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Bölcsészettudományi Kar

ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

*A motiváció jelentősége a nyelvtanulásban
Kiemelkedő angoltanulók motivációs profiljának vizsgálata*

*The importance of motivation in language learning
A study on the motivational profiles of high-achieving students*

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Budapest, 21st March, 2011

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Abstract

This study aims at getting an insight into the motivational profiles of high-achieving learners of English and through this, drawing a conclusion about what factors play an important role in student motivation, what kind of motivational profiles lead to more successful foreign language learning and how motivation can be enhanced in and outside of the classroom. After a brief summary of the most relevant points of the literature on the subject, where the notion of motivation is explained and a distinction is made among different types of motivation and their significance in a classroom context, the research carried out for this study is discussed and evaluated: semi-finalists and finalists of the Hungarian National Competition for Secondary School Students (Országos Középiskolai Tanulmányi Verseny) share their views on their motivation.

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1. Introduction

Everybody agrees that it is indispensable for successful language learning, but very few people actually know how it works and how to exploit it to the fullest; this is motivation, a phenomenon, which has been the focus of an increasing number of studies in the past decades, but still remains an area to be further investigated in order to be used efficiently in language teaching.

Having been a finalist of one of the most prestigious competitions of English for secondary school students, the OKTV myself, it has long fascinated me to examine what makes somebody who has never spent a longer period of time in an English-speaking country one of the top learners of English in Hungary. Some people talk about diligence, some about the need for achievement because of the competitive atmosphere of an elite school and still others about the extensive use of foreign language media as the key. It seems to me that all of these, to a certain degree, are connected to motivation.

In my thesis, my aim is to investigate what motivational variables are responsible for the success of these students. Of primary importance are the following questions: “Is it the intrinsic or the extrinsic factors that are more significant?”, “Is some contact with the target language community necessary for motivation to learn a foreign language?”, “Who are the people that can provide motivation for such a successful student?” and “To what extent can a teacher enhance motivation?”.

After analysing the literature on the topic to highlight the most important points of reference, I would like to start my research at the semi-final round of the competition, where I plan to ask students to fill out a questionnaire in connection with the already established motivational categories. When I have drawn the conclusion from the results, I would like to

get more immersed in the topic through some personal interviews, done both with students and their teachers, at the final round of the competition.

I expect that through this research, a clearer picture will be available about how students can be motivated to achieve, with some ideas that teachers might find useful in the classroom. However, given the small number of students involved in the research, this study does not aim to look for an unquestionable truth, it only intends to give a report on the motivational tendencies present at the OKTV in the school year 2010/2011 in Hungary.

2. Literature review

2.1. Defining Motivation

Since the second half of the 20th century, research projects have investigated the role of affective factors in language learning with growing interest (e.g. Gardner, 1959, Deci & Ryan, 1985, Dörnyei, 1990) and have concluded that they contribute as much as and often even more to language learning than the traditionally studied cognitive factors (Stern, 1983). Krashen (1985) emphasizes the significance of motivation, attitude, anxiety and self-confidence as the primary predictors of achievement in a second language context. Research suggests (e.g. Wei, 2007) that these factors are equally important in foreign language learning, too.

Motivation is one of the crucial elements of successful language learning that determines the extent to which a learner will be able to exploit learning strategies. It can be best described as “some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something” (Harmer, 2001, p. 51) that accounts for “why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to

pursue it” (Dörnyei, 2001a, p. 8). According to some researchers, if there is no motivation, the learning process cannot occur, either (Wlodkowski, 1999).

Oxford and Shearin (1994) list six factors which are in immediate relation with motivation in language learning: learners’ attitudes, such as attitudes towards the language itself, the language community or the teacher; beliefs about self, which include variables like self-efficacy, anxiety or expectations of success; personal attributes like aptitude or previous learning experience; goals; the extent of involvement and the environmental support, usually from teachers, parents or peers.

Due to the erratic nature of the variables influencing it, motivation cannot be approached as constant; as Dörnyei and Ottó’s model (1998) illustrates, it can change even in the course of apparently negligible time; motivation to learn is affected by both external and internal factors that can initiate, maintain, increase, or decrease the stimulus (Reeve, 1996). Therefore, when looking at motivation, the whole process rather than a specific stage should be taken into consideration.

Moreover, research suggests that there is significant individual variation among different learners; within a single class, there can be various types of motivation present. Researchers have invested significant effort into devising a model that is appropriate for all learners and situations (e.g. Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998; Gardner, 1985, 2001; Noels, 2001). However, recent results (e.g. Lamb, 2004; Yashima, 2000) point towards the fact that students with different motivational profiles may find different personalised approaches more useful. Hence, it is essential to examine different motivational types in detail and investigate what kind of learning the different motivational profiles are usually associated with.

