





## PERSONALITY AS EXTRALINGUISTIC FACTOR THAT INFLUENCES SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG FOREIGN STUDENTS




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### ABSTRACT

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#### Keywords

Extralinguistic factors  
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The researchers conducted this study to determine the relationship between second language extralinguistic factors with Malay achievement among foreign students at five universities in Malaysia. The researchers were interested to address colour personality as extralinguistic factor that influences second language learning among foreign students at universities in Malaysia. The findings showed that foreign students' personality was influenced by green, red and yellow which indicated that they are willing to do anything to succeed and acquire the second language. The sample of this study comprises 150 students from 27 countries. They took Malay as a foreign language at Putra University of Malaysia (UPM), National University of Malaysia (UKM), University of Malaya (UM), University of Technology Malaysia (UTM) and University of Science Malaysia (USM).

**Contribution/ Originality:** This study is one of the very few studies which have investigated the relationship between second language extralinguistic factors with Malay achievement among foreign students at five universities in Malaysia. One of the extralinguistic factors found was personality and good personality does influence.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Extralinguistic is a linguistic situation beyond language boundary (Schmidt, 2010). However, the elements of linguistic are needed in the language learning as it provides information that helps one to learn and acquire a language other than their mother tongue. Extralinguistic is a needed shared knowledge to understand a conversation or pronunciation (The Free Dictionary 2010). According to Rohaidah (2012) extralinguistic can be taken as motivation, emotion, attitude and personality for second language learning. In this study, the researchers propose that student with strong or perfect personality is easier to acquire the second language. The sample of this study comprises 150 students from five universities that taking Malay as a second language. The word 'personality' originated from Latin word – persona which can be defined as a mask or face protector wore by the stage actor. According to the fourth edition of *Derwan Bahasa dan Pustaka* dictionary, persona is a fictional character in drama, fiction and novel. To be specific, it can be explained as given characteristic or personality to an individual or based on people interpretation on the personality. Every human being has their own personalities and characteristics and

it is different from each other. It same goes to the personality of the foreign students who came from different countries and various backgrounds. To facilitate the teaching of Malay as foreign language to them, teachers or lecturers can try to understand their personality through their favourite colour. Personality is an act or behaviour learned and developed through maturity and learning process. In addition, an individual personality will develop through his/her response with the environment especially the person's response towards the significant individual. Thus, the researchers conclude that personality can be defined as personals or characteristics.

Colour can be interpreted as the effect of eye reaction with the light reflected by objects in different wave. It is also can be defined as variation or pattern that refer to the state or form of a thing ([Dictionary of the Fourth Edition Board, 2013](#)). In this study, the researchers would like to analyse the relationship between foreign students' personalities and their favorite colours as researchers believed that colour can affect one's life and their personality's trait. It same goes to [Ramli \(2008\)](#) which stated that whether we realize it or not, colour does affect human. Moreover, humans are growing up surrounded by colours. It is just the case either humans control it or being controlled by it. The finding of a study by [Rohaidah \(2012\)](#) showed the relationship between colour personalities of boarding school students with their interest to learn foreign language. Based on the study, the researchers wanted to carry out colour personality study as an extralinguistic factor that influences second language learning among foreign students in five universities in Malaysia.

## 2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research was carried out to study the personalities based on the group of foreign students' favourite colour at five universities which is Putra University of Malaysia (UPM), National University of Malaysia (UKM), University of Malaya (UM), University of Technology Malaysia (UTM), and University of Science Malaysia (USM). The studied second language extralinguistic factors include personality variables against second language learning. [Max \(1981\)](#) Colour Test has been used as the research instrument. The research focuses on foreign students at UPM, UKM, UM, UTM and USM. The researchers manipulated field survey by using a set of questionnaires, observations and report.

## 3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify personality of foreign students based on their favourite colours.
2. Analyse dominant colour among students who sit for Malay classes.

