

# A Study on the Motivation Levels and Problems in the Language Learning for the Higher Education Learners

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## Abstract

Language builds social and economic connections within countries as the most effective communication tool. It has the potential to introduce new opportunities and helps the speakers become world citizens. Although second language teaching focuses more on early education in many countries, it is still crucial for university students to acquire a foreign language. Second language acquisition enables institutional cooperation not just on a domestic but also on an international scale, thus contributing significantly to universal and contemporary growth. This research aims to determine university students' motivations for learning a foreign language, identify the problems during the process, and offer solutions. For this purpose, the opinions of the German Language and Literature department students studying at a state university on language learning were evaluated by taking the "Motivation Scale in Language Learning" and semi-structured interview forms. This study relies on a mixed research method combining the quantitative and the qualitative. The findings point out that students have a good motivation to learn a language, and the motivations are the same regardless of age, gender, grade level, previous educational background, and parents' educational background. According to the findings, students' motivations are living abroad, cultural growth, curiosity, interest, love, and new technologies. On the other hand, the lack of sufficient incentives, linguistic challenge, feelings of inadequacy, and prejudices affect their motivation negatively.

**Keywords:** university students, German, foreign language, second language

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## 1. Introduction

Throughout history, people have always used their native language to communicate so that they could be in touch with people from different environments or far from one another. Since then, those with a second or third language have become more advantageous than monolinguals. Nowadays, it has become possible to quickly understand every language thanks to rapid advances in smartphones, the internet, and computer technologies. These technologies improved to such an extent that smart applications instantly translate a text or image from a source language to the target language. However, there is still a need to acquire a second or a third language regardless of this technological advancement since artificial intelligence is not intelligent enough yet to take over verbal communication. People continue to educate their children with a second or third language in early education.

Experts and teachers have always been interested in studying how a second language is learned after acquiring a mother tongue and what variables affect the process. There is ongoing research on to what extent individuals' personalities and language learning abilities affect the acquisition of a second language. Variables for a successful language acquisition include the learning environment, personal characteristics, and process (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, cited in Mehdiyev, Uğurlu, & Usta, 2017). Motivation in language learning is a very complex psychological

phenomenon and is also influential in learning a new language (Quan, 2014; Seven, 2020). There is a great emphasis on foreign language teaching in Turkey. Effective foreign language teaching has been indispensable for raising a qualified workforce in the country. Due to developing technology, communication opportunities, and current socio-economic relations requirement, speaking a foreign language has become necessary (Çimen, 2011; Kung, 2017). Foreign language education is compulsory in the curriculum as of the second grade in primary education, and it remains mandatory even in higher education. Despite 900-1000 hours of foreign language education for 12 years, the success in foreign language education is low. This fact is consistent with the research (Demirel, 1978; Ceyhan, 1982; Gülmez, 1982; Sözer, 1986; Alagözlü, 2017). Language has four basic skills: understanding, reading comprehension, speaking, and writing. These four skills are required for written and oral communication. Due to the mandatory education system, it is enough for students to get enough scoring to pass without learning much. They repeat the same grammar topics yearly without sufficiently speaking or understanding a foreign language. They will survive in their professional careers without achieving much if they feel content with the language education given in schools. In the age of globalization, people need the skills, knowledge, and tools to adapt to the change, and learning at least one foreign language is a way to achieve that (Çelik & Erkensiz, 2000; Gimatdinova Çağaç, 2018).