2.2. Integrative and instrumental motivation

2.2.1. The difference between integrative and instrumental motivation

As early as 1959, after a study in search of an explanation for variation in motivation in second language acquisition in multicultural settings, Gardner and Lambert devised the Socio-Cultural Model and pointed out that the learner's attitude towards the target language and community plays a key role in the acquisition of the language and accordingly, distinguished between integrative motivation and instrumental orientation. This division has been frequently disputed ever since, but is still being used by most researchers as a point of orientation.

The key difference between the two types of motivation is in the way learners see the language that is being learnt and its usage. Instrumentally motivated students derive their motivation from the "perceived pragmatic benefits of L2 proficiency" (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, p. 21). For them, the emphasis is on the utilitarian nature of language knowledge and their priorities can be getting better marks at school, being more successful at getting a job or using the knowledge to help them achieve a goal, but the source of satisfaction is always outside of the process itself.

On the other hand, integrative motivation is triggered by the admiration of the language itself or of the countries where the language is spoken or by the urge to integrate into the community of native speakers. Integrative motivation, however, is not, as the name suggests, exclusively associated with the need to integrate into an English-speaking country and accordingly, second language acquisition. McDonough (1981) differentiates between assimilative motivation, a stronger stimulus to integrate into the group of native speakers, and affiliative motivation, which is less focused on integration, but is characterised by a desire to interact with target language speakers.

According to Brown (1989), a certain level of the acquisition of the culture is always involved in the process of learning a language. Williams (1994) notes: “The learning of a foreign language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar; it involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being” (p. 77). Considering this, Dörnyei (1994) argues that if the learner has negative feelings towards a culture, it may inhibit them from being successful at learning the language.

However, English tends to be seen as less and less connected to English-speaking countries. In today’s globalised world, where English plays the role of the lingua franca, McClelland’s (2000) view that integrative motivation should be interpreted as “integration with the global community rather than assimilation with native speakers” (p. 109) may prove to be more adequate. As Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh (2006) suggest, “English is rapidly losing its national cultural base and is becoming associated with a global culture – for many it now represents the language of the ‘world at large’” (p. 9).

Dörnyei’s (1990) study concludes that integrative motivation is more relevant to learners of English as a second language when the language is acquired through direct contact with the community of native speakers. As opposed to second language acquisition, foreign languages are learnt in a classroom context, usually through artificial means, without being exposed to the language outside of the lessons. Similarly, Oxford and Shearin (1994) argue that for learners of English as a foreign language, it is more problematic to find contact with the target language and become integratively motivated.

2.2.2. *Implications for teaching*

Different motivational profiles suggest different styles of learning and consequently, different outcomes. Integrative motivation tends to be associated with more thorough learning. An integratively motivated learner participates in class activities more enthusiastically and is eager to benefit from every occasion that offers the possibility of learning (Aiming & Aimin, 2006). Gardner et al. (1976) found that students with integrative orientation were more willing to volunteer in class, their answers were more often correct and consequently, received more encouragement.

By contrast, learners who are instrumentally motivated may not persist in the learning activity once the benefit is no longer available (Aiming & Aimin, 2006). This might be problematic, because when the goal is achieved, the learner might not strive to develop their competence any further and this might lead to fossilization of their existing knowledge (Cui-lian, 2003).

Learners with different motivational profiles may react to certain tasks with different levels of enthusiasm that can affect their degree of involvement and further motivation. Integratively driven students prefer concentrating on authentic materials and communication and are enthusiastic about topics that involve cultural background or literature. However, this is not always appreciated by instrumentally driven learners who find focusing on learning strategies, improving grammar skills and skills for exams more useful and might show more interest in special English related to their studies (Aiming & Aimin, 2006).

According to Kormos and Csizér (2008), an important element for both types can be providing them with intercultural contact, which may stimulate the effort that students will put into language learning. Clément (1980) concluded that repeated and positively

experienced contact lead to improved linguistic self-confidence, which positively affects students' motivation, too. In a Hungarian context, the importance of indirect intercultural contact and the use of foreign language media in enhancing motivation is also emphasized (Dörnyei et al. 2006).

There has been a lot of empirical research carried out in order to find out which type of motivation leads to better learning. Gardner and Lambert (1959) suggested that somebody who is instrumentally oriented can be just as highly motivated as somebody with an integrative motivation, yet, they assumed that integrative motivation could prove to be better, because it might maintain effort over a longer period of time. However, further research, undertaken by Lukmani (1972), Burstall (1975) and Izzo (1981) proved Gardner and Lambert's hypothesis wrong.

