

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**LEARNING STYLES, SELF-EFFICACY AND
MOTIVATIONS IN LEARNING ENGLISH
AMONGST ESL FOUNDATION STUDENTS
AT UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA (UPM),
SELANGOR, MALAYSIA.**

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original as the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I hereby acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduates, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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ABSTRACT

The reformation of education is a dynamic process that requires a constant investigation and research particularly in the 21st century. In view of performance in the second language, various variables were measured consistently by many scholars in the world. Amongst them, learning styles and self-efficacy seemed to be consistently investigated as the variables that contributed to the higher level of motivations in second language acquisition amongst the ESL students. However, they were normally measured individually. In the current study, all these variables were combined and explored for a better understanding on how these variables correlated and contributed to the students' level of motivations. Due to the pandemic of COVID-19 which strike most countries globally, the study of motivations amongst ESL learners seems to be more important and relevant as it became fundamental in facing the challenges of online learning. The major aim of the study is to explore and investigate the relationships of learning styles and self-efficacy towards motivations in learning English amongst ESL foundation students at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Selangor, Malaysia. This study was guided by five research objectives and seven research questions. A descriptive-correlational research design employing the mixed-methods approach was used to explore the relationships. The population of the study consisted of ESL Science Foundation students in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). However, due to COVID-19 pandemic, only 117 respondents participated in the study through online platform. The instruments used to measure and collect the quantitative data were Reid's PLSPQ (Perception Learning Style Preference Questionnaire), Bandura's Children's Self-Efficacy Scale and Gardner and Lambert's AMTB (Attitude and Motivation Test Battery). In addition, qualitative data in a form of semi-structured and open-ended questions were constructed and collected to further triangulate the quantitative data. A few statistical tests such as mean scores, standard deviations, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and simple regressions were employed to analyze the quantitative data. Findings indicated that firstly, majority of the students rated themselves as having flexible learning styles (ranging from M=4.18 to M=4.90) where the highest learning style was Kinesthetic learning style. Secondly, students rated themselves as having high self-efficacy (ranging from M= 4.53 to M=4.98) whereby Self-Efficacy for Academic Achievement was rated as the highest. Thirdly, the students seemed to rate high level of motivations (ranging from M=4.87 to M=5.56), where Integrative Orientation was viewed as the highest. Fourthly, there was a significant and positive relationships between learning styles and motivations ($R=.464$) as rated by ESL students. Fifth, there was a significant, positive and high relationship between self-efficacy and motivations ($R=.645$) as rated by ESL students. In addition, the simple regression results implied that 21.5% ($R^2=.215$) of the variance in Motivations score could be predicted from the independent variable of Learning Styles dimensions. Finally, a higher simple regression results by the students implied that 41.6% ($R^2=.416$) of the variance could be predicted from Self-Efficacy dimensions. Overall, the qualitative findings seemed to triangulate and support the quantitative findings. Thus, the findings tend to lead to some implications such as the extension of the corpus of knowledge, theoretical, pedagogical, policy and practical implications in the learning of English as a second language to students as well as instructors.

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