stress on the practical or instrumental benefits of knowing French language. In other terms, teachers were recommended to emphasize "how French can be useful in their lives" (p. 86). It's surprising that Newbill and Jones (2012) drew conclusion from this small sample of the population of their study over millions of Americans people. It is evident that a small handful of participants are far from being enough to conduct an empirical research. However, this study is somehow similar to the present study for both had investigated the learning of FFL.

In the Malaysian context, some papers have also been published in the learning of foreign languages in general and particularly in relation to students' motivation in learning those languages. Among the studies reported are Mat Teh, Amin Embi, Nik Yossof and Mohamod (2009a) which was carried out in Terengganu. The study was aimed to explore the types and level of Arabic language learning motivation of Malaysian religious secondary school students and examine the relationship between the use of language learning strategies and language learning motivation. The study involved 457 students. Oxford's (1990) SILL and a modified version of Ehrman and Oxford's (1991) Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire were used. The motivation questionnaire covered integrative and instrumental motivation as well as learners' desire to use the language. The authors discovered that religious secondary school students have a medium level of motivation for learning Arabic language. They also demonstrated a high level of integrative motivation than instrumental one. Mat Teh, Amin Embi, Nik Yossof and Mohamod (2009a) also reported an existence of positive correlation between the different types of language learning strategy and motivation (be it instrumental or integrative) The researchers recommended teachers to be aware of the effect they have on their students' motivation and strategy use. In addition, they also emphasized that teachers should create ways to enhance students' motivation.

Although, Mat Teh, Amin Embi, Nik Yossof and Mohamod's (2009a) study was designed for Malaysian secondary school students, it helps to understand the reasons why they study Arabic as a foreign language in the country. In contradiction with some previous studies, the findings of the actual one indicated that the importance of integrative motivation over instrumental one even though students are not exposed to the target language community. The reason behind this might be the fact Arabic is the language of Islam and that the participants involved are from Arabic religious school.

Similarly, Zubairi and Sarudin (2009) conducted an investigation to grasp Malaysian students' motivation to learn foreign languages (French, Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese, Thai, German and Italian). The participants of this survey were 531 students from two different higher institutions in the country namely Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Malaysia Teknologi MARA (UiTM).

These institutions offer foreign languages such as Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese, Thai, French, German, Italian, Korean and Spanish. A Rasch Model Analysis with a 16-item was used to identify students' motivation. Zubairi and Sarudin (2009) found that Malaysian students were highly motivated to learn a foreign language for extrinsic and intrinsic reasons. For instance they reported that they learned a foreign language for extrinsic reasons such as for "their future career, to make them more knowledgeable person or to fulfill the graduation requirements". (p. 10). They are also intrinsically motivated because they want to know about new cultures and meet new people from different countries. The authors advised curriculum designers to take into consideration different parameters to make foreign language learning easier in the country. As for the institutions in Malaysia, Zubairi and Sarudin (2009) recommended them to provide foreign language learning opportunities to students. The merit of Zubairi and Sarudin's (2009) study is that it is one of the rare papers that include learning of French as a foreign language in the country.

In sum, it is believed that in a foreign language learning setting, instrumental motivation was reported to play an important role compared to integrative motivation. In fact, learners seemed to be involved in a foreign language learning for utilitarian reasons such as to pass an examination, to improve job opportunities (Alrabai, 2009; Dwaik & Shehadeh, 2010; Vaezi, 2008; Zao, 2012; Zubairi & Sarudin, 2009). The reason behind this conclusion might be due to the fact that in almost all the contexts where foreign language learning is taking place, students have a very limited exposure to the target language community (if there is any) to have integrative motivation. However, a few studies contradicted with these findings by discovering that integrative motivation is the predominant factor in a foreign language context (Chan & Chi, 2010; Gardner, 1984; Mat Teh, Amin Embi, Nik Yossof, & Mohamod, 2009a). In addition, other findings suggested that both integrative and instrumental motivations are important in a foreign language learning environment (e. g Johnson, 2001; Kimura, Nakata, & Okumura, 2000; Zhao, 2012).