Dörnyei's (1990) study demonstrates that learners whose integrative orientation is higher – in his study, Hungarian students who valued English culture – were more likely to reach a level above intermediate than learners with less integrative motivation. Williams and Burden (1997) argue, however, that instrumental motivation may prove to be more significant in foreign language acquisition contexts. The generally accepted view is that there is no ultimate truth about which one is more efficient, both integrative and instrumental motivation can predict success in foreign language learning.

2.3. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

2.3.1. The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Similarly to the distinction made by Gardner and Lambert (1959), Deci and Ryan (1985) devised another type of categorisation. They focused on the source of the motivation and in their Self-Determination Theory, introduced the distinction between intrinsically and

extrinsically motivated learning, depending on whether the stimulus stems from the learner or it is influenced by outer sources.

An intrinsically motivated student engages in an activity “for its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes” (Lepper 1988, p. 292). It is defined by Deci and Ryan (1985) as being “related to basic human needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness” (as cited in Walqui, 2000, p. 4). On the other hand, a learner is extrinsically motivated if they act “in order to obtain some reward or avoid some punishment external to the activity itself,” (Lepper, 1988, p. 289) such as good marks, praise or presents. When this kind of motivation is concerned, the goal providing satisfaction is independent of the activity, so in this sense it is similar to instrumental motivation. (Calder & Staw, 1975)

However, the two kinds of motivation are not exclusive of each other; usually learners are motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically at the same time, only in different proportions. Deci and Ryan (1985) argue that there are different degrees of extrinsic motivation, depending on how much autonomy is involved in the action carried out under an extrinsic pressure. Therefore, sometimes it is difficult to define which of the two motivations is operating.

2.3.2. Implications for teaching

There is considerable difference between the two groups of learners in their approach towards a task. When primarily intrinsically motivated, students are willing to use strategies that require more effort; the processing of information is deeper, they tend to learn concepts and prefer more challenging tasks (Lepper, 1988). According to Condry and Chambers (1978), if confronted with a complex intellectual assignment, learners that are predominantly

intrinsically motivated use more analytical information-gathering and critical thinking. Lepper concluded that a primarily intrinsically motivated student is more likely to take risks to make mistakes and explores freely. Moreover, Ryan and Deci (2000) state that intrinsic motivation results in creativity.

Students that are predominantly extrinsically motivated, however, tend to avoid challenge, are likely to invest as little energy into a task as possible and expect maximal reward. They prefer less difficult tasks, use more rote learning, memorise facts instead of concepts and often do not try to understand how facts are related. However, if the task is algorithmic, students that are primarily extrinsically motivated may do better than intrinsically motivated students (Lepper, 1988).

Both intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation can lead to learning, but the quality of that learning might be very different: intrinsic stimulus is associated with deeper and fuller learning whereas extrinsic with more superficial learning. Various studies have concluded that an intrinsically motivated learner will more probably master a foreign language and do better in activities than others (e.g. Deci & Ryan 1992). Dörnyei (1990) states that a learner who is intrinsically motivated is more likely to go beyond intermediate level than a learner whose main motivation is extrinsic.

Although counter opinions do exist (e.g., Nisan, 1992), there seems to be a general agreement among researchers and educators that it is beneficial to enhance intrinsic motivation. Dörnyei (2001b) suggests four components of stimulating intrinsic motivation in the classroom. First of all, providing the students with the essential circumstances that enhance successful learning. This can range from such elements as providing a pleasant and stimulating atmosphere in the classroom, maintaining a good relation between teacher and student and developing a supportive group for learning.

Secondly, triggering initial interest and positive approach towards learning by strengthening expectancy of achievement and goal-orientedness and incorporating learner's needs and expectations when designing the course. As Vroom (1964) explains in his Expectancy-Value Theory, in order for effort to occur, the learner must value the task and must have the belief that they can complete it. Therefore, an educational task must be presented as meaningful and appealing and must stimulate expectations of achievement.

Thirdly, maintaining motivation by using stimulating and varied teaching methods, with interesting task contents, increasing the involvement of students, enhancing students' self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunity for experiencing success, decreasing anxiety associated with the language, setting specific learner goals, teaching learning strategies and promoting cooperation among learners.

Ryan and Deci (2000) emphasize the importance of autonomy in learning, because it leads to better self-esteem and through this, to intrinsic motivation, while, in contrast, control undermines intrinsic tendencies. Threats, deadlines and also, competition pressure undermine intrinsic motivation because people interpret them as controllers of their behaviour.

As for promoting and preserving intrinsic motivation in the classroom, Lepper (1988) summarises his strategies in four points: he suggests reducing external control, such as time limit or constraining rules and offer a choice among activities or let students explore by themselves; expose students to challenging tasks that are neither too hard nor too easy; evoke curiosity and underline the function of each activity.

Fourthly, it is important to provide the students with a feeling of success and positive self-evaluation, give constructive feedback, stimulate satisfaction in the learning process and outcomes and use appropriate rewards for motivation.

