The Effect of Integrative and Instrumental Motivation on Iranian EFL Learners’ Language Learning

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of integrative and instrumental motivation on Iranian EFL learners' language learning. The research examined both male and female learners using Gardner and Lambert's (1959) “integrative and instrumental motivation” model in order to achieve the desired results. Sixteen items were selected from Gardner and Lambert's model. They were distributed among students for testing. Results indicated that female students have stronger integrative motivation than instrumental motivation and male students have stronger instrumental motivation than integrative motivation. Findings will provide a better understanding of the theoretical and practical facets for teachers.

Keywords: Motivation, Instrumental, Integrative, Iranian learners
1. Introduction

Motivation is one of the most appealing, complex variables used to explain individual differences in language learning. By the 1990s Gardner's motivation had overwhelming dominance in second language motivation research (Dornyei, 2001). Gardner and Lambert (1959) focus on both integrative and instrumental motivations in second language learning. Learners with high integrative motivation tend to be interested in learning a foreign language in order to make friends with other speakers of a language to travel where the particular language is spoken, and in general are keen on learning more about the cultures that spawn the second language. Learners with higher Instrumental orientation tend to be much more educational and career oriented. They study the foreign language in order to do well on tests, and for use in job selection and professional achievement (Gardner & Lambert, 1959).

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), there are mainly two types of learning motivation: instrumental motivation, i.e., learning the language as an instrument to achieve practical goals, and integrative motivation, i.e., learning the language out of interest in or desire to identify with the target culture. We will take for example two different types of motivation, which according to Gardner and Lambert (1972) is likely to be the two most important under the concept of motivation. Instrumental Motivation, involves perception of purely practical value in learning the L2, such as increasing occupational or business opportunities, enhancing prestige and power, accessing scientific and technical information, or just passing a course in school. Example: A professional designer in Chile who's just finished university and is willing to find a good job. He would probably find different kinds of offerings to start working, but, there is one special for him, that will pay him very well and his/her economical situation will change enormously. However, there is one condition to be accepted on the job, the designer they were looking for, must have good English qualities. After analyzing this example, we can consider that learning English (as L2 in this case), will be conducted by instrumental motivation, since the willing of having a good job and a good economical situation will impulse the learner to acquire an L2.

Integrative motivation is based on interest in learning L2 because of a desire to learn about or associate with people who use it (e.g. romantic reasons), or because an intention to participate or integrate in the L2 using speech community; in any case, emotions or affective factors are dominant (Saville & Troike, 2005). Motivation has been identified as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). It is thought that students who are most successful when learning a target language are those who like the people that speak the language, admire the culture and have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used (Falk, 1978). This form of motivation is known as integrative motivation. It is also theorized that "integrative motivation typically underlies successful acquisition of a wide range of registers and a native like pronunciation" (Finegan, 1999: 568). In contrast to integrative motivation is the form of motivation referred to as instrumental motivation. While both integrative and instrumental motivation is essential elements of success, it is integrative motivation which has been found to sustain long-term success when learning a second language (Taylor, Meynard & Rheault, 1977; Ellis, 1997; Crookes et al., 1991). In some of the early researches conducted by Gardner and Lambert integrative motivation was viewed as being of more importance in a formal learning environment than instrumental motivation (Ellis, 1997).
Brown (2000) makes the point that both integrative and instrumental motivation is not necessarily mutually exclusive. Learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. He cites the example of international students residing in the United States, learning English for academic purposes while at the same time wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country. It seems that females have a better talent for language than males. There are contradictory beliefs about the tendency of females towards more language learning. Hagborg (1995) indicated that there were no significant gender differences on 'mastery motivation' intrinsic motivational components. Oggiano and Barrett (1992) found that females are more instrumentally motivated than males, and that males are integratively motivated, have fewer incidents of depression than females. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate EFL student motivations for learning English. This research will investigate whether Iranian EFL students tend to have a stronger instrumental motivation or integrative motivation.

2. Literature Review

Motivation has strong effect on students' achievement in numerous studies. In the literature on motivation, the focus is what specific factors work together to create motivation. Ellis (1994), in an overview of research on motivation, has simply asserted that motivation affects the extent to which language learners persevere in learning, what kinds of behavior they exert, and their actual achievement. Wlodwoski explained motivation as “the processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behavior, (b) give direction or purpose to behavior, (c) continue to allow behavior to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior” (1985, p. 2).