Language teaching should reflect culture, thought, and environment in which students feel peaceful and motivated to learn (Şahin, 2007: 468; Takkaç Tulgar, 2019). Learners' motives shape their behaviour and actions as a practical and intrinsic drive (Kırmızı & Işığüzel, 2014; Ramalingam & Kee Jiar, 2022). Today, motivation is scientifically considered an essential element of foreign language teaching, and therefore, there is a need for more research on motivation to achieve a successful foreign language education (Arslan & Kılıc, 2010). It is essential to start foreign language teaching at an early age. Linguists state that early foreign language education will contribute to cognitive development. A synchronized learning of a native language and a foreign language boosts the development of language skills and accelerates the process (İlter & Er, 2007; Takkaç Tulgar, 2018). One possible reason for failure is the learner's decreasing motivation levels due to using the wrong teaching methods in Turkey. One of the reasons for failure in foreign language teaching in Turkey is that individuals lose their motivation due to wrong teaching methods. Foreign language teaching in Turkey mainly focuses on teaching grammar subjects, leading to psychological prejudices in students. After passing down these stereotyped prejudices to other generations, individuals become reluctant to start learning a foreign language. Moreover, it is also demotivating to start teaching a foreign language with the grammar topics since people are also unwilling to learn the grammar subjects in their native language. As a result of the grammar-focused teaching method, learners hesitate to learn English. Any second language should be acquired the way a native language should be - in other words, through imitation. Repetition through hearing, seeing, and rephrasing should be the central techniques in foreign language teaching, just as they are for learning a mother tongue (Sunel, 1989: 140). There is an immense variety of language course programs in many institutions, each of which adopts different programs, thus leading to a lack of standardization. Therefore, it is controversial whether foreign language education in different secondary education institutions meets the expectations. Due to miscommunication between secondary and higher education, foreign language education policy cannot be determined at the national level. The determination and implementation of such a policy, although important, could not be realized. Another important factor regarding the inadequacies in foreign language teaching in Turkey is that individuals do not know the structure of their mother tongue. Learning other languages is difficult for those who do not know their mother tongue. Those who want to learn a foreign language should first master the grammar rules of their mother tongue and learn it well (İşeri, 1996: 21-27). One of the essential conditions of learning a new language is to learn the mother tongue well. Furthermore, more than one teaching method should be applied since learners have different preferences and motivations. Foreign language teaching methods should be adapted accordingly to make the teaching process more efficient (Kabadayı, 2003: 56). The educator's behaviour is also influential in language teaching. Students lose motivation when the language educators do not use the language in the classroom, corridor, or schoolyard. In private education institutions, students are better at pronouncing English since they take every opportunity to communicate in English. Therefore, foreign language teachers should communicate with the learners in the target foreign language during the breaks. There is another issue that needs to be highlighted concerning the educators. It is thought that language educators have a good command of grammar but do not speak the language they teach in practice, and foreign language teaching based on memorizing has an unfavourable impact on language learning. In secondary and higher education, old methods should be abandoned, and new methods should be adopted (Tokdemir, 2000: 524). Depending on the program and duration they study, students fail to acquire a foreign language sufficiently despite English education being a significant part of their academic life. Therefore, this has been a topic of interest to many researchers and a myriad of studies (Gökdemir, 2005; Arslan & Akbarov, 2010). Students studying at the language departments of the universities are admitted based on their language scores from admission tests. Those learning a new language in their home country require hard work and

strong motivation. Those with solid language learning ability and motivation can learn more than one language quite well. With the advent of globalization, there is a need to learn more than two languages. Thanks to technological improvements, learners are offered a wide variety of help and opportunities. Although technology will eliminate the necessity of foreign language learning to some extent, people will not give up on certain pleasures such as singing and reading poetry in foreign languages. Therefore, it will remain a desired skill in the new century. This study focuses on the motivation levels of foreign language students in universities and the motivation factors.

This study aims to examine the motivation levels of foreign language students in university, identify the problems during the process, and suggest solutions. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought.

1-Do the students' motivation levels differ according to gender, age, class level, previous educational background, or parents' educational background?

2-What are the factors affecting students' motivation?

3- What are the factors that negatively affect students' motivation?

## 2. Methodology

**Table 1.** Personal Information for the Participants

Participants	N	%	
Age	18-20 y	32	42,1
	21-24 y	35	46,1
	25 y +	9	11,8
Sex	F	47	61,8
	M	29	38,2
Class	Grade 1	31	40,8
	Grade 2	37	48,7
	Grade 3 - 4	8	10,5
Previous School	Anatolian High School	49	64,5
	State High School	16	21,1
	Others	11	14,5
Mother's Educational Background			
	Lower than high school	16	21,1
	High school	31	40,8
	Higher Education	29	38,2
Father's Educational Background			
	Lower than high school	17	22,4
	High school	22	28,9

