

Research on the Affective Domain of EFL Learning: a Study of Motivation

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Starting from the assumption, advanced by Clément and Kruidenier, that the type of motivation for learning a second/foreign language as well as its strength is likely to be determined less by some generalized principle and more by »who learns what in what milieu« (1983:288), an exploratory study was carried out with Croatian learners of English. The findings show that Croatian learners possess types of motivation that differ from those described in similar studies elsewhere.

The Croatian study looked into the concept of lack of motivation as well, thus trying to capture the full spectrum of this component of the affective domain of learning English as a second/foreign language.

Background

Most models of second and/or foreign language learning (e.g. Stern 1983, Gardner 1985) include motivation for learning as one of the key concepts. It is commonly thought that second language (L2) achievement is mediated by two basic types of components: the cognitive, involving intelligence, language aptitude and cognitive learning strategies, and the affective component, which comprises attitudes and motivation, personality traits, language anxiety and those learning strategies that assume some kind of emotional involvement.

Attitudes and motivation cannot be directly observed but have to be inferred from the learner's behaviour. Both attitudes and motivation are considered as two

very abstract concepts and up to now, even after decades of intensive research, there has been no agreement about what precisely they consist of or what the relationship between the two is.

Since the early seventies most motivational research has been influenced by the seminal work of the Canadian social psychologists Wallace E. Lambert and Robert C. Gardner and their associates. Their research powerfully brought motivational issues to the attention of the second language acquisition (SLA) research field.

Based on the reason for learning the second language that their subjects ranked highest (i.e. orientation), Lambert and Gardner (1972) differentiated between integrative and instrumental motivation. This distinction soon became the key issue in subsequent motivational studies elsewhere (e.g. Lukmani 1972, Burstall et al. 1974) and, through an oversimplification of Lambert and Gardner's research, led many to believe that these are the only significant types of motivation for learning a second language. Gardner has often drawn attention to this misinterpretation (e.g. in Interview with Robert C. Gardner in *Strani jezici* Vol. XXIV, Nos. 3–4, 1995:94–103).

Introduction

The study to be described here was prompted by an observation that Croatian learners of EFL seem to be highly motivated to learn but that their achievement does not reflect the intensity of their motivation. It was assumed that the motivation that the learner brings into the learning process changes under the influence of the various factors that are active during the teaching/learning process. By looking into the relationship between learning motivation and these factors we hoped to get an insight into a host of relationships that might be responsible for the observed lack of correlation between motivation and learning achievement. The model applied in the study included *ability to learn*, *motivation* and *desire to learn* as initial variables, *attitudes towards the teacher* and *the course* as mediating factors, and *effort* and *achievement* as resulting variables (Figure 1).

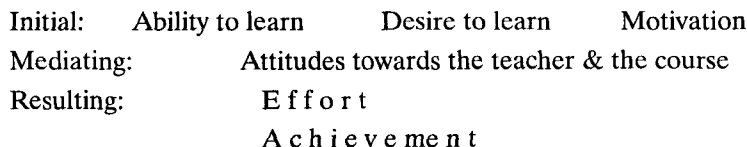


Figure 1: *Variables in learning English as a foreign language*

In order to get a more comprehensive view and to capture the full spectrum of motivation for learning EFL in Croatia we decided NOT to replicate the well-known studies carried out in Canada and some other countries but to start from scratch. We hypothesized that motivation of Croatian EFL learners would be characterised by different orientations from the ones often quoted in the literature.

Aim

The aim of the study to be described here was to construct an instrument that would, in a valid and reliable way, measure the types and intensity of motivation for learning EFL in the Croatian socio-cultural context. The basic defining feature of this context is that English is learned as a foreign language, i.e. as a language that has no official status as a means of communication in the country. Another important consideration is that English is often perceived as a language used primarily for international communication.

Methodology

The construction went in three phases.