Brief, the findings from previous studies with regards to learners' motivation to learn a foreign language carried out in different parts of the world revealed that, as pointed out by Brown (2007, p. 171): "some learners in some contexts are more successful in learning a language if they are integratively oriented, and others in different contexts benefit from as instrumental orientation". However, in most situations a mixture of each type of motivation was also noticed.

4.2 Studies on students' achievement in foreign language learning settings

Learning processes are believed to vary from person to person due to some biological and psychological differences within each and every learner of a target language (Zainol Abidin, Rezaee, Abdullah, & Singh 2011). Similarly, in a foreign/second language learning context, academic or learning achievement depends on several parameters such as students' backgrounds, motivation, attitudes or learning settings. According to Deniz, Gülden and Şen (2013), foreign language aptitude tests were developed in the US in the 1920's in order to assess one's performance in foreign language situations and to decide students who might not benefit from foreign language instruction.

In an attempt to find out the foreign language achievement of 1289 Turkish students learning English, Deniz, Gülden and Şen (2013) discovered that EFL learning achievement is affected by intelligence, learning styles, anxiety, native language aptitude, study fields, attitude and gender. In addition, Pishghadam and Zabihi (2011) conducted a research in Iran to examine among others the Iranian students' achievement in EFL classes. The results revealed that foreign language achievement is correlated to students' ability.

Methodology

3.1 The Study

The aim of this study is to find out the reasons why beginners choose to learn FFL at university level and their achievement in learning FFL. The research questions that the study attempted to answer are:

1. What motivates students to learn FFL at university level?
2. How is the learners' achievement in learning FFL?

3.2 Research site

The present research was conducted in one of the public universities in Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). The university is located in the State of Sarawak (Sarawak and Sabah are the two Malaysian States located on Borneo island).

UNIMAS creates language learning opportunities to its students through Centre for Language Studies (CLS). The Centre offers third languages such as Arabic, Iban, Japanese, Mandarin, Tamil and French. The third language courses are offered as university elective courses. According to the university's Academic Regulation, an elective course is "a course taken either from other programs or outside the Faculty" ("Undergraduate Studies Division", 2013). In other words, an elective course such as French is a non-compulsory course that a student can choose to learn. However, Undergraduates at UNIMAS are required to pass an elective course of their choice for graduation purposes and the above mentioned third languages are one of the options.

3.3 Participants

The questionnaire was initially administered with a total of 215 students who took French as an elective course at Centre for Language Studies (CLS) in UNIMAS. However, of the 215 participants, 2 students submitted incomplete questionnaire and thus they were excluded from the survey data. Thus, the total population of the study is 213 students of which 16% were males (34/213) and 84% were females (179/213). In fact, gender imbalance in tertiary institutions with more females than males is common not just in Malaysia but also in other developed countries such as the USA, Canada or Australia (Mustapha & Long, 2010). The participants came from various faculties in UNIMAS (see Table 1) and their ages ranged from 19 to 26 years old. Also, the participants came from all the 14 states in Malaysia as shown in Table 2. Nevertheless, about half of the population of this study originated from the State of Sarawak, where the university is located. In addition, as shown in Table 3, the participants are from different ethnic backgrounds.

Table 1*Participants' state of origin*

State	Frequency	Percent
Sarawak	114	53.5
Sabah	21	9.9
Johor	17	8.0
Selangor	12	5.6
Kedah	8	3.8
Perak	8	3.8
Kelantan	6	2.8
Kuala lumpur	6	2.8
Pahang	6	2.8
Pulau Pinang	6	2.8
Negeri Sembilan	5	2.3
Perlis	2	.9
Melaka	1	.5
Terengganu	1	.5
Total	213	100

3.4 Instruments

Data from the 213 Malaysian students who participated in the study were collected using a quantitative approach. The data were collected using a modified version of Gardner's (1985) AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery) to find out students' motivation.

