

Socio-Psychological Orientations in English Language Learning: A Study of Graduate Level Students

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Abstract

The study examines socio-psychological orientations of students of technical education (commerce colleges, technology colleges, Technical training institutes, and vocational training institutes) towards the learning of English language. The study emphasizes the social psychological variables of attitude and motivation. In technical education the syllabus of English is different from the institutes of general education. The students of general education study English language till the last year of their graduation, while the students of commerce education study functional English in the 3rd year and business communication in 4th year. These courses relate to business correspondence. The study finds that students of technical education concentrate on learning of English for its utilitarian purpose. It is due to the reason that the absence of inadequate language policy and linguistic reality of Pakistan impact these essential socio- psychological elements of the student and his view point about English language learning. Further, students also like to learn English language due to 'instrumental' purpose or for the purpose to acculturate themselves with the target language society.

Key Words:

ESL, EFL,
Attitude,
Integrative
Motivation,
Instrumental
Motivation

Introduction

The area of research of attitude and motivation in learning of English language is very vast. Gardner, Smythe, and Clement Gardner, R. C. (2000). Conducted comprehensive research on these two factors i.e. attitude and motivation. They also tried to explore the relationship and linguistic performance of the student with attitude and motivation. Khanna & Agnihotri, (1994) suggested that the student of second language should be mentally ready to learn various elements of a dissimilar linguistic society, to enforce fundamentals of the cultural aspects in their own life. The prime object of this paper is to observe individual and social variables in the learning of English as a second or

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foreign language and further exploration of learning of English among the learners of technical education at graduate level.

The investigation of socio-psychological variables of the student is essential in the understanding of the learning circumstances and the student' way of thinking towards English. The paper also throws light on the fact that it is the instrumental motivation because of which learners of technical education like to learn English for its worldly purposes instead of integrative motivation. The work of Gardner and Lambert (1979) is pinpointed to exhibit that the explanation of instrumental and integrative motivation given by Gardner and Lambert is debatable with reference to the motivational factor of the students of technical stream about the learning of English. The attitude of the student is directly related to the circumstances and environment of learning a language. It is acknowledged that positive attitude assists the learner in the process of learning a language; it is also fact that behavior is not determined by the attitude but it is one of the important factor which influence behavior.

English is considered in Pakistan as a passport to world because of its worth in the entire world. It has become the inseparable part of the educational, social and cultural, system of Pakistan because it is being used for years and for different objectives. The use of this language is growing rapidly in various forms; this language is also being used with Urdu code switching in Pakistan. One of the problems of the lack of motivation in learning English for Pakistani learner is the absence of adoption of clear cut language policy in the education system of Pakistan. Even than the education planners are still indecisive about the implementation of language policy. Therefore Pakistani learners are less motivated towards English language learning. While the situation in our neighboring country is entirely different because in India English is compulsory right from class one (Mehmood 2006).

In technical education especially in commerce and technology communication skill is taught to develop the communicative competence of the students. This course is designed to improve the four basic language skills of the students. The first course of *Communication Skills* is taught at intermediate which helps the students to use fundamental rules of English and to communicate in a better way. The course of communication skills is taught by using communicative approach and the course contents of this course are designed according to the needs and mental ability of the students.

The second course is Business communication which is taught at graduate level *in* this course the students are taught to write different styles of writing, such as comparative, contrastive, descriptive, narrative and expository writing etc. This business communication course is purely designed for professional and business correspondence where students learn various types of communicational aspects related to business affairs (Murphy H.R 2007).

The Review of Literature

There are various factors which assist the learner to learn second or foreign language.

These factors include age, motivation, anxiety and attitude etc. These factors are held accountable for individual differences in the learning of second language. The learner's overall performance is influenced by individual differences according to the view point of social psychologists. It is due to the reason whatever the research has been conducted in social psychology the earlier mentioned factors have their affect on second or foreign language learning. Gardner, (2000) suggests that acquisition of second language is 'actually a phenomenon of social psychology. It is directly related to the progress of interactive skills between the learner and the other members of target language community. Apart from other factors the areas which have been emphasized more in research are attitude and motivation in foreign language learning. In social psychology the definition of attitude and motivation is debatable issue. According to (Ellis, 1985, p.116) it is very difficult to make distinction between the two as regard to the research domain of second language acquisition. In order to have clear cut distinction between attitude and motivation let's have a look at the explanation of these two terms given by various researchers.