The feeling of success can be a strong predictor of motivation. Hermann (1980) states that learners who are successful tend to develop steady motivation and participate in classroom activities more actively because of the increasing self-confidence and the interest they develop. This suggests that motivation and achievement are interrelated. Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) argue that some learners are likely to receive positive stimuli from experiencing failure as well, but according to Ehrman (1996) it is not permanent, since effort without positive feedback in the long run leads to discouragement.

The use of extrinsic motivation by means of rewards has caused dispute among researchers and up until now no generally accepted theory exists. Eisenberger & Cameron (1996) state that it can actually contribute to intrinsic motivation. However, Kohn (1993) argues that offering extrinsic rewards has detrimental effect on already existing intrinsic motivation. Brophy (2004) concludes that when people begin to concentrate on the reward rather than on the learning task, the actual values associated with the task itself will be neglected.

Research highlights the diversity of outcomes when different types of rewards are administered. While praise is viewed as a positive method to inspire learning, the extensive use of unmeaningful rewards can lead to negative consequences. If students regard rewards as a valid feedback on their competence, it can increase their intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, when the controlling nature of rewards is obvious, it can lead to decrease in intrinsic motivation (Kaplan, 2009).

3. Research

3.1. Participants

The study focuses on the participants of the semi-final and final rounds of the Országos Középiskolai Tanulmányi Verseny (Hungarian National Competition for Secondary School Students), in the future referred to as OKTV, in the category of English. It is one of the most prestigious competitions for secondary school students, and given that English is one of the most popular subjects, about 3000 students participate in the first round each year (Zs. Király, personal communication, March 23, 2011), with 300 getting into the semi-finals. Being among the 30 finalists is a real acknowledgement of one's language skills.

According to Zs. Király (personal communication, March 23, 2011), who has been actively involved in the examination process of the OKTV for the past 20 years, the key elements of success, other than an excellent command of language, are quick intelligence, a keen interest in the world, efficiency processing information, a confident approach towards competing, an ambitious nature and being highly motivated.

3.2. Instrument

The research consisted of two parts, carried out at two different stages – the semi-final and final rounds – of the competition. At the semi-final round, students were asked to fill out a questionnaire, which served the purpose of getting a general overview of students' motivational tendencies and identifying to what extent and in what aspects the already defined four types of motivation – integrative, instrumental, intrinsic and extrinsic – are present among these high-achieving learners of English. (For a sample of the Hungarian language questionnaire, see Appendix A. For its English translation, see Appendix B.)

The questionnaire was written in Hungarian to make the points as clear as possible and to avoid stress related to being tested on language skills at the competition. It consisted of four different parts, each concentrating on a different aspect of the topic. A few questions were included in order to gain more detailed information about participants' background of learning the language, with questions like „When did you start learning English?” and „How many lessons of English do you have per week?”. The first part of the questions dealing with motivation was included in this general component in order to introduce students to the topic in research and to get an initial evaluation of their motivation of learning English without being influenced by the more in-depth statements that followed.

The second, main part was based on Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery: International AMTB Research Project, but was significantly altered to fit the purpose of this research. This part consisted of 46 items, with 10-12 statements reflecting instrumental (e.g. Those who speak English will be more successful in life), integrative (e.g. If I can talk to a foreigner, it inspires me to learn English), intrinsic (e.g. I wish I could learn English 24 hours a day) and extrinsic (e.g. If I get a bad mark in English, it discourages me) motivational characteristics respectively. Students were asked to mark these statements on a 4-point scale with the following labels: “Completely agree”, “Agree with some doubts”, “Rather disagree”, “Completely disagree”.

The third part, which consisted of 10 statements that had to be ranked according to which ones the students could identify with the most, was intended for analysing the motivational priorities of students and included typical motivating factors, such as a job, further studies, teacher, foreign friends, parents, etc. The fourth, closing part of the questionnaire was included in order to summarise their evaluation of their motivation after considering all the motivational factors in detail.

After evaluating the questionnaires and drawing the basic conclusions, 15 interviews were carried out at the final round with the aim of going deeper into the already established conclusions and to look at the some motivational profiles in detail. It also served the purpose of being able to clarify ambiguous points in the questionnaire. The most important questions included “In your opinion, what is necessary for somebody to be able to get into the final round of the OKTV?”, “What activities motivate you the most during your English classes?”, “What have been the biggest successes or failures in the course of your study of the English language?” and “When did you realise that you wanted to take the study of English seriously?”.

3.3. Procedures

The questionnaires were filled out during the breaks of the semi-final competition and out of the 50 questionnaires provided, 37 were returned, with 6 only partly filled-out. This is slightly more than 10% of the participants, which means that the opinion expressed by them is not an outstandingly reliable source for drawing conclusions about the participants of the competition in general, but it is enough to provide an insight into some of the most significant tendencies.