Table 2 shows the overall Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire items on students' motivation and learning strategies, the reliability of the items in the questionnaire for each learning strategy type as well as for all the 60 items in Section C.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

3.5.1.1 Motivation Questionnaire

For the purpose of this study, Gardner's (1985) AMTB was interpreted and used to collect data with regard to the students' motivation to learn FFL. In other words, ideas were taken from Gardner's (1985) AMTB for the motivation questionnaire part. The initial AMTB was designed for Canadian students learning French. It comprised 13 components: Interest in foreign languages, Parental encouragement, Motivation intensity, French class anxiety, Evaluation of the French course, Attitudes towards learning French, Attitudes towards French Canadians, Integrative orientation, Desire to learn French, Evaluation of the French teacher, Orientation index, Instrumental orientation and Attitudes towards European French people.

In this actual study, only questionnaire items related to the study were adapted with major changes. However, other items regarding motivation were also added. This is because of the six items added are related to motivation. Second, all of are believed to be relevant to the study. Below are the changes and the interpretations made.

Table 2*Motivation questionnaire***Motivation in Gardner (1985)**

Studying French can be important to me because it will allow me to be more at ease with fellow Canadians who speak French

Studying French can be important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.

Studying French can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate French Canadian art and literature.

Studying French can be important for me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.

If I planned to stay in another country, I would make a great effort to learn the language even though I could get along in English

I enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak other languages

My parents really encourage me to study French.

Studying French can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.

Studying French can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting job.

Adaptations/interpretations made

I would like to communicate with French people.

I am interested in French language.

I like French artists

I like French culture.

I would like to visit some French speaking countries.

I would like to be with friends who are learning French.

I was given encouragement by family

I was given encouragement by friends

I would like to further my studies in France.

I would like to work with French companies.

Added items

I like French songs

I like French food

I like French brands

I like to watch French program

I like French football team

I would like to travel to France

3.5.2 Grade

Data on Participants' achievement in the French language course was determined from the grade about for the course. The assessment consisted of self-introduction, free conversation, word recognition and pronunciation, role play and final examination. The ongoing assessment represents 60% of the total grade whereas the final exam counts for 40%. Table 3 presents the percentage allocated to each type of assessment throughout the French language course.

Table 3*Students' grade*

	Assessment	Percentage
Acheivement	Final exam	40%
	Role play	25%
	Recognition& Pronunciation	10%
	Free conversation	15%
	Self-Introduction	10%

As mentioned in Section 3.2, the course content of level1 French at CLS is about the acquisition of the basic listening, speaking and reading skills in French. As for the grade, it is divided according to the following: 40% for the final exam, 25% for Role play, 10% for Word recognition and Pronunciation, 15% for free conversation and 10% for Self-Introduction.

Table 4 below presents the grade system implemented at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).

Table 3
Grade system according to UNIMAS

Grade	Marks Ranges	Grade Points
A	80-100	4.00
A-	75-79	3.67
B+	70-74	3.33
B	65-69	3.00
B-	60-64	2.67
C+	55-59	2.33
C	50-54	2.00
C-	45-49	1.50
D	40-44	1.00
F	<40	0.00

3.6 Data collection procedures

3.6.1 Main Study

The main study involved 213 students who were taking French as a Foreign Language at Centre for Language Studies (CLS). The instruments constituted the refined version of the pilot study (appendix 2). As mentioned earlier, the total population of the study is 213 students of which 16% were males (34/213) and 84% were females (179/213). The participants were given detailed explanation on the nature of the study was explained to them and instructions on how to fill up the different parts of the questionnaire. They were ensured by the same way that the investigation will not in any case affect their results and that the information collected through them will only be used for the purpose of the study. The collection of the questionnaire data took a week and English was used by the researcher to communicate with the participants. However, all the questionnaire items were translated into Malay in order to make them easy for the students to understand. Before the administration of the questionnaire, students' respective lecturers were contacted. They then informed the students. The researcher was given 20 minutes towards the end of the class to administer the questionnaire inside the classrooms.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

The questionnaire data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows version 19.0. Descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) were performed to deal with students' background information such as age, origin, or faculty. Also, the same procedure was performed to analyze the motivation.