It is the investigation into the attitude of learners which enables the researcher, educationist, designers of syllabus and the teacher of foreign language to know about the process of learning and teaching foreign language. Kachru (1994) is of the opinion that, 'Attitude is related to the status of the various varieties of English is an important factor to understand the function performed by English language in the world context. For this purpose the students of graduate classes have been chosen. It is because the student of this age is mostly not decisive about their future job selection. In the same way probably they are not interested in the acculturation of target community. Chiero (1997) defines that the role of attitude is as significant in language learning as in the other spheres of life because the success of language learning entirely depends on attitude and motivation. It would be appropriate to examine what type of motivation the students of technical stream exhibit for the learning of English and which motivational factor is a strong source of learning English for the students of Technical education and vocational training authority?

Schumann (1978; 1986) presented acculturation model in which he investigates the impact of variables. He is of the opinion attitude as a social factor along with other variables such as time devoted in the target language community size of speech community, and collective harmony within the group of foreign language learning. He also opines that success level of foreign language learning is determined by the acculturation of target language culture .It means that the more you acculturate with the target group the more successful you are in the learning of foreign language (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Schuman (1978) declares that if one has favorable attitudes for the language of target community his desire to learn the particular language will be increased.

The distinction has also been made by Gardner and Lambert (1972) between attitude and motivation. They are of the view that attitude is actually a diligence exhibited by the student for the achievement of goal whereas motivation covers the overall goal. They argue that one should not suppose relationship between attitude and

motivation. However Ellis (1985) relates that motivation serves as assistance for the learner entire orientation.

Brown (1981) also identifies 'attitudes' by saying that it is related to the beliefs of the learners which they hold for the members of target community and also about his own social setting and culture. Brown (1981) further differentiates attitude and motivation. According to him motivation is of three types (1) *Global motivation* that provides direction toward the end of second language learning.

(2) *Situational motivation*, this type of motivation varies according to the situation for the learning of task. (3) *task motivation*, this type of motivation motivates learner to perform in the target field Ellis' (1985) says that global motivation is directly related to motivation concept given by Lambert and Gardner (1972) but Ellis(1985)acknowledges that situational motivation is a new concept that does not come into view in Gardner and Lambert.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) propounded the concept of *Instrumental* and *Integrative* motivation in learning foreign language. By Instrumental motivation we mean the learning of language for worldly purpose i.e. in order to prosper themselves. On the other hand integrative motivation means the interest of learner's in culture and the ways of TLC (Target Language Community).By integrative motivation the learner aspires to become the part of TLC.

Research Methodology:

Objectives of Study

The research aims:

1. To know key motivational factors in English learning in Technical Education?
2. To suggest some remedial measures to promote motivational activities.

Research Questions

The following are the research question of present research.

1. What is the extent of instrumental or interactive inclination to learning of English among the student of graduate level of technical education?
2. What is the strength of use of English in different areas of educational context?
3. How do the motivational activities of learning English can be better utilized?

Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to the various institutions of Technical Education and Vocational

Training Authority (TEVTA) of district Bahawalpur.

Population

The population of this study consists of total number of 150 students. Among them 90 students are male and 60 students are female. These students were randomly selected from the different institutes of technical education of Bahawalpur. The population size of female students is less than that of male students therefore their sample was taken accordingly. These students came from different areas of Bahawalpur and its vicinity. They are studying English as a foreign language as the mother tongue of the above mentioned students are Punjabi, Saraiki, and Urdu. The population is randomly selected from different department of the under mentioned institutes. I.e.30 students from B.Com 30 students from Dress designing and Making and each 30 students from Mechanical, Engineering Electrical Engineering and Electronics Engineering. English is being taught from the last 13 years as a compulsory subject. The targeted population has been taken from the following institution of Technical education of Bahawalpur:

- i. Government Poly Technical Institute for Woman, Bahawalpur.
- ii. Government Vocational Training Institute for Woman, Bahawalpur.
- iii. Government College of Technology for Boys, Bahawalpur.
- iv. Government College of Commerce for Boys, Bahawalpur.