The two models of motivation discussed in this literature review also concentrate on specific factors that influence motivation. Gardner was one of the pioneering researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) to focus on motivation. He chose to define motivation; Motivation is an important factor in learning a second and foreign language (Gardner, 1985b). It is defined as the individual's attitudes, desires, and effort (Gardner, Tremblay & Masgoret, 1997). Moreover, Ryan and Deci (2000) define motivation as concerning energy, direction, persistence and equifinality—all aspects of activation and intention. In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), motivation has been identified as one of the key factors that determine L2 achievement and attainment. It serves as an impetus to generate learning initially and later as a sustaining force to the tedious process of acquiring a target language (Cheng & Dornyei, 2007).

Gardner focused on classifying reasons for second language study, which he then identified as orientations (1985, p. 54). He found two main orientations through his research: Integrative is a favorable attitude toward the target language community; possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use of the language. Instrumental is a more functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement.

Gardner specifically delineated the difference between these orientations and actual motivation. Motivation “refers to a complex of three characteristics which may or may not be related to any particular orientation. These characteristics are attitudes toward learning the language, desire to learn the language, and motivational intensity” (Gardner, 1985, p. 54). For example, an integrative orientation was a class of
reasons suggesting why a person might undertake language study, including a desire to integrate with a target language community. By itself, this simply reflected a goal which might or might not lack motivational power. On the other hand, an integrative motive included this orientation, plus the motivation, which included desire, motivational intensity, and a number of other attitudes involving the target language community.

Gardner's socio-educational model of motivation focused on the integrative motive. Motivation was the central concept of the model, but there were also some factors which affected this, such as integrativeness and attitudes. These were other factors that influenced individual differences, and were seen as complex variables. Gardner received criticism for focusing so much on the integrative motive. However, Gardner himself stated that since the SLA process is extremely complex, when considering motivation to learn a language the complexity must also be realized. Motivation must be looked at in totality and in relation to other characteristics of the individual. He simply found that studies have demonstrated “that subjects who select integrative reasons over instrumental ones as indicative of themselves evidence higher levels of motivational intensity” (Gardner, 1985, p. 53). Gardner found the integrative motive to have an extremely high significance in results of his studies. Clement and Kruidenier (1983) designed a research study in order to specify further factors that influence motivation. From survey results, four different orientations to language study were identified.

The instrumental orientation was an important factor, along with reasons such as travel, seeking new friendships, and acquiring knowledge. They acknowledged that the “relative status of learner and target groups as well as the availability of (or at least familiarity with) the latter in the immediate environment are important determinants of the emergence of orientations” (1983, p. 288). The challenge was to look not at the universality of integrative and instrumental orientations, but to look more at “who learns what in what milieu” (1983, p. 288). Ely (1986) did work looking specifically at a FL setting, with learners of Spanish in Northern California. He designed the study wanting to address the possibility that the integrative/instrumental dichotomy did not capture the full spectrum of student motivation. To his surprise, there were clustering's of motivation that resembled instrumental and integrative orientations, even though the survey was not formed on the basis of that prior theory.

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) also worked to move beyond the instrumental and integrative orientations, specifically looking at how motivation includes both internal and external factors. Dörnyei was also concerned with expanding the model of motivation beyond two orientations, specifically in a FL setting. He stated that “the exact nature of the social and pragmatic dimensions of second language motivation is always dependent on who learns what languages where” (1994a, p. 275). Contrary to Gardner's focus on integrativeness, Dörnyei (1994a) asserted that in a FL setting instrumental orientation would have a greater influence on language learners. One specific area in which motivational factors can be seen at work is in the use of different learning strategies. Studies by Oxford and Nyikos show that the “degree of motivation is the most powerful influence on how and when students use language learning strategies” (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, p. 53).

However, it is important to first distinguish specifically what learning strategies are. Learning strategies are “operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information...(they are) specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more
enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990). Usually, more proficient language learners use a wider range in more situations. Strategy use varies according to the task, stage of the learner, age of the learner, the context of learning, individual learning styles, and cultural differences.

Current research is now showing that the difference between successful and unsuccessful learners is more the quality of strategies used, not quantity. Successful language students do not necessarily use more strategies, but instead use different combinations of strategies (Kaylani, 1996). Successful strategy users have the ability to choose the strategies suitable for the task. Many different categories of learning strategies have been documented. Oxford (1990) created a taxonomy of different strategies which is divided into two main, equally important categories. The first, direct strategies, simply involves direct use of language. Under this heading are three areas: strategies dealing with memory, the entering and retrieving of information; cognition, the manipulation of language for reception and production; and compensation, the overcoming of limitations in existing knowledge. The second main category is indirect strategies, which support language learning, but do not directly involve using the language. Under this heading are three areas: strategies dealing with meta-cognition, the organization and evaluation of learning; affective strategies, the management of emotions and attitudes; and social strategies, the learning of a language with the help of others.