## 4. STUDY OF EXTRALINGUISTIC FACTORS

[Abdul et al. \(2014\)](#) stated that students' high motivation is a major booster to the great achievement in Arabic at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA) Naim Lillbana, Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Some of the factors that have the most impact on the students' motivational level are their commitment in learning the language, the Arabic culture environment, their assumption that Arabic is easy to learn and understand self-awareness and the effectiveness of teaching and learning process in classroom. Meanwhile, Pearson correlation test showed a significant positive correlation between the level of motivation and the achievement of Arabic among the lower secondary students in the school.

[Abdul et al. \(2014\)](#) also classified the factors of motivation into two categories. The first category is intrinsic orientation which can be defined as the satisfaction and excitement due to the development of knowledge, self achievement or joyful experience. The next category is extrinsic orientation which occurred due to their desire to gain rewards such as getting degree, job, and presents. Next, [Zaliza et al. \(2014\)](#) stated that self-esteem is the most important factor that influence someone to learn a language. This means if a student inculcates positive perception towards the importance of learning a language, the person will try harder to learn the language in many ways.

Their costiveness in learning foreign or second language was developed from their high level of motivation. According to [Zaliza et al. \(2014\)](#) motivation is crucial in the process of teaching and learning as it can determine the direction and efficacy of a person to learn foreign language. This motivation came in incentive and motive form. Scores, grades, gifts and praises are the examples of incentive motivation. This type of motivation is usually delivered by the teacher in the process of teaching and learning. On the other hand, motive motivation is an aspiration that arises from their self inspiration or the tendency to act in order to achieve the goals. Next, [Fatimahwati and Ling \(2016\)](#) in their research about the relationship between self determination, big five personalities with achievement motivation and academic performance showed that the autonomous regulation ( $r = .40$ ) and controlled regulation ( $r = .43$ ) were significantly related to achievement motivation. Results also showed that the autonomous regulation ( $r = .45$ ) and controlled regulation ( $r = .29$ ) were significantly related to academic achievement.

[Muhammad and Noor \(2017\)](#) in their research about the relationship between personalities, learning style, environmental factors and religious with academic achievement among private universities students in Selangor, Malaysia their result of Correlation analysis showed that every factor which is students' personality, learning style, environmental factor, and religious aspect have positive relationship with academic achievement. It showed that students must apply positive personality, effective learning style, emphasize on religious elements and positive environmental to improve academic performance. [Mardhiyyah and Nurazan \(2016\)](#) in their research about parents influence and roles in personality development Syed Qutb: autobiography analysis. The research applied qualitative research with content analysis. The findings showed that parents have the most influence on personality development, identity and characteristics of the child. It happens in two situations; give positive description or perception and play important roles as parents. The study focused on some of the important roles by Syed Qutb parents in developing the renowned figure. Undeniably, positive perception and parents roles are the main factor to ensure children's victory.

## 5. COLOUR STUDY

[Max \(1981\)](#) measured individual mental state physically (psycho-physical), individual ability to deal with stress, expose themselves and communicate through "Diagnostic Color Luscher Test". The test could identify the reasons of psychological stress that lead to the physical sign. Max Luscher stated that colour is an objective and shared by every human. However, colour preferences are subjective and this colour test will be able to change subjective situation into objective. The result of the Diagnostic Luscher Colour Test has the indication of the specific self assessment and allows the researchers to recognise individual personality precisely. This is because the processes of colour selection were done randomly in colour test. By doing this, the actual attitude through their displayed characteristics or Max Luscher used seven colours in his colour test comprises red, yellow, green, purple, grey, brown and blue. Colour chosen by the respondents illustrates their physical and mental condition.

Respondents who chose red can be described as energetic and have bottomless interest toward something. According to [Max \(1981\)](#) respondents who chose this colour are stated as someone who likes to affirm and high spirited. In addition, they always want improvement and enjoy their life to the fullest.

Yellow represents excitement and calmness. The person who put this colour in second, third or fourth place is an optimistic, positive and always look forward. This person always believed that life is simple and has no problems. However, this does not mean the person who chose this colour is a lazy one because sometimes they will turn into a very diligent person. The person who chose yellow as their first choice is considered as ambitious and always put other people as their priority. Meanwhile, the person who choose this colour as the seventh and eighth choice could be interpreted as someone who lost their hopes, disregarded, frustrated and anti social.