Procedure

A questionnaire is based on Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) developed by Gardner (1958; 1960) and extended by Gardner and Lambert (1972). comprises of 20 item (with 5 point likert scale strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree ,not sure) was applied to check the response of the respondents about the effects of instrumental and integrative motivation and to know their bent of mind toward learning English language of both sexes. These questions are as follows:

Questions Related to Instrumental Motivation

- It is the view point of my parents that learning English is significant for me.
- The knowledge of English is indispensable for my future career.
- English is necessary for the completion of my degree.
- The competency of English will assist me to proceed for higher education.
- The study of English make me more knowledgeable
- Knowledge of English is a source of getting good job in Pakistan?
- English will make my social position prominent.
- Honestly speaking I attend my class of English with little interest,
- Learning of English make me respectable in front of the people of my community

- It is the view point of my parents that I should spent maximum time in studying English

Questions Related to Integrative Motivation

- I attend the class of English because my English teacher is very good.
- Learning English is really pleasurable.
- I wish I could have many native English speaking friends
- Studying English is significant because it will make me comfortable and easy with English speaking community.
- I am desirous to know the various aspects of English language
- I spend more time in my English class than other classes.
- English assists me to think & behave like native speakers of English?
- The knowledge of English is necessary to understand novels and story books of English.
- The English will help me to comprehend the life style of native speakers?
- The knowledge of English will widen the horizon of my intellect?

Data Collection Tool

Questionnaire (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery developed by Gardner (1958; 1960) and Semi Structured Interview are the data collection tools in order to get the responses of the participants

Administration of the Data

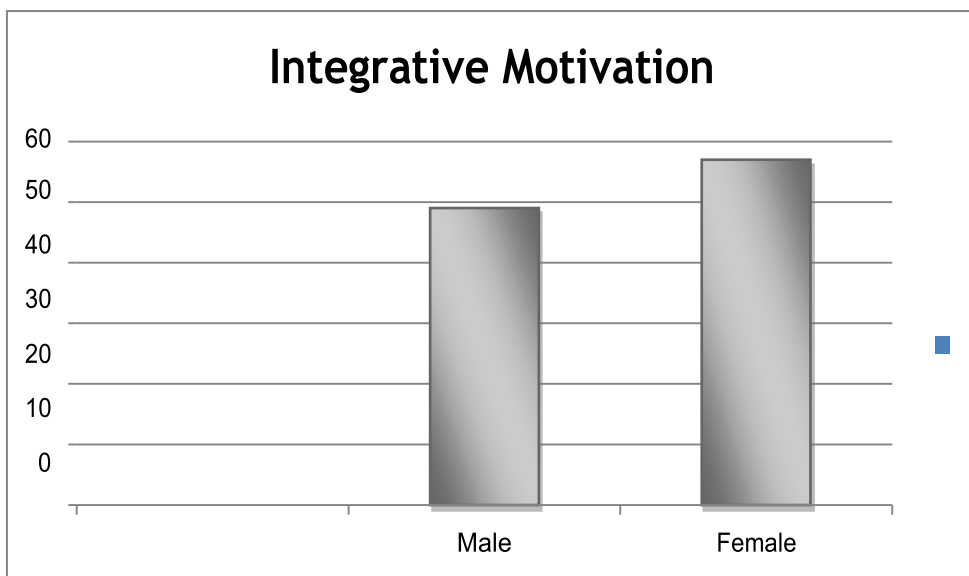
After using the research tools for data collection, its reliability was checked in other researches done in this field of study. Research tools were finalized and then employed into the field for data collection purpose. The researcher visited the selected colleges to collect the data .The principal and staff of the colleges exhibited co-operation to collect the data

Data Analysis

The collected data by the research tools was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted. To analyze the data, SPSS_16 (VERSION) was employed. Values were put in SPSS system and then percentage, frequency was known and presented as interpretation of the data. The responses of the participants after collecting the date have been shown with the help of table and figure 1.1 below. The inclination of the both sexes is described with the help of a table and figure whether they are instrumentally motivated or integratively motivated toward learning English language.

