

Types of Motivation in Iranian EFL learners toward English Language Learning

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Abstract- *This study aimed at investigating the types of motivation (integrative, instrumental, intrinsic and extrinsic) that Iranian students, studying English, have toward the learning of the English language. A modified 27-item motivational survey adapted from Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) questionnaire was administered to 47 (male and female) who were studying English as their second language. The data was then recorded in SPSS computer software and later was calculated with the help of the descriptive data. The findings revealed that the students had high levels of integrative and instrumental motivation to learn English. Their integrative motivation was found slightly higher than their instrumental motivation. Contrary to intrinsic motivation, the learners demonstrated a relatively high extrinsic motivation. Following these findings, some pedagogical implications are discussed with their recommendations.*

General Terms- *Language Learning*

Key words- *Motivation; English Language; Learning*

1. INTRODUCTION

Second language (L2) learning is influenced by a bunch of factors. However, what is often picked out as one of the most significant factors in second language learning overall process is the learner's motivation and their desire to learn that particular language. This has been widely studied and discussed by researchers in second language learning (Gardner, 1985; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Dornyei and Csizer, 1998; Cook, 2000; Melendy, 2008; Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 2010; and Zaman, 2015)[9][18][5][3][16][7][10][21]. According to Brewer and Burgess (2005)[1] motivation is a basic and essential part of learning.

Mahadi and Jafari (2012)[15] believe that motivation directly influences and affects the language learner's learning methods, skills, and practices. That is, motivation has a high effect on learner's communication with foreigners, determining learning amount, in addition to developing the desired levels of language teaching such as reading, comprehension, speaking, and writing. They also added that motivation has a direct effect on both quality and quantity of language learning. Chambers (1999)[2] and Zaman (2015)[21] emphasize that motivation leads or guides the students to the possibilities. Students have some potentiality in them and they just need to believe in that. Motivation leads them to show or prove their potentiality.

From every day conversations motivation can be defined. Students have to activate their action always. So, it is like a process which needs to be activated constantly. Students should persist towards their goal. All these actions are driven from one umbrella term named "motivation".

Dornyei and Csizer (1998) [5] and Hall (2011) [11] show the responsibility of motivation for achievement in language learning, and emphasize that without adequate motivation, learners with distinctive talents and abilities will not be able to accomplish such objectives, even if they have a good curriculum and/or teachers.

Gardner (2010)[10] views motivation as an abstract and complex concept that is used to describe human behavior. With a plethora of definitions, this continues to highlight just how complex motivation is, more so as a variable factor for L2 learners due to the dependency on different situations and conditions. For instance, some learners in L2 are less motivated to communicate with the target language society, whereas, it is the exact opposite for other learners.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013, p. 4)[6] discuss motivation in a very descriptive way. From their perspective motivation derives from the Latin verb "movera" which means "to move". Motivation influences performing action and making some choices. They described motivation with two terms: direction and magnitude. They defined motivation more specifically with some points. They are: the choice of

a particular action, the persistence with it and the effort expanded on it. In detail, they believe motivation helps learner choose specific actions. This is a process in which motivation can work out in learning the language. Learners should expand their best effort to attain the goal. These three events can happen only if the learner has motivation or desire to learn.

Researchers define motivation with many different perspectives. Gardner (1985) [9] introduces the Socio educational model. According to this model the most important matter in motivation is the factor that influences learners' energy, desire, self-esteem, and social perspective in learning a language. Gardner's socio-educational model showed ability and motivation of learners and these two needs to show in performance as well.

Loewen and Reinders (2011, p. 119) [14] define motivation as “a psychological construct that refers to the desire and incentive that an individual has to engage in a specific activity”. This broad definition provides a strong foundation for the overall concept in this area of study. However, Dornyei (2005, p. 65) [4] makes this more understandable, by contextualizing it in terms of language learning and defines it as one of the significant effects in language learning process because “it provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process”. Similarly, Melendy (2008) [16] states that motivation refers to a process that starts with a need and leads to a behavior which moves an individual towards achieving a goal.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the study of SLA, motivation has been considered as an important aspect of investigation because researchers have assumed that the more motivated language learners are, the more they improve in learning. In the study carried out by Muchnick and Wolfe (1982, in Ellis, 2008) [8], the importance of both integrative and instrumental motivation in studies of foreign language learners was highlighted. The results revealed that the measures of integrative and instrumental motivation of 337 students of learning Spanish in high schools across the United States were not able to differentiate between the factors of this dichotomy of motivation. Although instrumental motivation for learning a foreign or second language appears to be more lucrative and yields success, a combination of both seems more important in SLA.

Schmidt, et. al. (1996) [19] developed a questionnaire based on the work on motivation in second and foreign language contexts and more general models from cognitive and educational psychology. Factor analysis and multidimensional scaling were used to identify the components of EFL motivation for the participants. Learner profiles with respect to motivation were related to age, gender, and proficiency. Results suggested that motivation is related to learning strategies and preferences for certain kinds of classes and learning tasks.