Respondents who chose green can be defined as someone who is strict and reject changes. They like to control and selfish. They are also the high-achievers and like collecting properties. They like to be outstanding and thirst

for acknowledgment. But they are afraid of failure. However, those who chose this colour as their last option are described as egoistic, like to criticise, pessimist and stubborn.

The combination of red and blue colour will produce purple. Purple can be interpreted as conflict, insistent and calming, dominant and obedient. They are mentally immature and their physical always in fantasy. Meanwhile, those who put this colour as their last choice are considered as more matured and always prepared to face reality.

Brown can be inferred as the physical state and indication to the level of person healthiness. Those who choose the colour at the fourth or fifth place can be described as someone who does not care much about their physical health because there are in good condition. Those who put this colour at the first or second place are always worried about illnesses. If this is their favourite colour, then they are considered as someone who lack of confident and cannot stay still. But if the person put the colour as the eighth choice, they do not really care about physical health and they are not in a good condition. Brown as their first choice illustrates the importance of having safe environment as always chosen by the refugees.

Black means “no”. People who chose this colour as their first option are considered as people who deny their destinies. In the mean time, people who put the colour as second choice are the ones who are willing to let go everything for the sake of their goals and dreams. However if the colour is their seventh or eighth preference, it shows how they can control their destiny and be practical for their life and future.

Anne *et al.* (2017) in their recent research showed that individuals are perceived as more attractive when presented with the color red. Their study seeks to extend these findings by studying the effects of red color on individuals' perception of self-attractiveness, rather than the attractiveness of others. Based on the color-in-context theory, we hypothesized that individuals would perceive themselves as more attractive under red chromatic conditions. In three experiments, participants were asked to wear a red or a blue shirt and rated their own attractiveness. As expected, participants in the red shirt condition indicated a higher level of self-attractiveness than participants in the blue condition. Moreover, the results showed that the self-perception red effect was mediated by the individuals' self-perceived sexual receptivity and self-perceived status.

## 6. PERSONALITY STUDY

Reid (1998) in Rohaidah (2012) conducted a study about students personalities on how they handle their feelings while learning the second language, type of motivation used by the students, personal values, beliefs and their learning attitude whether they prefer to work individually or in group and last but not least is the type of the relationship between teacher with other favoured students. Those are the main factors of B2 learning process. Students' learning style is influenced by their personality. Reid (1998) indicated that the type of students' personalities is correlated to their B2 learning style. Reid (1998) used Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), an instrument to help people to know their tendency in getting information, decision making and connecting with others. There are four main parts in MBTI, which is:

1. Introversion vs Extroversion. Extroversion can be referred to someone who likes to interact with others and could think better when they share their ideas with people. Meanwhile, introversion person will think better when they are alone and process ideas in their mind.
2. Sensing vs. Intuitive. Sensing can be classified as someone who tends to get information with continual approaches by using five senses and they are interested in concrete, authentic and current information. Next, intuitive individuals are interested with theories and assumptions. They don't need arguments and reasons because they always applied reasoning.
3. Thinking vs. Feeling. Person who used preference for Thinking can be described as someone who makes decision objectively, logically, and unbiased. Person who used preference for Feeling tends to make more subjective decisions based on their feelings and personal issues.

4. Judgement vs. Perception. The Judgement preference can be classified as someone who is reserved, preferred to deal with problems that can be solved and looked forward to the resolution. Meanwhile, the Perception person is more open minded and preferred limitless open discussion.

While learning second language, students will involve their personality and emotion entirely. The eight personality choices built their psychology to learn second language. Differences in their personality affect their second language learning style.

**The Extroversion:** Extroverted students will learn better when they are undergoing concrete experiences as in their relationship with the world outside and with others. They will appreciate group and classroom interaction with other students. They are the risk-taker as they will start the conversation but it will depend on external motivation and interaction.

**The Introversion:** Introverted or quiet students are able to learn about idea and concept effectively when they are alone. Their ability to concentrate is depends on their strength and proficiency. Before speak, they need to process the ideas that may cause avoidance of language risk in a conversation.