The study is carried out based on a mixed method of the qualitative and quantitative approaches since it will allow a better understanding (Creswell, 2006; Fırat, Kabakçı Yurdakul, & Ersoy, 2014). Researchers highlight the advantages of mixed method (Creswell, 2021). There were 95 students in the research sample, and the opinions of 80 students were received with a scaling technique, and the opinions of 15 students were received through semi-structured interview forms. The research group was made up of students studying at the Department of German Language and Literature in one of the largest universities in Turkey. Necessary permissions were obtained for the scale used in the quantitative research, and it was stated that the Motivation Scale in English Language Learning developed by Mehdiyev, Uğurlu, and Usta (2017) could be used to determine the motivation levels of university students. The Likert-type five-point rating scale included 1.00–1.80 'Strongly disagree'; 1.81–2.60 'Disagree'; Between 2.61–3.40 'I partially agree'; 3.41–4.20 'I agree'; The range of 4.21–5.00 was rated as 'I totally agree'. A semi-structured interview form was created for the data used in the qualitative part of the study, and its final form was given while taking the opinions of the field experts. In the interview form, there were questions about the factors

of student motivation and their desire for language learning. The study group was formed with the readily accessible sampling method. The personal information of the sample in the quantitative part of the study is given in Table 1.

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that half of the participants are between the ages of 21-24, most of them are women, half of them are in the second year, and most of them are Anatolian high school graduates. The mothers of nearly half of them are high school graduates, and the fathers of half of them have a university education or higher. In the qualitative part of the study, students were asked about the motivation factors. Opinions of 16 people in the study group were collected with the readily accessible sampling method. As per the age status, the group includes four person 19-year-olds, seven person 20-year-olds, a person 21-year-old, two person 23-year-olds, and two person 26-year-olds. There were six male and nine female participants. Nine participants' mothers had high school degrees, and three participants' mothers had university degrees. Only a single participant's mother had a primary school degree. As for fathers, there were five university degrees, eight high school degrees, one secondary school, and two primary school degrees. Participants included seven Anatolian high school graduates, four vocational school graduates, two state high school graduates, a social sciences high school graduate, one open education high school graduate, and one medical high school graduate.

### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 Findings on the Motivation Levels, Gender, Age, Class Level, Graduated School, Mother and Father Education Level

Analyses of student motivations are given below. The normality test of the scale used in the research is given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Normality Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Total Scale p>.05	,092	76	,175	,898	76	,000

An analysis of Table 2 indicates that the data are typically distributed in the significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results. The reliability test results of the scale used are given in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,864	,878	6

An analysis of Table 3 indicates that the reliability level of the test was calculated as .86. The level in the original scale was .84 (Mehdiyev, Uğurlu, & Usta, 2017). The language learning motivations of the students were examined based on the gender variable, and the results are given in Table 4.

An analysis of Table 4 indicates that students do not have difficulties learning a language (1.63); they do not think they are good at language (1.66). Instead, they feel slightly discouraged (1.81) and are slightly afraid of being ridiculed. It is understood that they love learning a language (4.43), they do not hate it (1.23), or they do not find it annoying (1.54). They are happy (3.85). They try to learn a language (3.86) and partially follow the world agenda (3.03). They want to travel to different countries (4.07), watch different broadcasts (4.04), and want to talk to tourists (3.41). They learn a language for personal development (4.52). They think that the language they are trying to learn is universal (4.51) and that learning it will help them get prestige (4.16). The t-test results of the students in terms of gender, self-confidence, attitude, and personal use are given in Table 5.

**Table 4.** Descriptive Statistics on Language Learning Difficulties

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Difficulty in learning languages	79	1	5	1,63	,976
Not being good at it	80	1	5	1,66	1,055
Feeling discouraged	80	1	5	1,81	1,045
Fear of being ridiculed	80	1	5	2,05	1,168
Love for language learning	79	1	5	4,43	,858
Dislike for language learning	80	1	5	1,23	,729
Language learning is annoying	79	1	5	1,54	,958
Language learning happiness	80	1	5	3,85	1,148
Trying to learn a language	79	1	5	3,86	1,206
Following the world agenda	79	1	5	3,03	1,339
Travelling to different countries	80	1	5	4,07	1,209
Watching different broadcasts	80	1	5	4,04	1,216
Communicating with tourists	80	1	5	3,41	1,366
For personal development	79	1	5	4,52	,845
The universality of language	80	1	5	4,51	,842
Getting prestige	80	1	5	4,16	1,267
Valid N (listwise)	74				