Noels, et. al. (1999) [17] conducted a study in which the process of how students' extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations are related to their teachers' communicative style. The results determined that stronger feelings of intrinsic motivation were related to positive language learning outcomes, including greater motivational intensity, and greater self- evaluations of competence, thus perceptions of the teacher's communicative style were connected to intrinsic motivation.

Jurišević and Pižorn (2013) [13] discussed an empirical research study in Slovene primary school system based on a questionnaire. The results of the study showed that the students generally like learning foreign languages and develop a sense of positive academic self-concept during the lessons. Most students preferred foreign language lessons when learning activities involve playing (informal learning situations), while they like foreign language lessons least when they read or write (“classic” learning situation). This result shows that the goals of learning foreign languages as perceived by the students may be either intrinsic or extrinsic.

Véronique Saheb (2014) [20] investigated the levels and types of motivation among students at basic and upper secondary levels of English in Stockholm through a questionnaire. The results showed that the instrumental and integrative motivations of adult learners of English are concomitant. They also demonstrated there is no significant correlation between adult students' level of English and their degree of socially oriented motivation. Differences among adult learners of English appear when extrinsic and intrinsic motivations were examined. The results demonstrated that attitudinal motivation varies according to age range and the number of languages spoken.

We know that language learners can be motivated by internal or external factors. When learners are motivated intrinsically, they will learn a language because of self-satisfaction or for fun. For example, someone can write an article because writing removes all the stress of that writer. On the other hand, when learners are motivated extrinsically, they will try to learn a language for highly rewarded outcome. They do not learn for fun or personal experience. On the other hand, there are two kinds of motivation, namely, instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Instrumental motivation shares common features with extrinsic motivation; learners learn language to get a job, salary or practical issues. Also, integrative motivation has similarities with intrinsic motivation. Integrative motivation aims at better understanding and knowing about the people who speak that language (Gardner, 2010) [10].

To the researchers' knowledge, there has been plenty of research on motivation but few have focused on the different types of motivation. Therefore, the primary objective of the present study was to investigate Iranian students' motivation to learn a foreign language, particularly students who are learning English as their

second language. Three research questions formulated for the purpose of this study were as follows:

1. What is the motivation of Iranian students to learn a foreign language?
2. Is there a difference between the motivation types of Iranian male or female students to learn a foreign language?
3. Does the number of languages spoken affect the motivation types of Iranian students to learn a foreign language?

3. METHOD

3.1 Participants

The participants were chosen based on their level of English based on a convenient method of sampling, as the researchers had access to their own students. Forty seven students (35 female and 12 male) answered the questionnaire; they were mainly between 20 to 39 years old. The first language of 43 of them was Farsi, two of them Turkish, and two others spoke Lori at home. One of the students had a foreign background, with one parent who was originally an Arab. Among the participants, 15 students spoke or used Farsi for their everyday purposes, 27 of them use both Farsi and English in their daily activities. One of the participants used Farsi, English and Arabic daily, another used Farsi, English and Lori. Two of them used Farsi, English and Turkish and one of them used Farsi and Lori. Also, 15 of them used just one language every day, 28 of them claimed to speak two languages and four of them spoke four languages.

The number of hours they used English weekly differed from an hour to 30 hours. Their proficiency level of English differed, some were lower intermediate, some intermediate and some others upper intermediate. They all were living and studying in Shiraz, southwestern part of Iran. They were taking 2-day classes of English as a foreign language, an hour and 45 minutes each day.

3.2 Instrument

A questionnaire based on Gardner's Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (2004 web) which has been adapted by numerous researchers in L2 motivation studies was used in this study. The AMTB was applied as the basis of this questionnaire to assure the validity. However, the original one includes about 100 items, the questionnaire used in this study consists 37 items for the ease of administration and to the purpose of the study.

The first part of the questionnaire consists of six demographic questions on students' gender, age, language background, their daily use of English and other languages, and the number of hours they study English each week.

The second part, adapted by many researchers and chosen from AMTB, includes 27 items. These statements are divided into nine groups, each with three statements, in front of each statement a five-point Likert scale is presented, and participants are asked to circle or check one

of the five given points (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly disagree).Hence, by using the five-point Likert scale, reliability is ensured (Bryman 155).

The 27 statements are divided into nine coded factor or category groups in order to facilitate the analysis and investigation of the relationships among those factors, namely social and attitudinal motivation. Statements 2.1 to 2.3 ask about the instrumental motivation, 3.1 to 3.3 integrative motivation, 4.1 to 4.3 extrinsic motivation with an instrumental orientation, 5.1 to 5.3 show the participants level of intrinsic motivation, based on their self-confidence, 6.1 to 6.3 is about their external encouragement, 7.1 to 7.3 intrinsic motivation with an integrative orientation, 8.1 to 8.3 extrinsic motivation, 9.1 to 9.3 recapitulation of instrumental motivation, and 10.1 to 10.3 is for self-assessment of the use of English outside the class, motivation and the English class.