**The Sensing:** This type of students will learn better through facts and actions, which means they preferred physical input based on physical senses. They are willing to work hard in systematic and particular details. However, they will greatly affect if an arrangement, aim or language structure and language course get interrupted.

**The Intuitive:** Intuitive students can learn better through understanding, imagination and taking general concept. They are able to guess from a context, constructing practises, assuming concepts and developing a model. Their second language learning will end if there is uncertainty and loss the important point.

**The Thinking:** Personal situation and logical consequences will make this kind of students to learn language effectively. Discipline and their ability to analyse are the main strength for them. However, they prioritise the quality of their performance because their pride depends on it.

**The Feeling:** This kind of students can learn effectively when they applied personal and social values in the learning process. They are at advantage because they are strongly depending on their teachers. It will enhance the relationship between the students and the teachers. However, they are easily discouraged when they feel unappreciated. They will be affected by the lack of individual harmony.

**The Judgment:** Students are able to learn better by using reflective analysis and dissolution involved process. The advantages of this kind of students are they can handle the task systematically and willing to complete the task. However, they will suffer due to their stubbornness and intolerances with incompetency.

**The Perception:** Students learned effectively through negotiations, feelings and inductive process that delays dissolution. Their strength lies on their receptiveness, flexibility in changing and adapting with new experiences. But, they may be experiencing idleness and inconsistency of work pace in the long term period.

Ali and Shah (2018) in their research about the role of extrovert and introvert personality factors in second language and according to the outcome of the research, all the personality factors, particularly extroverts and introverts have a tremendous role in acquiring English as a second language. Moreover, extroverts can communicate easily with other people. They are more confident and initiate the conversation and considered themselves the main part of the conversation. They do not even bother to other persons, they are bold and would like to join social gathering. They believe in collective work and feel relax while doing oral tests. However, introverts do feel confuse and cannot involve in social gathering. Additionally, they want to work alone and feel comfortable in individual classes having just one teacher and one student, unlike extrovert they feel hesitation by asking questions in a classroom because they are threatened by the shyness and laughing of the other fellows. Howsoever, being as socialize and confident, extroverts have the ability to acquire language better than introverts. Extroverts can talk more frequently than introverts. Introverts tend to be passive, they want to work alone. They are more independents in their studies. Additionally, introverts have the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences while speaking like native accent, whereas extroverts do not even bother to correction of the sentences.

Although, introverts are less socialize, remain quiet and do not speak frequently but they owns all the characteristics of extroverts.

### 7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive study was carried out by the researchers to obtain information on the influence of colour personality towards Malay learning at five universities in Malaysia. The study used questionnaire and the data was analysed in percentage and descriptive. The questionnaires were used to find out the feedback on research questions and needed information. The form was divided into three parts which is Part A-students demography, Part B-students' attitude and motivation while learning second language and Part C-colour personality. The study was conducted on 150 foreign students from 5 universities, which are UPM, UM, UKM, UTM and USM. The respondents comprise many countries such as Iran, Nigeria, Japan, China and Yemen. Nevertheless, the researchers only focused on describing the colour personality research findings that influence Malay learning process among foreign students.