Noels, Clement, Pelletier (2001) investigated French Canadian students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for language learning. The results showed that integrative motivation has strongly correlation with intrinsic motivation. Learners' use of strategy may reflect their motivational motivation. Learning motivation was confirmed to have significant correlation with learning strategies. Chang and Huang (1999) investigated English learners' learning motivation and learning strategies. It was found that integrative motivation was significantly related to motivation level as well as the deep processing strategies: cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. They suggested that integrative motivation may be powerful predictors for language learning and should put emphasis in the EFL classroom.

3. Purpose of Study

This study aimed to provide a better understanding of motivation for Iranian EFL students. There are two questions for this study:
Question 1: How the Iranian EFL students are motivated to learn language?
Question 2: Are there any motivational differences among male and female students?

4. Methodology

4.1. Subjects

The researchers conducted a survey of 60 Iranian EFL students from 2 different English Translation classes at Garmsar University, Iran. They were 30 female 30 male students between 21 and 25 years of age.

4.2. Instruments

The students were required to complete a questionnaire showing their motivation concerning learning English. Sixteen items were selected for test administration: 8 items for integrative motivation and
another 8 items for instrumental motivation. The questionnaire put emphasis on the motivational differences among Iranian EFL students. The questionnaire was translated into Persian language so that every student could understand the questions.

4.3. Procedure

The questionnaire consisted of 16 different items, each with a five-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (5). 8 items measured integrative motivation and other 8 items measured instrumental motivation. The instructions for completing the questionnaire were explained by the researchers. Respondents were given 20 minutes to answer the questionnaire.

4.4. Data Analysis

Descriptive analyses were used to describe the data in order to get the results for the motivation orientation of Iranian EFL students learning English. Each 8-item questionnaire was subjected to two reliability tests to check for internal consistency of both integrative and instrumental motivation. The reliability coefficients were high, confirming that the internal consistency of 16 items in the questionnaire was high.

5. Results and Discussion

The study showed that Iranian students had a stronger instrumental motivation to learn English. The following table shows the gender differences between instrumental and integrative motivation. Summary of statistics and reliability for the questionnaire according to gender. (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrative motivation</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental motivation</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study showed that Iranian EFL students have a stronger instrumental motivation to learn English. Female students have stronger integrative motivation orientation than instrumental motivation. The reasons are as follows: females tend to be more socially dependent and they are more eager to integrate with a social norm, because they see other people's criticism more important than males. Male students have stronger instrumental motivation orientation than integrative motivation. The reason could be their thinking is more career-oriented than females, thus learning English is mainly for vocational purposes. On the whole, this study found that female students had stronger integrative motivation while male students had stronger instrumental motivation.

6. Conclusion

This study indicated that Iranian EFL students have stronger instrumental motivation than integrative motivation toward language learning. The most important factors affect students' motivation are parents, teachers, social personality, university environment and examinations. Females were found to have stronger integrative motivation than males to learn English. Findings of this study have implications for
teaching pedagogy. Teachers should put emphasis on increasing students' integrative and instrumental motivation, although findings of the study indicated that males have stronger instrumental motivation than integrative motivation on language learning. Teachers should find out appropriate activities that enhance students' motivation. Teachers should use effective strategies to motivate students of different groups. They can inform their students the significance and usefulness of these strategies. In order to motivate male and female students to learn English, teachers should adjust their teaching techniques based on their students' needs to enable them to learn English easily. In conclusion, motivating students is necessary to ensure learners' academic growth. Encouragement can make learning more efficient and improve the classroom atmosphere. Successful learners are motivated by both internal and external factors and both types should be promoted in the classroom by teachers.

References


Appendix

Motivations for Learning English

We would like to find out what motivates you to learn English. Please look at the statements below and indicate how much you agree or disagree with them. Circle the number that corresponds to your own opinions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I want to learn English, because:</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I want to travel overseas in the future.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I want to further my studies in the future</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. English can help me to make friends with people of different nationalities and background.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. English can enhance my chances of emigrating to other countries in the future.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. English is the way to gain more knowledge</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. English can raise my social status.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A good standard of English can help me do</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. English can help me to find a better job in the future.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. English can help me understand Western culture.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. It can help me to broaden my horizons.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. English can enable me to appreciate Western films and music.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. It can satisfy my interests and curiosity.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. English is the mark of an educated person</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. It is part of my schoolwork.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I like conversing with foreigners.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I want to pass my public examinations.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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April 2011
ISSN : 2230-9136