Table 1.1: (N=150) Integrative Motivation

Serial Number	Motivational Factor	Male	Female
1	Integrative Motivation	49%	57%

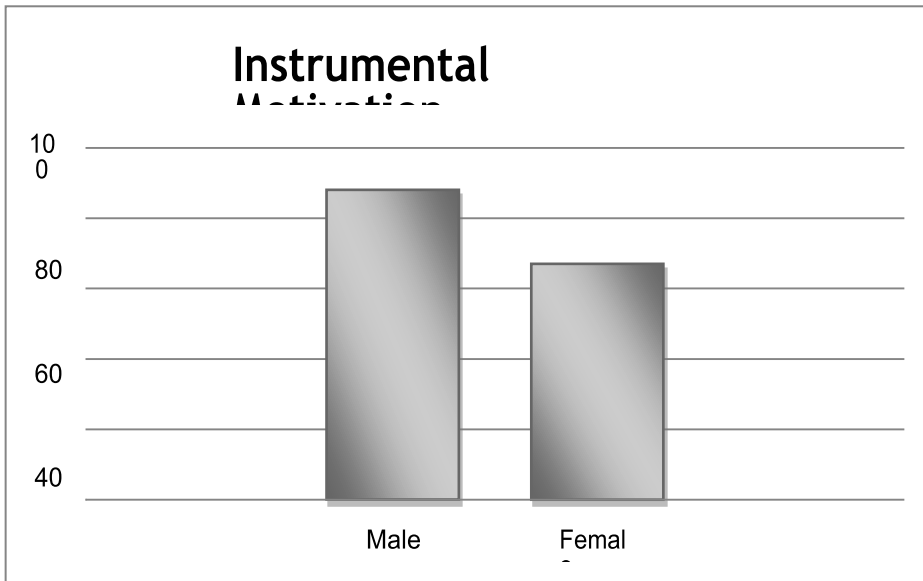


Graph 1.1: (N=150) Integrative Motivation

This figure 1.1 indicates that the inclination of male students towards integrative motivation is 49% while the inclination of female is 57%. It can be assessed that female respondents are more integratively motivated than male respondents.

Table 1.2: (N=150) Instrumental Motivation

Serial Number	Motivational Factor	Male	Female
2	Instrumental Motivation	88%	67%



Graph 1.2: (N=150) Instrumental Motivation

Figure 1.2 indicates the response of the participants with respect to their bent of mind about instrumental motivation. It shows that 88% of the male respondents are instrumentally motivated. While 67% female respondents are instrumentally motivated. It can be seen that male respondents are more instrumentally motivated than that of female respondents.

Semi-Structured Interview:

20 students of different institutes were randomly selected for semi structured interview in order to know their responses about the use of English in their daily life and the present situation of English at present in Pakistan following ten relevant issues.

Do you Like to Watch English Movies?

When asked to observe their interest in English movies. 12 respondents shared that they liked to watch English movies most of the time because they like the story and various interesting scenes of horror and adventure .6 respondents said that they watched English movies off and on. Rest of the respondents replied that they did not like to watch English movies.

Do you Like to Watch Sports Channel?

All the participants of interview shared their views that they liked to watch matches with English commentary especially cricket because the commentary in English was full of emotions and passions of the commentators which really corresponds their passions about the respective teams.

They also suggested that Pakistan should also start English sports channel like our neighboring country India.

Do you Read English Newspaper and Magazines?

When asked to see their inclination about English newspapers and magazines. 14 respondents said that they do not read English newspaper because they cannot recognize the whole news because of poor vocabulary and deficiency of understanding sentence structure. 2 respondents said that they read English newspaper once in a blue moon. 4 students replied that they read English newspaper and magazine of Sunday only.

Do you Speak English with Your Family Members?

When asked to see the use of English in their family all the 20 respondents shared that no one in their family speaks English except a few words and phrases of English in their family.