Chapter 4

Results and Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter reports the results from the present study. The chapter starts by presenting the results of the study starting with the results for motivation, and students' achievement in learning FL.

4.2 Motivation for learning FFL

The data for students' motivation came from Section B of the questionnaire (refer to Appendix 2) Section B of the questionnaire consisted of 18 items related to students' motivation for choosing to learn FFL. The 18 items were numbered from 21-38. Also, an open-ended question was added ('other reasons'). Each item was followed by a five-option Likert scale the scale and its meaning were as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree. The responses for the 18 items were keyed into SPSS version 19 and analyzed to determine the mean scores and standard deviations. The open ended item (item19) only had 5 respondents and thus did not seem relevant to the analysis. Table 5 below presents the interpretation of the students' motivation levels.

Table 5

Interpretation of the mean scores

Mean	Agreement Level	Motivation Level
4.5 - 5.0	Strong Agreement	Very high motivation
3.5 - 4.49	Agreement	High motivation
2.5 - 3.49	Neutral	Moderate
1.5 - 2.49	Disagreement	Low motivation
1 - 1.5	Strong Disagreement	Very low motivation

Table 6 displays the results of the descriptive analysis of the 18 questionnaire items with regard to their motivation for learning FFL.

Table 6

Students' motivation to learn French as a FL

Items: I choose to learn French language because...	Rank	Mean	SD	Level*
I would like to travel to France.	1	4.63	.650	VH
I would like to visit some French speaking countries.	2	4.47	.717	H
I would like to improve my employment opportunities.	3	4.38	.796	H
I am interested in French language.	4	4.02	.662	H
I like French food.	5	3.93	.901	H
I like French brands.	6	3.92	.923	H
I would like to be with friends who are learning French.	7	3.83	.848	H
I would like to work with French companies.	8	3.76	.838	H
I would like to further studies in France.	9	3.71	.925	H
I would like to communicate with French people.	10	3.71	.740	H
I am interested in French culture.	11	3.70	.723	H
I was given encouragement by friends.	12	3.58	.905	H
I would like to get scholarship from France.	13	3.54	1.035	H
I was given encouragement by family.	14	3.47	1.030	M
I like French songs.	15	3.13	.862	M
I like to watch French program.	16	2.96	.739	M
I like French artists.	17	2.87	.770	M
I like French football team.	18	2.82	.974	M

Note: *VH-Very High, H=High, M=Moderate

Results in Table 6 shows that travel to France has the highest mean (M=4.63) and this indicates that the students are very highly motivated to learn French because they wish to travel to France. Students are also highly motivated by the desire to visit other French speaking countries (M=4.43), to increase their employment opportunities (M=4.38) and their interest in French language (M=4.02). Similarly, the mean scores for the items ranked 5 until 13, range from M=3.54 to M=3.93, indicating that students also appear to be highly motivated to learn French for cultural reasons such as liking towards French food, brands and also for practical or economic reasons like working with French companies, studying in France and getting scholarship from France.

However, the results of the following items: "I was given encouragement by family" (M=3.47), "I like French songs" (M=3.13), "I like to watch French program" (M=2.96), "I like French artists" (M=2.87) and "I like French football team" (M=2.82), with mean less than 3.50 demonstrate that students exhibit a medium level of motivation for those items. Thus, family encouragement, French songs, program, artists and French football team only moderately influence students' reason for learning FFL.

None of the items received a low or very low motivation. This shows that the students' reasons for learning FFL ranged from moderate to very highly motivated.

In short, results indicate that the learners' motivational orientations to learn FFL are towards both utilitarian and cultural goals. This means that they choose to learn the target language for travel, followed by employment and thirdly cultural purposes.