### 8. RESEARCH FINDINGS

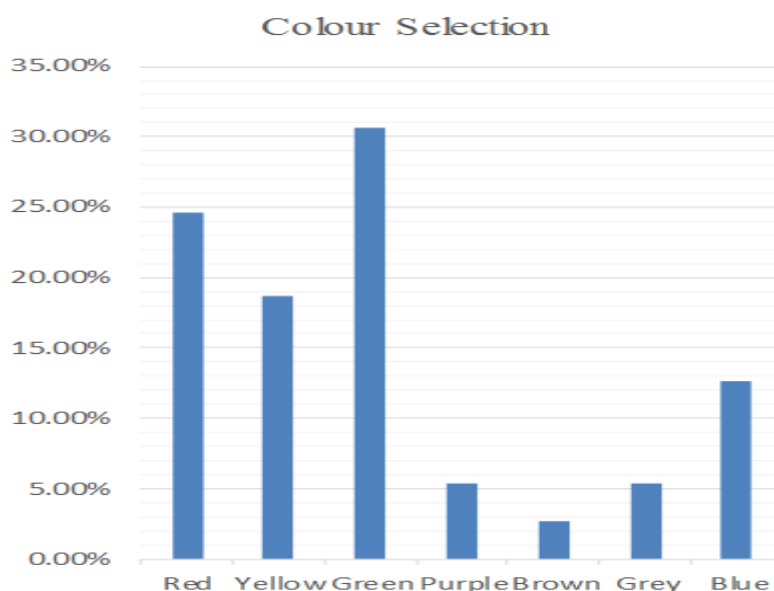


Figure-1. Percentage of foreign students' colour selections  
Source: Field work of the research (2017)

Table-1. Percentage of foreign students' colour selections

Colour	Percentage (%)
Red	24.66
Yellow	18.66
Green	30.66
Purple	5.33
Brown	2.66
Grey	5.33
Blue	12.66

Source: Field work of the research (2017)

The research finding showed that green had the highest percentage which is 30.66% or 46 students. Students who chose green can be described as determined and reserved. It showed that they are firm and reject changes. They have high potential but selfish. This finding is equivalent to Rohaidah (2012) who stated that students who chose this colour will work hard to achieve their objective in any way and they are very selfish. This situation can



be observed by the researchers in Malay learning class when the students with green personality will use Google Translate instantly to complete the assignment given even though they knew the translations are inaccurate and will affect their marks. Besides that, they always want high achievement, like to collect assets, popularity and attention. But at the same time they are afraid of failure. The percentage of students who chose red is 24.66% or 37 out of 150 students. Students who chose this colour can be described as energetic and passionate in their life. These foreign students will ask questions directly to their teachers or lecturers when they did not understand any topic in the classroom. They are not the procrastinator. They are enthusiastic and willing to do anything to achieve their desired goals.

The findings also showed that the percentage of yellow selection was 18.66% or 28 students. Students who chose this colour can be described as someone who preferred peace, fun and live their life in the simplest way. They are always positive, optimistic and ambitious. Positive thinking will lead them to the success.

The number of students who chose blue was 19 students or equal to 12.66%. These students do not like to be alone and will do anything to succeed. They are able to control their life and have their own opinions about life and future. According to Max Luscher, the personalities of these respondents can be classified as peaceful lover and loyal persons. They are sensitive and vulnerable. However, they are not easily getting anxious, able to control their life, and comfortable with their current life. At the same time, the respondents who chose this colour do not like to rush and willing to sacrifice everything to be peace. Blue personality also hoping for the stable and zero conflict relationship.

The percentage of students who chose purple and grey was 5.33% respectively. Respondents who chose purple can be described as someone who is lack of confidence. They always depend on other people to make decision. It shows that they need teacher's guidance in determining any decision. They are very concerned about their safety and health. They care the most about balance diet. Students who chose grey can be described as calm, sensitive and and perceptive. They are calm and do not like to be controlled. They are willing to sacrifice everything for peace. Besides that, they are anti-social and hard to give commitment. They refused to involve in group activities and preferred to be an observer rather than an initiator. They also will do anything to unlock their goals. Brown had the lowest percentage of selection at 2.66%. Students who chose this colour can be described as someone with low self confident and preferred to observe rather than implement.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The findings of this research showed the significance of the studied foreign students' personality that passionately wants accomplishment is coming from their inner strength. They are strongly influenced by their intrinsic motivation. This is because they tend to choose green, red and yellow in the survey. According to Max Luscher, those who have the tendency to choose these colours are willing to do anything to be success or to achieve their life goals. The equality of these colours personality descriptions are made of their inner strength. The inner strength or intrinsic motivation can be defined as someone who has their own perceptions and ability to make decisions by themselves. Personality or behaviour will be controlled from their internal self and they will work hard to achieve their aims without being influenced by external environment. This situation can be seen from foreign students' life at Malaysia who lives far away from their family and country. They embrace the challenges as foreigners with different cultures, language and religion. These dissimilarities asking them to be mentally tough and high motivated to be success. Hence, the factors and obstacles faced by the foreign students created strong intrinsic to thrive as a student in Malaysia.

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