In the last part of the questionnaire, participants are given a chance to write down any comments they like, this makes it possible for the researchers to gather some qualitative data.

3.3 Procedure

The Gardner's AMTB questionnaire was given to the participants, to 30 of them the printed version on paper and the pdf file was sent either via email or through a mobile application called "what's app", and later they sent back the answers. The number of the second group was 82, however just 18 of them participated and answered the questionnaire. The students were told that participation is optional and the results will be used for a research paper, but they were not told about the topic or the goals at all, in order not to respond by any bias. They were asked to respond to the first questions about their demographic information and circle or check one of the five given points.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered by the questionnaire was then recorded in SPSS computer software and later on was calculated by the help of the descriptive data in order to find out the frequency and the mean score of each item. The item "strongly disagree" got 1 point. Those who chose "disagree" were recorded by 2, the item "neither agree nor disagree" was given the value of 3, the item "agree" was recorded as 4, and the last item "strongly agree" was valued 5.

4. RESULTS

In the present study, the Gardner's Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was presented to the learners to investigate different types of motivation namely, instrumental, integrative, intrinsic, and extrinsic.

In relation to the instrumental and integrative motivation (see [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#)) the results represent that participants had high degrees of both instrumental and integrative motivation (over 4 out of 5).

Table 1 Instrumental motivation

Item	Mean
2.1 Knowing English will be helpful for my career.	4.60
2.2 I need to know English for academic purposes.	4.38
2.3 English will broaden my future options.	4.45
9.1 I learn English for practical purposes (e.g., get a job).	3.96
Mean	4.34

On one hand this means most participants believe that learning English will help them, in their career, academic purposes, future options, and practical purposes as instrumental motivation, and on the other hand, in meeting foreigners, understanding their culture in traveling overseas, knowing more about the world and their communication as integrative motivation.

Table 2 Integrative motivation

Item	Mean
3.1 English helps/will help me meet foreigners.	4.40
3.2 English helps/will help me learn about other cultures, values and thoughts.	4.57
3.3 English helps/will help me in my travels overseas.	4.64
9.2 I learn English to know more about the world.	4.09
9.3 I learn English to communicate with others.	4.28
Mean	4.39

Regarding the results of language learners' intrinsic motivation (see [Table 3](#)), it can be inferred that learners are not much intrinsically motivated, especially in the issues related to self-confidence (3.31 out of 5). Also, the results indicate that learners are concerned if they make a mistake while speaking (2.89 out of 5). Although they believe that learning English is not an easy job, it is surprising that the majority of the participants (4.47 out of 5) admit that they like English.

Table 3 Intrinsic motivation

Item	Mean	
self-confidence	5.1 When I speak English, I don't mind making mistakes.	2.89
	5.2 When someone speaks to me in English, I tend to be nervous.	2.60
	5.3 Knowing English helps me become a better person.	3.49
integrative orientation	7.1 I study English because I like it.	4.47
	7.2 If I could not go to English class, I would learn English by myself.	3.32
	7.3 Learning English is easy.	3.09
Mean	3.31	

Contrary to intrinsic motivation, the learners (4.10 out of 5) demonstrated a relatively high extrinsic motivation (see [Table 4](#)). Hence, instrumental orientation, encouragement, and external assistance are to be dissociated as three different variables in this section. The results (3.09 out of

5) reveal that they don't get much help from outside the class; however, they consider the role of teacher's personality and method as a leading factor in class. All in all, the findings assert that the participants are definitely motivated to learn English by themselves.

Table 4 Extrinsic motivation

Item	Mean	
Instrumental orientation	4.1 English is essential for personal development.	4.04
	4.2 Others will have a better opinion of me if I speak English	3.81
	4.3 Knowing English gives me a feeling of success.	4.38
encouragement	6.1 My family /friends encourage me to learn English.	4.17
	6.2 I get help to do my homework or get things explained to me outside the class.	3.09
	6.3 Outside the class, I watch films, listen to songs or read in English.	3.91
Mean	4.10	

The results also demonstrated that instrumental and integrative motivation varies according to gender and the number of languages spoken.

5. CONCLUSION

Teachers of English have a significant role to play in adult education because language learners attend the English courses with this idea that English is a prerequisite for their progress in society both educationally and professionally.

Regarding the findings of this study and similar surveys the need for further inquiry in adult education in Iran as a developing country with young human resources seeking opportunities is a necessity. It is, therefore, very important that foreign language teachers of young learners recognize their students' most prominent motivational features by observing their students' classroom behavior. Teachers should then be able to consider these features in lesson planning and actual teaching activities while at the same time they should become aware of the students' developmental features and their language competences. In this way students will be able to satisfy their own developmental needs and simultaneously become proficient in a foreign language.

The findings of this research were unique for Iranian students undertaking English as a foreign language. The study results may not be generalized for other groups of students in different contexts. Therefore, the need to further explore other students in different learning environments should be investigated and the findings may yield significantly different results. More research is needed in order to investigate different features involved in

the motivation of the language learners such as age, educational and social level, cultural issues, aptitude, learning styles, and strategies.

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