4.2.1 Integrative Motivation and Instrumental Motivation

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2, motivation is divided into two major types, they are integrative and instrumental. Integrative refer to the desire of the learner to integrate in the target language's speech community, instrument refers to the practical reasons for learning a target language, for instance to improve the learner's employment opportunities or to pass an examination.

Of the 18 items on Motivation, 10 were related to integrative and 8 instrumental. Table 7 highlights the results for integrative motivation items. The questionnaire consisted of 10 items related to integrative motivation, they are items numbered 21 to item 30 (refer to Appendix 2).

Table 7

Descriptive statistics for integrative motivation items

Items: I choose to learn French language because...	Rank	Mean	SD	Level*
I am interested in French language.	1	4.02	.662	H
I like French food.	2	3.93	.901	H
I like French brands.	3	3.92	.923	H
I like to be with friends who are learning French.	4	3.83	.848	H
I like to communicate with French people.	5	3.71	.740	H
I am interested in French culture.	6	3.70	.723	H
I like French songs.	7	3.13	.863	M
I like to watch French program	8	2.96	.739	M
I like French artists.	9	2.87	.770	M
I like French football team.	10	2.82	.974	M
Nm				
Overall Mode and Mean scores		3.48	.814	

N: *H=High, M=Medium

Table 7 reports the results of the 10-item on integrative motivation. As explained in Chapter 2, Section 2. Among the items that contribute highly to their desire to learn French are firstly, interest in FL, followed by French food, French brands, interaction with friends and French people and interest in French culture. However, the results also show that the students exhibit a medium level of motivation towards French songs, program, artists or football team, with mean ranging from 2.82 to 3.13. Also, as shown in Table 14, the overall mean for integrative motivation is 3.48 and this indicates that the students have a medium degree of integrative motivation towards learning FFL.

As for Table 8, it reports results for instrumental motivation. The items which are numbered 31 to item 38 in the questionnaire (refer to Appendix 2). Unlike integrative motivation, instrumental motivation refers to learning a language for some practical reasons such as passing an examination, improving one's employment opportunities, fulfilling a university entrance requirement and so on (Gardner, 1985).

Table 8*Descriptive statistics for instrumental motivation items*

Items: I choose to learn French language because...	Rank	Mean	SD	Level
I would like to travel to France.	1	4.63	.650	VH
I would like to visit some French speaking countries.	2	4.47	.717	H
I would like to improve my employment opportunities.	3	4.38	.796	H
I would like to work with French companies.	4	3.76	.838	H
I would like to further studies in France.	5	3.71	.925	H
I was given encouragement my friends.	6	3.58	.905	H
I would like to get scholarship from France.	7	3.54	1.035	H
I was given encouragement by family.	8	3.47	1.030	M
Overall Mode and Mean scores		3.94	.862	

N=*VH=Very High, H=High, M=Medium

Table 8 displays the results for instrumental motivation. The results in Table 13 show that a high level of motivation is found for some items such as travel to France (M=4.63), visiting other French speaking countries (M=4.47), and improving employment opportunities (M=4.38).

Also, except for one item (encouragement by family with mean score of 3.47), all the remaining items were found to be high contributing reasons in students' reason for learning FFL. In addition, the overall mean (3.94) implies that students are highly motivated to learn FFL because of instrumental motivation. Thus instrumental motivation plays an important role in students' desire to choose to learn FFL.

Furthermore, the overall mean for instrumental motivation is 3.94 and integrative motivation is 3.48. This indicates that instrumental motivation contributes highly, whereas integrative motivation's contribution is at the medium level. Thus, both types of motivation do contribute towards the students' choice to learn FFL, but the students are more motivated to learn FFL for instrumental reasons compared to integrative reasons.(make reference to table 9)

Table 9*Instrumental VS Integrative Motivation*

Motivation types	Overall Mean	Level of motivation
Instrumental	3.94	High
Integrative	3.48	Medium

In sum, Section 4.1 reported the reasons why students engaged themselves in learning FFL. The results show that the students chose to learn FFL for both instrumental and integrative reasons. As far as the instrumental motivation is concerned, the results indicate that the learners choose to learn French for reasons such travel and/or employment purposes. Also, the students were found to learn the language in order to be able to communicate with French speakers whenever they visit Francophone countries. Similarly, it appears that the students also choose to learn FFL for integrative reasons particularly due to interest in the language. This could be because of the fact that French is one of the most important world languages. Other integrative reasons particularly liking for French food and brands also contribute to the students' choice.