**Table 5.** T Test for Gender Variable

Dimension	Sex	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	t	sd	p
Confidence	F	47	16,3404	3,46584	-1,117	74	,359
	M	29	17,2414	3,33440			
Attitude	F	47	21,7417	3,80756	,806	74	,303
	M	29	21,0148	3,84076			
Personal Use	F	47	27,9052	5,22306	,223	74	,500
	M	29	27,6207	5,71598			

p>.05

**Table 6.** One-Factor Analysis of Variance for Age Variable (Anova)

		Square Sum	sd	Square Av.	F	p
Confidence	In-group	32,914	2	16,457	1,421	,248
	Intergroup	845,507	73	11,582		
	Total	878,421	75			
Attitude	In-group	26,337	2	13,169	,904	,409
	Intergroup	1063,062	73	14,562		
	Total	1089,399	75			
Personal Use	In-group	4,136	2	2,068	,070	,933
	Intergroup	2167,041	73	29,685		
	Total	2171,177	75			

p>.05

An analysis of Table 5 reveals that there is no statistically significant difference between the females ( $M=16.34$ ,  $Ss=3,46$ ) and males ( $M=17.24$ ,  $Ss=3,33$ ;  $t(74)=-1.11$ ,  $p=.35$ ) in the self-confidence dimension; between the females ( $M=21,74$ ,  $Ss=3,80$ ) and males ( $M=21.01$ ,  $Ss=3,84$ ;  $t(74)=.80$ ,  $p=.30$ ) in the attitudes dimension; between the females ( $M=27.90$ ,  $Ss=5,22$ ) and males ( $M=27.62$ ,  $Ss=5,71$ ;  $t(74)=-.22$ ,  $p=.50$ ) in personal use dimension. The analysis results are based on the age variable in Table 5.

An analysis of Table 6 points to no statistically significant difference in the dimensions of self-confidence, attitude, and the personal use based on the age variable ( $F=1.42$ ;  $p>.05$ ). Student motivation was examined based on the grade level, and the Anova test is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Analysis on Grade Level (Anova)

		Square Sum	sd	Square Av.	F	p
Confidence	In-group	45,112	2	22,556	1,976	,146
	Intergroup	833,309	73	11,415		
	Total	878,421	75			
Attitude	In-group	58,987	2	29,493	2,089	,131
	Intergroup	1030,412	73	14,115		
	Total	1089,399	75			
Personal Use	In-group	79,634	2	39,817	1,390	,256
	Intergroup	2091,544	73	28,651		
	Total	2171,177	75			

$p>.05$

An analysis of Table 7 points to no statistically significant difference in the dimensions of self-confidence, attitude, and the personal use based on class level. The students' motivation based on their previous educational background is analysed, and the results are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Analysis on Previous Educational Background (Anova)

		Square Sum	sd	Square Av.	F	p
Confidence	In-group	28,723	2	14,362	1,234	,297
	Intergroup	849,698	73	11,640		
	Total	878,421	75			
Attitude	In-group	32,432	2	16,216	1,120	,332
	Intergroup	1056,967	73	14,479		
	Total	1089,399	75			
Personal Use	In-group	38,847	2	19,424	,665	,517
	Intergroup	2132,330	73	29,210		
	Total	2171,177	75			

$P> .05$

An analysis of Table 8 points to no statistically significant difference in the dimensions of self-confidence, attitude, and the personal use based on the previously graduated school. The educational background of the students' mothers is analysed, and the results are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Analysis of Mothers' Educational Background (Anova)

		Square Sum	sd	Square Av.	F	p
Confidence	In-group	24,451	2	12,226	1,045	,357
	Intergroup	853,970	73	11,698		
	Total	878,421	75			
Attitude	In-group	26,087	2	13,044	,895	,413
	Intergroup	1063,312	73	14,566		
	Total	1089,399	75			
Personal Use	In-group	62,131	2	31,066	1,075	,347
	Intergroup	2109,046	73	28,891		
	Total	2171,177	75			

P>.05

An analysis of Table 9 points to no statistically significant difference in the dimensions of self-confidence, attitude, and the personal use based on mothers' educational background. It has been examined whether the education level of the students' fathers affect the student motivation, and the results are listed in Table 10.