The initial step of the study was an exploratory survey: subjects were asked to write open-ended essays on why they liked or disliked learning English. It was felt that an exploratory survey would make it possible to discover types of motivation other than those derived from either an *a priori* theoretical framework or from any already established models. On the basis of 578 such essays, clusters of reasons were isolated and then operationalized in 99 five-point Likert-type scales of agreement. This questionnaire (Questionnaire I) was then administered to another sample of 470 subjects and the results were factor-analyzed. The final questionnaire (Questionnaire II), which resulted from the analysis, comprised 38 Likert-type scales of agreement which reflected the existing motivation and demotivation for EFL learning among Croatian learners. In terms of measurement, the final questionnaire could measure both the type and intensity of motivation.

Sample

Three different sets of subjects participated in the study.

In the first phase, 578 learners of three age groups (primary school, secondary school and adult) and different levels of proficiency described their orientations in open-ended essays. Questionnaire I was administered to another sample of 470 learners, again of different ages and proficiency levels. The final questionnaire was used with a new sample of 340 primary school, adolescent and adult EFL learners. All the three samples comprised subjects coming from both metropolitan and small-town settings.

Procedure

The questionnaires, written in the subjects' native language Croatian, were administered during the subjects' regular EFL classes. The subjects' teachers usually introduced the researcher and immediately left the classroom. The subjects were first explained the purpose of the investigation. In phase one the subjects were not required to write their names as we were interested in learning about all the possible causes of demotivation as well. In Questionnaire I the subjects were asked to notify their age and gender only. In Questionnaire II the subjects were asked to write down their names as well. Such procedure was applied following the advice of the social psychology consultants.

Results and discussion

The open-ended essays offered a wealth of information on orientations in EFL learning among Croatian learners. In the first phase of the study no categorization was externally imposed on the selected reasons as, by having the subjects' replies themselves determine which categories were to be established, we thought they would better reflect the learners' own perceptions of their motivation. Two phenomena were looked into: motivation and lack of motivation. Altogether, the orientations described in the essays lent themselves to 13 categories: 9 referred to motivation and 4 to lack of motivation.

The reasons in the first group of categories reflected:

- (1) the importance of English as a world language
- (2) the cultural orientation
- (3) the affiliation orientation
- (4) future benefits of knowing English
- (5) the possibility of using English at present
- (6) the requirement orientation
- (7) the affective orientation
- (8) the integrative orientation
- (9) the teaching methodology

The second group, referring to lack of motivation, comprised orientations reflecting:

- (10) the perception of usefulness
- (11) personality traits of the learner
- (12) aspects of the language itself
- (13) the teaching setting

In the next phase the 13 categories were operationalized in the form of 99 statements, each followed by a five-point (1=least agree, 5=most agree) Likert-type scale of agreement.

In order to study the relationship among ratings on the various scales these measures were intercorrelated and factor-analyzed.

Two groups of factors were revealed. For each of the two groups, the dimensionality underlying the relationships among the included variables was investigated by means of a principal components analysis and the varimax rotation procedure.

In the first group of factors the varimax rotation revealed 6 factors. An inspection of the factorial structure pointed to a need for additional factorization. This resulted in 3 final factors, which accounted for 43% of the total variance. The varimax factor matrix is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX (FIRST GROUP OF FACTORS)

Item	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
(29)	.66826		
(75)	.63131		
(61)	.61506		
(41)	.60416		
(47)	.57912		
(35)	.53318		
(69)	.53059		

Item	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
(93)	.52967		
(39)	.52413		
(99)	.49639		
(13)	.45059		
(87)	.43471		
(97)		.76518	
(67)		.75518	
(63)		.75257	
(5)		.71635	
(53)		.62458	
(20)		.41015	
(91)			.75752
(58)			.73503
(81)			.73115
(25)			.41357

As can be seen from Table 1, Factor I obtained high loadings from 12 measures. They refer to the following items:

Particle	Saturation
(29) English enables me to communicate with many people.	.66826
(75) Knowing English, I can read foreign magazines.	.63131
(61) English will help me in my future education.	.61506
(41) I often use English to talk to foreigners.	.60416
(47) English will be useful to me in my future profession.	.57912
(35) English enables us to become part of the world.	.53318
(69) I use English in everyday life to understand pop music, films etc.	.53059
(93) Thanks to English I can broaden my cultural horizon.	.52965
(39) With English I can travel all over the world.	.52413
(99) Knowing English, I could read literary works in the original.	.49639
(13) Sometimes I use my English to translate instructions on foreign-made machines (e.g. household appliances).	.45059
(67) Thanks to English I can learn more about the life of the English, Americans, Australians etc.	.43471

Factor II received appreciable loadings from 6 measures:

Particle		Saturation
(97)	English is a very interesting language.	.76518
(67)	English is a very beautiful language.	.75518
(63)	I like English words.	.75257
(05)	English sounds very nice.	.71365
(53)	I enjoy pronouncing English words.	.62458
(20)	English is a stupid language.	.41015

Factor III obtained high loadings from the following 4 measures:

Particle		Saturation
(91)	I would like to be like the English, Americans, Australians, etc.	.75752
(58)	I would like to marry someone from the USA, Britain, etc.	.73503
(81)	I'd like to know English in order to be able to live in the USA, Britain, etc.	.73115
(25)	English will be useful to me when I visit my relatives/friends in the USA, Britain, Australia etc. one day.	.41357

Based on this structure of the factors 3 corresponding subscales were formed in the final form of the motivation questionnaire. The reliability coefficients for the three subscales are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: SUBSCALES RELIABILITY

Subscale	Alpha reliability coefficient
1	.8247
2	.8054
3	.6845

In the second group, the four factors initially extracted by means of a principal components analysis and a varimax rotation procedure were inspected and additional factorization was carried out. By means of the resulting 2 factors 39.8 % of the variance could be accounted for. Table 3 presents the final results of the varimax rotation.

Table 3: VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX (SECOND GROUP OF FACTORS)

Item	Factor IV	Factor V
(33)	-.80732	
(74)	.71947	
(38)	.66854	
(84)	.65689	
(71)	-.57602	
(78)	.54264	
(51)	-.51608	
(24)	.46684	
(34)	.42621	
(30)		.71399
(76)		.69615
(86)		.69081
(60)		.66350
(85)		.53577
(84)		.52412
(22)		.51334

Factor IV obtained appreciable loadings from 9 measures:

Particle		Saturation
(33)	Our teacher teaches English in a very interesting way.	-.80732
(74)	I don't like the teaching methods our teacher employs.	.71947
(38)	Our teacher assigns grades unjustly.	.66854
(84)	I'd learn English if the course was more interesting.	.65689
(71)	My teacher of English motivates me to learn.	-.57602
(78)	Our teacher is not motivated to teach.	.54246
(51)	The teaching materials we use are very motivating.	-.51608
(24)	I don't like learning English because I have a bad teacher.	.46684
(34)	Our teacher pays too much attention to good pupils.	.42621

Factor V received high loadings from seven measures:

Particle		Saturation
(30)	During English classes I'm always in panic because I know I will not understand the teacher when she addresses me.	.71399
(76)	My pre-knowledge of English is so low that I could catch up with the others only if I started from the very beginning (and that I can't do, of course).	.69615
(86)	After getting a bad mark I have no more wish to learn.	.69081
(60)	English is too difficult for me.	.66350
(85)	My parents force me to learn English.	.53577
(44)	I'd rather learn another foreign language.	.52412
02)	I prefer to learn something more useful than English.	.51334

In the final questionnaire two subscales were made on the basis of the structure of these two factors. The reliability of the scales is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: SUBSCALES RELIABILITY

Subscale	Alpha reliability coefficient
1	.7929
2	.7456

For the final questionnaire (see Appendix) a Likert scale instrument was thus designed. It contained 38 items reflecting the five subscales described above. Each item was followed by a five-point Likert response scale, with the alternatives labelled: »strongly disagree«, »slightly disagree«, »neither agree nor disagree«, »slightly agree« and »strongly agree«.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate the existence of three types of motivation for EFL learning among Croatian learners.