The subjects of the interview were 10 finalists and 5 teachers who had coached them for the competition and the interviews were carried out during the registration time before the competition. All the students and teachers I asked to participate in the process willingly agreed to do so and tried to answer my questions as informatively as possible. The interviews lasted about 10 minutes each and I discussed the same 7-8 questions with all of them, sometimes asking them for more in-depth information on some aspects.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Background information about the students

The students answering my questionnaire are all in their 12th or 11th year of school, have been learning English for 10 years in average, with weekly hours of English lessons varying from 1 to 8. However, a third of the students no longer attend English classes at school. The most important regulation of the competition being not having spent more than 3 months in an English-speaking country, all the participants have learnt English as a foreign language in a Hungarian environment.

The majority of the students attribute their good level of English to passive sources of learning, such as using the Internet, reading books or watching films in English, while teachers got acknowledgement from only half of the participants. Foreign friends or time spent abroad have played a minimal role in forming respondents' English knowledge. (See Chart 1 and 2 in Appendix C.)

4.2. Integrative and instrumental motivation

4.2.1. Integrative motivation

Already from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, it is obvious that there is a very strong element of motivation associated with the perspective of being able to spend a longer period of time abroad. More than half of the students identified their wish to study, work or travel abroad as their main goal with English. (See Chart 3 in Appendix C.) The problematic point is, however, that this factor, in itself, can be interpreted as either integratively or instrumentally triggered, in the sense that 'stay in a foreign country' can be either a means or a goal and students' answers seem to reflect this ambiguity, too.

Integrative elements are quite significantly present among motivational factors, however, it is quite obvious that so far, most of the students answering my questions have only been able to integrate into the target language community through indirect contact and the use of foreign media, rather than through direct contact. When having to rank why it is important for the students to learn English, the answers “being able to watch films in English” and “being able to communicate with foreigners” were ranked as the 2nd and 3rd most important factors, respectively (See Chart 2 in Appendix D.), and during the interviews, the interviewees expressed surprisingly great enthusiasm regarding the ability to read in English.

Although among people who motivate students to learn English, the option “a foreign acquaintance” was very rarely selected and none of the students interviewed finds that contact with foreigners has played a significant role in their learning process, most of them find it motivating to talk to people from different countries and would like to have more chance for this and to learn more about English-speaking cultures, which they claim to know too little about. Most of the finalists have had the opportunity to spend a few weeks in a foreign country where they could put their English knowledge to the test and all of them report on it as a highly motivating experience, because of the success they experienced when being able to communicate.

A special case of integrative motivation can be observed in a few of the participants’ families, where, although nobody is a native speaker, the family decided that with one relative, the learner could only communicate in English. This, however, falls more into the category of second language acquisition and falls outside of the scope of my thesis.

Most teachers agreed on the necessity of exposing students to the culture of the target country, most of them organise study trips to Great Britain and all of them notice – although to a varying degree – increased motivation after such an experience. In their opinion, it is not

possible to speak a language without knowing about the culture behind it, therefore, to a certain extent, they find it necessary to adopt the way of thinking of the target country. According to them, most students respond with interest to classes held on different cultural aspects of English-speaking countries or watching films or listening to music in English.

The students who filled out the questionnaire definitely understand the global role of English and consequently evaluate English as not only useful in a native English environment, but in a wider context as well. Very few of them actually specify their preference for an English speaking country when they talk about their wish to live abroad. They even highlighted in the interviews that what they really like about English is that this is the only language that enables them to access the whole world.

They seem to have a very realistic and not in the least idealised picture of English native speakers and surprisingly, they do not usually express a preference to learn English from a native teacher. An elevated number of the interviewees claimed to be motivated by the beauty of the language and they emphasized the pleasure they take when hearing or using it, however, most of the answers given in the questionnaire reflect that they are not biased towards it: they do not think of English as the most beautiful language in the world. (See Chart 1 in Appendix D.)

4.2.2. Instrumental motivation

The students have a very clear picture of the importance of English on the job market. The overall opinion ranked “English is indispensable in today’s world” as their number one reason for learning English. (See Chart 2 in Appendix D.) As well as that, ‘being able to use it in work’ was one of the three most frequently appearing answers among motivating factors, with ‘being able to go abroad’ and ‘to access English-speaking media’ being the other two.

Students also think that those who do not speak English do not have such good opportunities in life as those who do. Not many of them yearn to speak many languages; they seem to share the idea that if they have a good enough command of the English language, they already hold the key to the world and to achieving their personal goals.