Although both instrumental motivation and integrative motivation contribute towards students' reason to learn FFL, integrative motivation is higher compared to the latter. The following subsection provides the results on students' strategy use in learning FFL.

4.4 Learners' achievement in learning FFL

Table 10 provides the interpretation of the grades for the present study and the results of the achievement data.

Table 10

Student grades and achievement in French

Mark Range	Grades	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
75-100	A & A-	Very good	35	16.5
65-74	B+ & B	Good	77	36.1
55-64	B- & C+	Average	60	28.1
45-54	C & C-	Below Average	28	13.2
<40-44	D & F	Weak	13	6.1
			213	100

Similarly, Figure 1 shows the distribution of students' achievement in learning FFL.

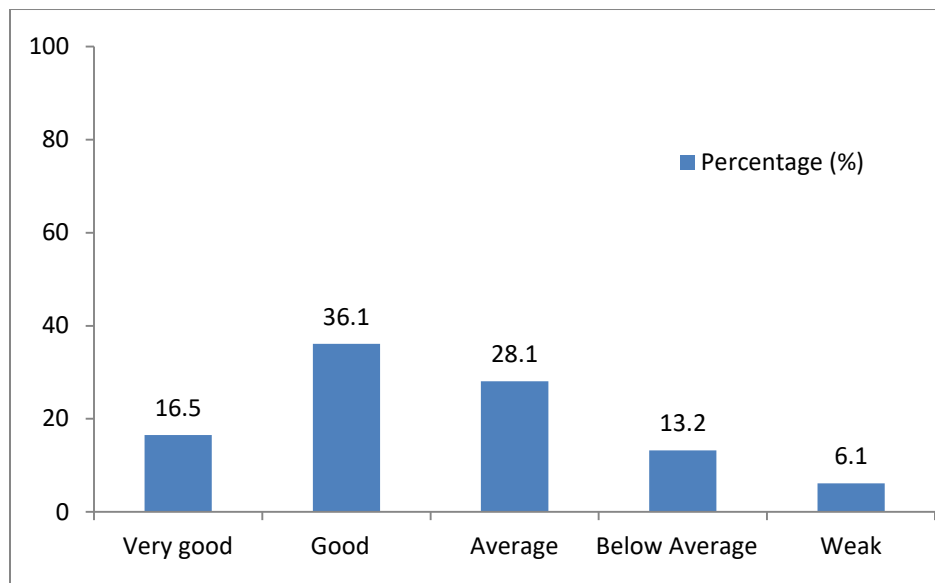


Figure 1. Graphical representation of students' performance in French

As shown in Figure 1, 16.1% of the students seem to have scored very well in the course. 36.1% of them have scored good grades, 28.1% of the participants have obtained average grades, 13.2% are reported to have less knowledge of the language and 6.1% have weak command of FL. Besides, a close examination of these results indicates that 52.6% of the students have obtained very good to good grades which are A or A- whereas 28.1% of the students have an average performance. On the other hand, less than 20% that is 13, 2% and 6.1%, falls into below average to weak command of French.

In sum, Section 4.3 reported the students' achievement in French. The results from the students' ongoing and final exams reveal that almost half of the population of the students has good command of

French. On the other hand, the results also show that only less than 20% of the students have weak knowledge of the language whereas the rest are in the average range. Next, the results on the relationship between students' motivation, learning strategies and performance are presented in the following subsection.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the findings and answers the research questions of the study. Also, the chapter discusses the implications of the findings on the teaching and learning of FFL in general. It ends with the general conclusion drawn from the findings of the study.