The configuration of loadings on Factor I suggests an instrumental type of motivation that has the pragmatic-communicative component prominent. The selected reasons refer to goals that can be fulfilled either in present or in future. The »communicative« items (in particular particles number 35 and 93) include elements of integration. However, the integration implied in them is of a different kind from the one referred to by the term integrative motivation. Here, it does not imply integrating into another linguistic-cultural group but, rather, a more general integration into the international community. This first type of motivation is thus termed *pragmatic-communicative motivation*. It may be of relevance to know that our EFL learners perceive English not necessarily as the native language of the countries like Britain, Canada, the US, and Australia but, rather, as a means of international communication. The communication partners they have in mind are thus not necessarily native speakers of English but foreigners who have also learned English as a foreign language. This fact has been pointed out by Dörnyei (1990) as well. He concludes that the variability in EFL achievement may not be explained by the attitudes towards the native speakers as the major cause.

Because Factor II receives its major loadings from variables assessing various aspects of liking the English language as such the second type is termed *affective motivation*. This affectiveness has both aesthetic and emotional overtones. Thus, affectively motivated learners are those learners that like learning English because they like the language and enjoy using it. One may think that this is the most desirable type of motivation one might think of. However, a later study (Mihaljević Djigunović, 1994) failed to find a significant correlation between affective motivation and grades in English.

The loadings on Factor III suggest a wish to integrate into a socio-cultural group that speaks English as the native language. This wish may imply identification with native speakers of English (see in particular particle number 91). This third type of motivation is termed *integrative motivation*.

The two factors from the second group refer to demotivation.

The configuration of loadings on Factor IV suggests orientations that result from evaluations of the concrete teaching situation. The items refer to the teacher, teaching materials and teaching methodology. This first demotivator is thus termed *the teaching setting demotivator*.

As Factor V receives its major loadings from variables referring to difficulties the learner encounters in learning the second demotivator is termed *the learning difficulties demotivator*. The difficulties (lack of basic pre-knowledge, seeing English as too complicated, etc.) the learner has often seem to cause classroom anxiety (see in particular particle number 30).

Conclusion

If we accept the view, advanced by such authorities on the subject as R. C. Gardner, that motivation is one of the two best predictors of learner achievement (the other one being aptitude), we can only conclude that it is essential that teachers be sensitive to the type and intensity of motivation of their learners. This is especially significant having in mind that, as Stern (1983) stresses, attitudes and motivation are a variable that can be easily ameliorated.

The findings of the study of motivation described have important instructional implications. The nature of these implications can be estimated once we look into the relationship between motivation and learning achievement of Croatian learners of English as a foreign language.

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ISTRAŽIVANJE AFEKTIVNE DOMENE UČENJA ENGLSKOG KAO STRANOG JEZIKA: ISPITIVANJE MOTIVACIJE

Polazeći od pretpostavke koju zastupaju Clément i Kruidenier da tip i intenzitet motivacije za učenje drugog/stranog jezika ne određuje toliko neki općeniti princip koliko »tko uči što u kakvoj sredini« (1983:288), proveli smo istraživanje motivacije u hrvatskih učenika engleskog jezika. Nalazi pokazuju da se tipovi i intenzitet njihove motivacije razlikuju od onih koji se pojavljuju u drugim studijama slične vrste. U ovom se istraživanju ispitao i fenomen nemotiviranosti te se time pokušalo dobiti potpuniji uvid u ovaj dio afektivne domene učenja engleskog kao drugog/stranog jezika.