Do You Like to Watch News Channel Like BBC and CNN?

When asked to know their response about watching BBC and CNN only 4 respondents said that they watched BBC and CNN news channel rest of the 16 respondents said that they do not watch English news channels at all.

Why the Students are Not Good in English?

When tried to discover the reasons for their poor performance in the subject of English. All of them pointed out that in the schools and colleges; there is a strong tendency for the students to cram the material without understanding. They also opined that there is a little use of English in our daily life 5 students thinks that unnecessary use of Urdu language is the major cause for the declining standard of English. They have lack of latest equipment to listen and watch the different lessons of English.

What is the Justification for Learning English?

All the students believe that English is learnt for its worldly purpose, such as. Going abroad for higher study getting good Job, traveling, reading books, etc. Four respondents claimed that they learn English so that they can share their ideas with the native speakers comfortably. This interaction will assist them to share knowledge of science and technology with native speaker.

Do you Feel Need of English Language Courses at College Level?

All the respondents think that they are in a dire need of English language courses at college level. They are agreed that the courses of spoken English should be introduced apart from functional English and Business communication in the form of basic and advance English language courses, so that the learners can increase their fluency in speaking English.

Should You Learn Other Foreign Languages?

12 respondents are of the view that they are in a dire need of learning English only, instead of other foreign languages .Other 8 respondents shared their views that as the whole world has been compacted to global village due to the advancement of science and technology so learning other languages such as French, German, Chinese etc. would ensure better future opportunities for them.

From which Class English Should be Made Compulsory?

17 of them say that English should be made compulsory from the beginning of academic career for all the learners without the difference of cast color creed and demographic area. Only 3 respondents say English should be introduced from class five so that the native language can be retained.

Conclusion

The result of the present research presents clear cut view that instrumental motivation is the main motivational and inspiring orientation of learning English as a second language for the students of Technical education institute in Bahawalpur. It gives a satisfactory answer to the research questions asked/discussed in the beginning, and it clashes the result of some of the researchers (Maniruzzaman & Haque, 2000; Maniruzzaman & Haque, 2001), who are of the view that integrative motivation is the inspiring factors in the learning of foreign language. The current study also exhibits that the students of technical education, learn English mostly for

instrumental reasons. The participants of this study actively participated in process of research. They accept the reality that without the proficiency of foreign language it is not possible for them to face the challenges of modern world. They rather say that they should be provided a chance to communicate with the native speaker because before that they just saw and heard about native speaker through electronic and print media. They also showed their interest towards English people because they are successful and developed nation and the respondents of the study want to be the same. They strongly favored the idea that separate English language courses should be made the part of curriculum so that their fluency in English may be increased. It does not mean that they like the English and abhor their existing education system rather they want to make Pakistan English educated country by following the way of life adopted earlier by the native speaker. They actually do not want to become native speaker of English culturally. It is because some of the questions from Gardner's AMTB which have no relevance with the present study were left. The informants accepted the fact that their earlier knowledge about the English is very limited because they do not read English magazine novels, and other literature of the English. The present study also concluded that integrative motivation is not as active driving force for the male respondents for learning of English as compared to instrumental motivation. But the situation is entirely changed when we got the responses of female respondents perhaps they are inspired by the development and active participation of female community of the English society in almost all field of human life. The future research on large scale may provide clear picture by keeping in view of linguistic realities of Pakistan because there is always room for improvement in all spheres of life.

Recommendations

The following recommendations may improve and accelerate the sense of motivation of English Language learning among the learners of English in Pakistan.

- Learners should be encouraged to interact with their classmates and teacher in English.
- The provision of DVDs of children stories and listening can bring positive results in learning of English.
- Apart from syllabus, students should be guided to read the books of famous English authors.
- Students should watch BBC and CNN news channels regularly.
- The teacher should reduce the use of national language in the class.
- The teacher should use simple and easy sentences so that students can understand it easily.
- Modern technological devices should be provided in the class so that the practice of four language skills should be imparted.

- Teaching English through activities and fun game should be made the part of class room teaching apart from syllabus.

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