5.2 Overall Discussion

The section highlights all the aspects of findings from the study and discusses them following the different research questions that the study attempts to address.

RQ1: What motivates students to learn FFL at university level?

The purpose of the first research question was to investigate the reasons why students chose to learn FFL. The results show that the students chose to learn FFL for both instrumental and integrative reasons. However, the results also indicate that instrumental motivation is slightly higher than integrative one. As far as the instrumental motivation is concerned, the results indicate that the learners' main motivational orientations to learn FFL are towards utilitarian or practical goals such travel and employment purposes. On the other hand, it appears that the students also choose to learn FFL for integrative reasons particularly due to interest in the language, French food or brands. French being a world language was also found to be a motivational factor among the learners.

As mentioned earlier, the results indicate that the students are instrumentally and integratively motivated in choosing to learn FFL. However, instrumental motivation is found to be higher than integrative one. These findings are different from the findings reported in an earlier research conducted in the same context (Malaysia) by Mat Teh, Amin Embi, Nik Yussof and Mohamod (2009). They found that learners demonstrated a high level of integrative motivation than instrumental in their choice of learning Arabic as a foreign language. The reasons for this high level of integrative motivation among the Malaysian students towards Arabic language could be explained by the fact that Arabic is the language of the Holy Koran which is the holy scripture for Islam. All the participants of the study were Muslims, thus their religion could be the main reason for a higher level of integrative motivation. However, French which is the language focused on the current study is not connected to any religion and does not have any communicative or special status in the country.

Also, the present study's findings on motivation contradict with other reported studies in some foreign language learning settings where students were found to be involved in a target foreign language learning for mostly some integrative reasons such as to adopt the target language culture or to integrate its society (Chan & Chi, 2010; Erhman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2002; Gardner, 1984; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994; Newbill & Jones, 2012; Walqui, 2000). Among these reported studies, is the one conducted in the same geographical region (Singapore) by Chan and Chi (2010). The results of this study revealed that K-Pop and Hallyu or Korean wave had substantially contributed to a strong interest in the learning of

Korean as a foreign language in Singapore. Thus, unlike the findings from the present study, integrative motivation was higher among learning of Korean as a foreign language in Singapore.

In addition, the present study's finding is not in line with a similar study conducted in the USA about the learning of FFL by Newbill and Jones (2012). Newbill and Jones (2012) found that the American students who participated in their survey were more integratively motivated in learning the language because they find French as enjoyable. This could be due to the fact that in this study, the participants are all youngsters and for many French is believed to be a language of love, a romantic language. Also, in the USA, French language does not have a communicative function in the country, that is the language is not widely spoken, thus, students may learn it just for fun. Similarly, this finding contradicts other reported studies where learners were found to be solely influenced by instrumental or extrinsic motivation in learning a given foreign language (Dwaik & Shehadeh, 2010; Zhao, 2012).

However, the findings of the present study are in some extent congruent with a similar research conducted in the Malaysian context by Zubairi and Sarudin (2009). Zubairi and Sarudin (2009)' study investigated the reasons why Malaysian university students chose to learn some foreign languages such as French, Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese, Thai, German and Italian. The results suggested that Malaysian students were highly motivated to learn foreign languages for both extrinsic and intrinsic reasons such as to improve their employment opportunities or to meet people from different backgrounds. Similarly, in the present study, learning French in order to improve employments opportunities, to visit French speaking countries or to be able to communicate with French people were also found to be factors that contributed to learners' choice to learn French. In the same perspectives, the findings from the present study are consistent with other findings in various foreign language learning contexts where learners appeared to have both instrumental and integrative motivation in learning the target language (Chalak & Kassain, 2010; Johnson, 2001; Kimura, Nakata & Okumura, 2000).

