

Секция «Методика преподавания иностранных языков и лингводидактика: Актуальные проблемы методики преподавания иностранных языков»

Dominant motives in second language learning: an investigation of international students in tertiary education

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Achieving a high level of proficiency in a foreign language setting depends on many factors and personal motives. Motivation is considered to be one of the underlying determinants of the successful learning of foreign language and it might influence all the other individual variables to some extent [2]. In addition, motivation and other affective variables have been shown to be at least as important as aptitude for predicting achievement [3]. Therefore, it is worth investigating dominant motives of students who continue learning English as a second language in the international environment because it might influence their level of motivation to achieve a high level of proficiency in English. In this regard, the aim is to investigate learners' choice preference to study English language and to define a dominant group of students' motives in foreign language learning. Altogether, 6 groups of motives have so far been observed: intrinsic, extrinsic, cognitive, perspective, social and motives of achieving success. Based on this aim, the research questions are following:

1) What groups of motives are related to high, moderate and low levels of motivation in second-language learning among international students studying at the large university in Budapest?

2) Are students predominantly integratively or instrumentally motivated towards learning English language?

The study involved 80 international students from a Budapest university who ranged in age from 18 to 32. The instrument used in this study is 5-point Likert scale which was adapted from the original 7-point Likert scale format of Gardner's AMTB, ranging from 'Completely true' to 'Not at all true' [3]. Some of the questions used in the questionnaire were adopted from previous research [4, 5] to gather information on participants' motivation. The research incorporated quantitative evidence obtained by a survey via online-Google form. All the questionnaires were computer-coded and the data was analyzed by using the SPSS program (Statistical package from social sciences). First, Cronbach Alpha was calculated to determine the reliability of the scales. Secondly, descriptive statistics were computed. Thirdly, the data was analyzed by means of paired samples T-test, Pearson correlation coefficient and cluster analyses. The results in Рис.1 show what a dominant group of students' motives is in English language learning (see below).

The data indicate that the dominant group for students to learn English is a group of cognitive motives ($M=4.00$, $S.D.=.68$). This group is the most attractive for the students because they realize they will not be able to become competitive specialists in a rapidly developing society without a systematic expansion of knowledge in the field of language.

Paired sample T-test showed in relation to intrinsic motives that perspective motives have a significant role (0.875). It means that English is perceived by the students as having a utilitarian value, such as seeking employment and enhancing future opportunities. It showed in relation to extrinsic motives that social motives have the significant value (0.903).

The highest correlation was found between intrinsic and perspective motives (0.65), intrinsic and motives of achieving success groups (0.67), perspective motives and motives of achieving success groups (0.67) and social motives and motives of achieving success groups (0.68).

The overall results revealed that the students are highly motivated to learn English. This finding answer the research question of what the level of the students' motivation is. It is concluded that the dominant groups of motives were cognitive (4.00) and perspective (3.97) motives, relating to high level of motivation. At the third and fourth places were intrinsic (3.76) and extrinsic (3.69) motives, relating to moderate level of students' motivation and motives of achieving success (3.60) and social motives (3.29), related to low level of motivation. It is possible to say, from the one hand, that the participants had integrative motivation and, from the other hand, English was perceived by the students as having a utilitarian value, such as seeking employment and enhancing career opportunities and high salary.

Identifying the preferences of students' dominant motives is necessary for the planning of learning activity and for teachers with the purpose of its organization and correction. The results obtained from this research will help to make a contribution to enhancing our understanding of the concept of motivation and the relationships among its many facets and they can be used to increase students' motivation in foreign language learning.

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Иллюстрации

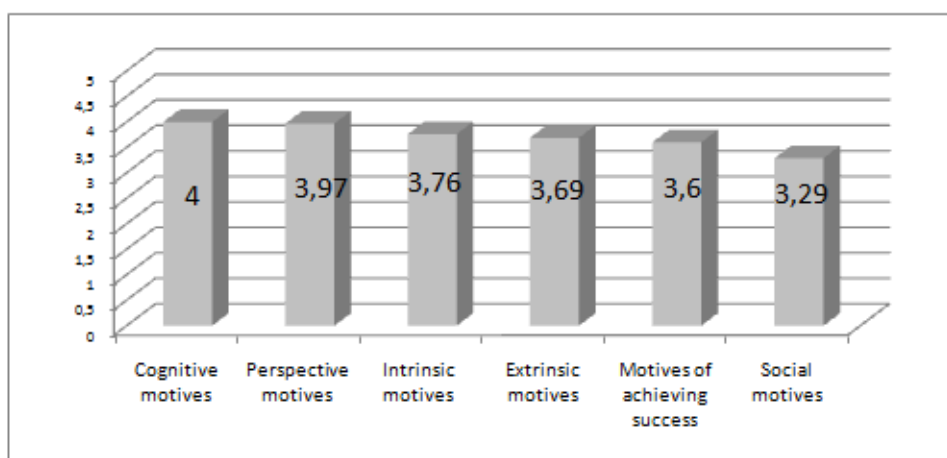


Рис. 1. Identifying the dominant group of motives in second language learning among international students