**Table 10.** Analysis of Fathers' Educational Background (Anova)

		Square Sum	sd	Square Av.	F	p
Confidence	In-group	40,026	2	20,013	1,743	,182
	Intergroup	838,395	73	11,485		
	Total	878,421	75			
Attitude	In-group	19,542	2	9,771	,667	,516
	Intergroup	1069,857	73	14,656		
	Total	1089,399	75			
Personal Use	In-group	68,566	2	34,283	1,190	,310
	Intergroup	2102,612	73	28,803		
	Total	2171,177	75			

P>.05

An analysis of Table 10 points to no statistically significant difference in the dimensions of self-confidence, attitude, and the personal use based on fathers' educational background. In this part of the study, the positive and negative factors affecting the motivation and willingness to learn a language were collected with open-ended questions, and the data were analysed and revealed.

**Table 11.** Language Learning Motivation Factors

Factors	f	Participants
Desire to live abroad	5	1E-10K-11K-12E-15K
Desire for cultural improvement	5	1E-2K-3E, 6K-12 E
Curiosity, interest, love	4	1E-3E4E-13K
To make some practice	3	14K-15K-16E
New languages	3	4E-9K-13K
International validity of the target language	2	1E-16E
Occupational benefit	2	5K-14K
Interest in literature	2	3E- 8E
Reward	1	15K
Educator-driven	1	5K
Desire for academic studies	1	2K

### 3.2 Findings on Language Learning Motivation Factors

The students were asked which factors affect their foreign language learning motivation. Their opinions were analysed and included in Table 11.

An analysis of Table 11 reveals that motivation factors are the desire to live abroad, cultural development, practice, interest in new technologies, literature, rewards, the desire for academic studies, and educator-driven reasons. The expectation of living abroad ranks first in language learning motivations. A student said:

*“It is the idea of being in Germany someday”* (12 E) while another said:

*“I am very much interested in studying German and I would like to learn it as I dream of living in Germany”* (15K). Some seek cultural development. A student said:

*“I would like to watch movies and TV series without subtitles”* (1E) and another said.

*“It is the desire of getting new information and feeling empowered and successful as personal development becomes more visible with right and rapid studying methods”* (3E) and another said:

*“I would like to get to know another culture”* (12 E). Personal interest in language learning is also a motivating factor. A student said:

*“I am interested in learning languages. I am studying German language and literature after learning English because I wanted to have this education”* (4E) and another said:

*“I want to learn German because I like, and I would like to be fully equipped for the translation profession. In my opinion, those who speak a language is always one step ahead in the competition”* (13K). Another student said:

*“There is no reason for losing my language learning motivation. I would learn different languages even if I did not have to”* (3E). Some stated that practices while learning a foreign language are motivating. A student said:

*“In my personal opinion, speaking practices with friends will increase the motivation”* (14K); and another said:

*“Being in a German-speaking environment, being able to understand the conversations while listening to or watching something in German are motivating”* (15K). As to the motivation triggered by new technologies, a student said:

*“Audio visual resources make me keep going”* (4E) says.

Others said:

*“Understanding the material while watching a video or reading a text boosts my motivation”* (9K, 13K). Validity of the language also triggers interest. Two students said:

*“I believe German is the second most prestigious language following Latin”* (1E). and *“It is highly common”* (16E). Some students indicated the occupational advantage:

*“German is the main source language of some works in particular fields such as legal texts. I would like to learn it to analyse those texts”* (14K) and another said:

*“This is my department, so I have to learn it”* (5K). Following themes include the interest in literature, rewards and educator-factor. A student said:

*“I would like to read German works in their original language. My interest in German*

*language and literature influences the way I learn a new language”* (8E) and another said: *“Literature is a beautiful art form and German literature is highly successful in terms of quality. It has contributed significantly to the improvement of humanity and therefore, it is nice to learn German”* (3E). Another student referred to the motivation impact of rewarding and said:

*“Minor games and rewards, treats given to me like the ones given to Pavlov’s dog”* 15K) and another highlighted the influence of the educator and said:

*“Our classroom environment is so cosy thanks to my teachers and their understanding is so strong that they guess what we can ask in the classroom and answer them before we ask. They never belittle us when we do not know an answer. They always understand that this language is new to all of us and prepare the course accordingly”* (5K). Another student referred to the desire to carry out academic studies and said:



*"I am learning this language so that I can make use of German resources while carrying out academic research"* (2K). An overall analysis of the opinions reveals that the desire to live abroad ranks first. The other motivation factors include cultural improvement, speaking practice with friends, and interest in new technology and applications. In addition, it is seen that their interest in literature also motivates them to learn a new language, and language educators are also important factors to be considered. Students are also motivated to learn a language when they desire to carry out academic research.