In addition, the present study is totally in line with some other earlier research studies in other foreign language learning settings. In this respect, most of the previous research findings with regard to foreign language learning revealed that lack of exposure to the target foreign language and its speech community constituted the main reasons for learners to be more instrumentally motivated in learning a given language. This belief as well as the findings of the present study is consistent with some previous studies conducted in various parts of the world (Moskovsky & Alrabai, 2009; Vaezi, 2008).

In sum, it is believed that affective factors such as motivation, linked to the cognition. That is the knowledge gained in the learning process is actively constructed by the learner rather than passively consumed by them. This belief can in some extend explain the results of the study. In addition, it appears that in a foreign language learning context, instrumental or extrinsic motivation is reported to play an important role compared to integrative motivation. In fact, learners seem to be involved in a foreign language learning for utilitarian reasons such as to fulfill admission requirements, to improve job opportunities (Alrabai, 2009; Dwaik & Shehadeh, 2010; Vaezi, 2008; Zao, 2012). This idea was supported by the fact that in almost all the contexts where foreign language learning takes place, learners have a very limited exposure to the target language as well as its speech community (if there is any).

However, the students who participated in this present study are reported to have, in addition to the instrumental motivation some integrative reasons to learn FFL despite their lack of exposure to the language and its speech community.

RQ3: How is the learners' achievement in learning FFL?

The results from the students' ongoing and final exams reveal that almost half of the population of the students has good command of French. However, the results also show that less than 20% of the students have weak knowledge of the language whereas the rest are in the average range. The learners'

good performance in French could be due to their strong desire to learn the language. In fact as mentioned earlier, French is offered in their university as an elective course, a non-compulsory subject. Thus, majority of the students who enroll in this course is due to their own efforts. Also, the findings reveal that the students look for every opportunity to practice French though this language does not have any communicative function or status in the country. Another possible reason for this good performance could be explained by the fact that the participants of this study are all beginners of FL. Thus, the curriculum for this particular level of French language is designed to initiate the learners to the basic writing, listening, speaking, and reading skills in French language. These findings support a conclusion made by Zainol Abidin, Rezaee, Abdullah and Singh 2011. That is, in a foreign/second language learning context, academic or learning achievement depends on several parameters such as students' backgrounds, motivation, attitudes or learning settings. In addition, students' overall results in French could be linked to their motivation to learn the language as well as the interest they showed throughout their learning process.

5.3 Implications of the findings

In the current study, the students were found to be motivated in learning FFL for both instrumental and integrative reasons though instrumental motivation is higher than integrative motivation. This implies a need to expose the learners more to French language, culture and people. It is evident that in a foreign language learning context, learners mostly lack exposure to the target speech community and the language itself. Thus, introducing some materials related to the target languages, its speech community, culture and so on can be one way to promote integrative motivation in the learners. Also, the high level instrumental motivation among the students implies that learners of FFL should be informed about the usefulness of knowing the language for the future especially in terms of employment opportunities.

Also, the findings from the present study suggest that almost half of the participants of this study have good command of French language. This good achievement of the students of French should be a pretext for policy makers to create more foreign language learning opportunities and to encourage students to be proficient in at least one foreign language.

5.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find out the reasons why students choose to learn FFL at university level and their actual achievement in learning FLL. The results show that the students chose to learn FFL for both instrumental and integrative reasons though instrumental motivation is higher than integrative motivation. In addition, the results from the students' ongoing and final exams reveal that almost half of them have good command of French.

In sum, this study was aimed at filling a gap as far as foreign language learning is concerned in general, particularly with regard to the learning of FFL. Over the past years, researchers had conducted tremendous studies around the world in relation to foreign languages. However, it appears that almost all the studies in the foreign language settings deal with the study of EFL in detriment with other international languages. The present study had tried to address this gap in the literature by investigating about French language, which is an international language. This study has in some extent, filled in that gap by exploring a language rather than English to show that other languages should also be studied. Furthermore, another contribution of this study is, it was carried out in a non-western context unlike the limited studies on French which were studied in countries like Canada or the USA. This contribution highlights the need to conduct foreign languages studies such as French in 'true' foreign languages context.

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