Being instrumentally motivated because of school was not a recurring answer. Good marks as a motivational source appeared 9th on the list of 10 (See Chart 2 in Appendix D.), however, it did have an extremely important place in a few of the participants' lists, presumably because of the connection between getting good marks and being admitted to university or college, which for a fair number of people was of particularly high importance. More important than good marks, however, was achievement in competitions. There were interviewees who had been consciously preparing for the OKTV for 4 years and being among the top students in their final year of school had served them as a strong motivating factor for years.

During the interviews, another subgroup of instrumentally motivated students emerged. For them, the use of English is essential either because of a hobby, for which the literature is not available in Hungarian; or for a future career, usually connected to computing. Although they do not seem to have a special interest in the language itself or the target language culture, they still managed to reach and maintain an excellent level of English due to the activity for which the means is English. However, teachers reported on their fear of the fossilization of their students' knowledge of English and they mentioned the problem of students who seem extremely motivated and willing to complete any task that they deem useful up until the point that they reach their goal – which usually means passing an examination of some sorts – but not further.

4.3. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

4.3.1. Extrinsic motivation

Similarly confusing is the question of extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivation. Parents as an extrinsic source of motivation appear to be quite important for about half of the participants. These parents are usually teachers of English or have a high command of the language and practice with their children on a regular basis. However, for the other half of the contestants, no substantial support seems to come from the family. Accordingly, the formerly mentioned group of students consciously aim to please their parents with their improvement of English and for them, keeping this up is among the most important goals, whereas for the latter group, it is of no special importance at all.

Attitudes towards the teacher and formal learning as a source of extrinsic motivation were evaluated quite differently at the semi-final and final rounds. At the semi-final part of the competition, there seemed to be a huge gap between the two extremes of being exceedingly grateful to the teacher and viewing them as the main motivational source or even role model and not having a good opinion of the teacher and English classes at all and having achieved everything on their own. (See Chart 1 and 3 in Appendix D.)

However, in the final round, students usually agreed that even if one has an excellent teacher and a reasonable number of English classes, in order to be able to reach such a high level that is required at the OKTV, one needs other sources of motivation independent of formal education. When asking the finalists about the difference between them and their peers in their attitude towards learning English, more than one student highlighted that for their classmates, English is just another subject that needs to be ticked out, whereas for them it is more like a hobby that they would continue doing even if no formal education existed.

Extrinsic motivation seems to be the least dominant among the 4 main types of motivation. In the ranking of students filling out the questionnaire, good marks come in 9th and their aim to live up to the expectations of the teacher is at the last place. (See Chart 2 in Appendix D.) However, there were examples of strong extrinsic motivation turning into intrinsic motivation. Two students talked about the huge pressure they were under to perform well in class while learning English that turned into the love of the language once they recognised their success when using the language outside of the classroom.

It seems a universal truth that students need success in order to maintain motivation. Almost everybody underlined the importance of the sense of achievement, either after reading a difficult book in English or as the result of a compliment about their command of English from foreigners or in the form of a certificate after a competition. These even outweigh smaller failures, which most students were unable to recall when they were asked for examples. However, some students claimed that after repeated failure some of their peers labelled themselves as being without aptitude and gradually reduced the effort they were willing to put into language learning.

4.3.2. Intrinsic motivation

There seems to be a significantly stronger tendency for intrinsic motivation. Most of the students who filled out the questionnaire claim that they practise English every day and are not easy to discourage. It seems to have been their own wish to participate in the competition, they would learn English even if there was no reward connected to it and they plan to continue learning it even after secondary school. A lot of the finalists claimed to be motivated by their inner curiosity or the pure love of the language.

Students give the impression of having a well-balanced self-esteem, they are aware of their good language skills, very few of them seem to care about the opinion of peers connected to their level of English and not many of them have anxiety related to language performance. In the questionnaire, not a single one of them claimed to be very anxious when having to use English either inside or outside of the classroom. (See Chart 1 in Appendix D.)

When exploring how teachers can promote intrinsic motivation in the classroom, the theory of Ryan and Deci (2000) about the necessity for autonomy was very clearly reflected. Students find tasks the most motivating if they can put their creativity into practise, carry out research about a chosen topic on their own or debate about a topical issue. They get more stimuli from productive tasks such as writing and talking than from passive tasks like listening or grammar practice.

As already mentioned above, grades are not of any significant motivational value at such a high level. However, according to the teachers interviewed, evaluation is highly important even for these high-achieving students and they are convinced that it can be done in an intrinsically motivating way. In their experience, grades prove to be less motivational than praise, self-reflection or a progress chart. However, they underlined the huge difference between students in the interpretation of feedback and claimed that empathy and understanding what a grade or comment means to a certain student is always more important than merely stating the pure truth.

5. Conclusion

All things considered, the questionnaires and interviews seem to reflect most of the points made during the summary of the literature. The study clearly demonstrates that in order to become a high-achieving student, one needs resolute, intrinsically triggered motivation.