### 3.3 Findings on the Factors with Negative Impact on Students' Language Learning Motivation

The students were asked what kind of factors negatively affect their motivation while learning a language, and the findings are given in Table 12.

**Table 12.** Factors with Negative Impact on Students' Language Learning Motivation

Factors	f	Participants
Not being encouraged enough	5	5K-6K-12E-13K-15K
Difficulty of the target language	5	5K-7K-8E-9K-11K
Feeling inadequate	4	6K-7K-10K-15K
Prejudices against the target language	3	5K-10K-14K
Insufficient language teaching techniques	2	5K-14K
Feeling down	1	4E
The fear of being mocked and humiliated	1	5K
Instructor prejudices	1	14K
Personal	1	7K

An analysis of Table 12 points to factors of demotivation. They include the lack of motivational environments, the idea that the target language is challenging to learn, their perception of themselves as inadequate, prejudices against language, low morale, fear of being mocked and humiliated, instructors' prejudices, and inadequate teaching techniques. Lack of encouragement and good practice rank the top two. A student said:

*"I do not have enough chance to advance my German in Ankara"* (6K) and another said:

*"I cannot concentrate enough on German because I speak Turkish during the day"* (12E). Another student refers to the idea that the language is challenging:

*"I lose my motivation when I think that I will fail because of the difficulty of German"* (9K) and another said:

*"Articles and grammar rules are too complicated and varied"* (8E). Some students indicated that they believed German is a difficult language and their motivation is low due to this prejudice. Some also feel inadequate. A student said:

*"I am afraid of making mistakes"* (15K) and another said:

*"I have native German speakers in my class and my circles"* (10K). Some students are also prejudiced against the language:

*"I find it hard to learn, it is not a polite language. I have low motivation due to foundational problems. I have no idea how to motivate myself. I lost my enthusiasm"* (5K) and another said:

*"I do not want to learn German because it is not a universal language. I did not willingly choose this department"* (14K). Some students referred to the lack of teaching techniques:

*"Lessons are not based on the right teaching techniques designed for us"* (5K);

*"Insufficient preparatory education curbs my enthusiasm to learn a language"* (14K). A person feeling down and willingly to quit the programme said:

*"I feel down when I do not understand a topic. I feel like giving up"* (4E). A student concerned over being humiliated in front of his friends said:

*“When I do not know the answer, I fear being humiliated and that is why I cannot ask questions or express myself in front of everyone”* (5K). Instructors are also influential. A student gave a list of examples as such:

*“Prejudiced instructors, low grades despite my success, unfair treatment, favouring students who lack potential and lowering the potential of successful students who want to achieve, giving an F to student due to insignificant reasons such as clothing style”* (14K). Sometimes the problem is personal, and a student said:

*“I am the reason why I feel demotivated”* (7K). Overall analysis of the negative factors on language learning motivation point to difficulty of the target language, feeling inadequate, prejudice against language, feeling down when failing to learn, fear of being mocked and humiliated, instructors’ prejudices against students, insufficient teaching methods and personal factors.

