

FACTORS AFFECTING ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE
LEARNING AMONG IRANIAN STUDENTS
AT UCSI ENGLISH ACADEMY

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ABSTRACT

One of the most useful and significant languages in the world is the English language. Other languages also are important but there are several reasons that show that the English language is more important than those. First of all, a major part of the world is linked together by the English language, particularly in terms of economic, politics, science and technology, as well as education. Secondly, the number of people who are able to speak English is probably more compared to those who can do so in other languages. Thirdly, countries that seem to dominate the world economically and politically have English as their *lingua franca*. The main exceptions in this respect are China, Russia, and Japan. Thus, because the use of the English language is universal, many people in countries where English is still a foreign language travel far and wide to acquire the language.

In recent times, Malaysia has provided the opportunity for students from foreign countries, including Iran, to be literate in English. Indeed, Malaysia has become a gateway for such students to learn the language, while pursuing also their preferred university major. Malaysian universities offer content programs in the national language (Bahasa Malaysia) as well as in English. The perception among many Iranians is that the level of university education in Malaysia is almost at parity with those in Euro-American countries. For this reason, Malaysia has become an attractive location for tertiary education.

However, as many Iranian students are not very proficient in the English language, intending Iranian students have to be willing to undertake an intensive course in the target language so as to come up to speed when they before they begin their freshmen year at the university proper.

The purpose of this survey is to determine the barriers and difficulties that Iranian students face while still undergoing the intensive English program. This research paper is a survey statement. Thirty-three Iranian students from the Upper Intermediate and Advanced levels were invited to respond to a questionnaire. In addition, three students from the lower levels were separately interviewed in order to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the related issues. The focus of the study was on language learning difficulties experienced, including opportunities to engage in authentic communicative events, by the students.

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