Although a healthy amount of outer pressure and a supporting atmosphere can be favourable, the most important thing is that language learning should become an activity that learners pursue for their own pleasure or satisfaction, primarily because intrinsic tendencies can sustain the effort for a longer period of time and point towards more thorough learning.

However, looking at the results from the viewpoint of a former participant, the most surprising finding was that neither instrumental nor integrative motivation seemed to outweigh the other and no evidence was found that one of them would lead to better achievement, either. Although – basing my hypothesis on my personal experience – I initially thought that integrative factors would dominate, the study reflects that a significant number of participants have no real interest in the English language or English countries and have reached the level required for the competition as a result of their engagement in activities for which the means, the ‘instrument’ is the English language.

An aspect that seems important for me to remember as a future teacher is to respect the different types of motivation present among different students and to try and find stimulating activities for all of them. The research findings point towards the assumption that teachers can be more useful if they serve the role of facilitator instead of educator after a certain level. This means that their main task should be to direct students towards activities which are both beneficial for the learning progress and engage their interest, provide them with the necessary support to be able to fulfil their potentials but in the meantime respect their autonomy.

Another important finding that should be emphasized more in teaching was that motivation is fuelled by the feeling of achievement. Frequent and repeated success is necessary at every stage of learning, for initiating, maintaining and enhancing motivation. However, this does not mean that teachers are responsible for distributing rewards; instead,

they should provide students with ample feedback and a chance of being able to experience success while putting their knowledge into practice.

Of course, given the small number and also, the very specific group of participants of this study, the outcome cannot be treated as generally representative of learners of English in Hungary. It would be interesting to further examine the question of motivation among less achievement-oriented, but more language-oriented students to re-evaluate the question of instrumental and integrative motivations being equally productive or to conduct the same study among different cultural and social circumstances to see if those students are motivated by the same perspectives as the subjects of this study.

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Appendix A

The questionnaire in Hungarian

Kedves OKTV közép döntős!

Először is, engedd meg, hogy gratuláljak, hogy idáig eljutottál!

Az alábbi kérdőív az angoltanulási motivációt vizsgálja. Nagyon sokat segítenél velem, ha rászánnál pár percet, hogy kitöltsd, természetesen név nélkül! Előre is nagyon köszönöm!

Sikeres versenyzést kívánok! Molnár Judit, ELTE Anglisztika BA szakos hallgató

Hány éve tanulsz angolul? _____ éve

Melyik iskolába jársz? (nem kötelező megadni)

.....

Heti hány órában tanulsz az angol nyelvet? _____ óra/hét

Szerinted kinek/minek köszönheted elsősorban, hogy olyan az angoltudásod, amelyen?

Kérlek, karikázd be! Több választ is adhatsz! mostani tanárom régi tanárom
magántanárom TV/filmek angolul számítógépes játékok Internet angol
nyelven olvasás önszorgalom külföldi tartózkodás külföldi ismerősök
egyéb:.....

Ki az, aki legjobban motivál az angol nyelv tanulására? Kérlek, karikázd be! Több választ is adhatsz! tanárom szüleim barátaim/osztálytársaim külföldi
ismerősöm én magam senki egyéb:.....

Miért szeretsz angolul tanulni?

.....
.....

Mik a céljaid az angol nyelvvel?

.....
.....

Kérlek, pontozd az alábbi állításokat aszerint, hogy mennyire értesz egyet velük.

4=teljesen egyetértek 3=egyetértek 2=nem értek egyet

1=egyáltalán nem értek egyet

- A barátaim és osztálytársaim becsülnek az angoltudásom miatt.
- Az az álmom, hogy sok nyelven tudjak beszélni.
- Az angoltanárom a példaképem.
- Előfordul, hogy félek, hogy a többiek rosszat gondolnak rólam, ha rosszul mondok valamit angolórán.
- Az angol anyanyelvűek barátságosabbak, mint a magyarok.
- Ha rossz jegyet kapok angolból, az nagyon elkedvetlenít.
- Aki angolul tud, az könnyebben boldogul a mai világban.
- Az, ha angolul beszélek egy külföldivel, mindig motivál a nyelvtanulásra.
- Én vagyok a legjobb az angol csoportomban.