#### 4. Discussion

Language learning motivation of students does not show a significant difference according to age, gender, grade level, previous education level and educational status of parents. According to a study supporting the finding, there is no statistically significant difference between students' attitudes toward English according to the program they are studying (Çimen, 2011). A similar study concludes that there is no significant difference based on gender, age, class level, previous educational background, or parents' educational background. However, there is a significant difference in favor of female students compared to males regarding personal use, one of the motivation sub-dimensions. Although the motivation levels do not reveal a significant difference at the level of different variables, it is seen that the motivations remain at a moderate level (Mehdiyev, Uğurlu, & Usta, 2017). Another study not backing up the findings points to gender as an influential factor in language learning. It claims that females are more successful than males. According to this research, learners with university-graduated parents are more successful. It claims that parents' educational background is highly influential on students' success (Kırmızı, Işığüznel, 2014). In another study, it was understood that female students viewed the foreign language course they took with distance education more positively than male students (Doğan, 2020). In another study, no significant difference was found between the genders (Ranjan & Philominraj, 2020). Another finding is that there are other factors for language learning motivation, such as the desire to live abroad, cultural improvement, speaking practice with friends, interest in new technology and applications, and literature. Other studies confirm that students learn languages for financial and educational reasons (Tok & Yığın, 2013). In another study, it was determined that the belief in success is also crucial in the attitude towards a foreign language, and students who believe in their success are also successful (Kırmızı & Işığüznel, 2014). As a result of this research, it was concluded that the students did not have any difficulties in learning a language. They thought they were good but felt a little discouraged and were afraid of being ridiculed or mocked. They did not hate but loved learning a language. They did not think it was tedious and tried to learn it. They are interested in discovering what is happening in the world to some extent. They want to travel to different countries, watch different broadcasts and talk to tourists. They think the language they learn is universal and will make them prestigious. A similar study highlights that finding a job or getting a promotion is the essential motivation for language learning in university (Acat & Demiral, 2002). This study also points to the educators' attitude towards the target language. A study by Rahman et al. (2017) also supports this finding, suggesting that teachers' attitudes and motivation are mirrored in the student's motivation while learning a foreign language. Factors resulting in demotivation are also analyzed in this study. The factors with a negative impact on language learning motivation include the difficulty of the target language, feelings of inadequacy, prejudices against the target language, feeling down when not being able to learn, fear of being mocked by friends, the anxiety of being humiliated, the educators' prejudices against the students, and inadequate teaching methods. Other studies support these findings. A study concludes that the educators' quality, lack of practice, memorizing vocabulary, and environment quality may negatively affect the student motivation (Mehdiyev, Usta, Uğurlu, 2016). The instructors' and students' negative attitudes influence language learning. A study supports the finding and suggests that educator-related problems in foreign language education include teaching methods, teaching materials, and resources, and teachers' difficulty going beyond conservative methods. Student-related problems refer to a lack of motivation resulting from reluctance and lack of interest (Kan & Durak Koç, 2020). The attitudes of teachers and the regulation of the classroom environment affect the motivation towards language learning (Zhang, Dai, & Wang, 2020). According to a similar study, it can be said that students' prejudices against the educator and the lesson are among the most critical factors determining student success in foreign language education (Özer & Korkmaz, 2016). In another study, which reached similar results, not understanding the foreign language causes anxiety in students, and they are worried when they do not understand what is spoken in the foreign language lesson (Baş, 2014). It can be said that the motivation

levels of students who have been able to solve their anxiety-related problems will increase significantly (Çetin, 2020). According to other studies supporting the results obtained, technological infrastructures in language teaching should be sufficient for language teaching, and teachers' prejudices against using communicative techniques should be changed (Demirpolat, 2015). The adults' prejudice against learning a foreign language also influences those who want to learn a foreign language negatively (Arslan & Akbarov, 2010). It has been stated that there is still not enough success in foreign language teaching in Turkey, that several solutions should be applied to change this, and that all elements in the education system have their share of responsibility (Demirpolat, 2015).

## 5. Conclusion

The results of this study, in which the motivation levels of university students learning a foreign language and the problems they have encountered while learning a language were determined, are given below. The language learning motivations of the students no significant difference in terms of age, gender, grade level, graduated school, and parents' education level. According to the research, among the factors that motivate students to learn a language are the desire to live abroad, people's desire to develop themselves culturally, the practice of speaking with their friends, the attractiveness of new technologies, and their interest in literature. It is understood that some students do not have difficulty in learning a language, think that they are good, feel a little discouraged and are afraid of being ridiculous, love and are happy to learn a language, do not hate learning a language and do not find it annoying, try to learn a language. In addition, it can be said that they follow the world's agenda even a little, want to travel to different countries, want to watch different broadcasts and talk to tourists, learn a language for personal development, and think that the language they learn is universal and that learning a language gives them prestige. The attitudes of the instructors and students towards the course also affect language learning. Among the factors that negatively affect motivation are the difficulty of the language learned, the students' feeling of inadequacy, the prejudices against the language, the demoralization caused by not being able to learn, the mockery by their friends, the anxiety of being belittled, the prejudices of the instructors against the students, the teaching techniques used in the course and the problems arising from themselves.

## 6. Recommendations

In this study, the motivations of the students who receive language education were examined, and the factors that affect the motivation positively and negatively were revealed. According to the results, the following recommendations can be given. New methods, techniques, and technology should be used effectively in foreign language lessons. There is a need for virtual and face-to-face environments where students can practice the target language. Instructors should improve their attitudes towards the lesson positively and should not cause anxiety.

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