- Már voltam olyan országban, ahol angolul beszélnek és ez a tapasztalat még inkább felkeltette az érdeklődésem az angol nyelv iránt.
- Mindig várom az angolóráimat, mert érdekesek és jól érzem magam az órákon.
- Jobban szeretem eredeti nyelven nézni a filmeket, mint magyarra fordítva.
- Sokszor azért tanulok, hogy a tanárom ne legyen rossz véleménnyel rólam.
- Sokat tudok az angol nyelvű országokról, mert érdekesnek találok őket.
- Órákon kívül is szívesen foglalkozom az angollal.
- Külföldön szeretnék később letelepedni.
- Az angol nyelv sokkal szebb, mint a többi nyelv.
- Szerintem akkor is jól tudnék haladni angolból, ha nem kéne órákra járnom.
- Több angol anyanyelvű barátot szeretnék.
- Bárcsak több angolóránk lenne!
- Az, aki angolul tud, sokkal érdekesebb emberekkel ismerkedhet meg, mint aki csak magyarul.
- Nem volt kedvem részt venni ezen a versenyem, de a tanárom ösztönzött rá, hogy mégis részt vegyek.
- Az angoltanárom jobb, mint bármelyik másik tanárom.
- Sokat idegeskedek amiatt, hogy valamit nem jól mondok angol órán.
- Az angoltanítás Magyarországon nem elég jó, ezért nem tudok elég jól angolul.
- Szeretem az angol nyelvet, de az angolóráim unalmasak.
- Aki tud angolul, az intelligensebb, mint aki nem.
- Minden nap angolozom.
- A szüleim ösztönöznék rá, hogy egyre jobb legyek angolból.
- Aki nem tud manapság angolul, annak nincsenek olyan lehetőségei, mint annak, aki tud.
- Legszívesebben éjjel-nappal angolt tanulnék.
- Bosszant, ha az osztálytársaim jobban beszélnek angolul, mint én.
- Soha nem fogom abbahagyni az angol nyelv tanulását.
- Az angoltanárom nagyon jó tanár.
- Néha úgy érzem, soha nem leszek elég jó angolból.
- Mindig az angolvázimat csinálom meg legszívesebben.
- Idegesít, mikor nem tudunk elég gyorsan haladni, mert a többiek nincsenek elég jó szinten.
- Néha úgy érzem, az angolba fektetett energiám nem térül meg.
- Számomra az angolul való beszéd természetesen jön, ezért nem izgulok miatta.
- Aki angolul tud, azt jobban megbecsülik, mint aki nem.
- Jobban szeretném, ha anyanyelvű tanárom lenne.
- Ha egy turista kérdez tőlem valamit angolul, mindig elbizonytalanodok.
- Azért tanulom az angolt, mert így biztos, hogy jó munkát fogok kapni.
- Ha a tanárom megdicsér, az nagyon motivál.
- Az angol nyelven keresztül közelebb kerülhetek más kultúrákhoz és ez gazdagít.
- Aki angolul tud, az biztos, hogy sikeres lesz az életben.

Kérlek, rakd sorrendbe az alábbi válaszokat aszerint, hogy melyik a legjellemzőbb rád és melyik a legkevésbé jellemző! 1.=leginkább igaz, 10.=legkevésbé igaz

Miért tanulsz angolul?

- Hogy később jó munkát kapjak
- Hogy tudjak kommunikálni azokkal is, akik nem tudnak magyarul
- Mert hosszabb időt külföldön szeretnék majd tölteni
- Mert ez a hobbim
- Hogy jó jegyeket kapjak
- Hogy felvegyenek arra az egyetemre/főiskolára, ahova járni szeretnék
- Azért, hogy a szüleim büszkéek legyenek rám
- Mert a mai világban elengedhetetlen a nyelvtudás
- Hogy eredeti nyelven nézhessek filmeket, olvashassak könyveket
- Mert a tanárom azt várja el tőlem, hogy jól teljesítsek

Kérlek, tegyél X-et a megfelelő helyre, aszerint, hogy melyik válaszhoz van közelebb a véleményed!

1. A motivációm arra, hogy angol anyanyelvűekkel kommunikáljak:

ERŐS 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ GYENGE

2. Az angol anyanyelvűekről való véleményem:

NAGYON ROSSZ 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ NAGYON JÓ

3. Érdeklődésem az idegen nyelvek iránt:

NAGYON ALACSONY 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ NAGYON MAGAS

4. Az angoltanáromhoz való hozzáállásom:

NEGATÍV 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ POZITÍV

5. A motivációm arra, hogy az angolt a céljaim elérésére (pl. munka, felvételi) használjam:

GYENGE 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ ERŐS

6. Aggódom, ha az osztálytermen kívül kell angolul beszélnem:

KICSIT 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ NAGYON

7. Az angolórákhoz való hozzáállásom:

NEGATÍV 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ POZITÍV

8. Aggódom amiatt, hogy meg kell szólalnom angolórán:

KICSIT 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ NAGYON

9. A motivációm arra, hogy megtanuljak angolul:

ALACSONY 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ MAGAS

10. A szüleim bátorítanak arra, hogy angolul tanuljak:

KICSIT 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ NAGYON

Appendix B

The questionnaire in English

Dear OKTV semi-finalist!

First of all, let me congratulate you on getting to the semi-finals!

This questionnaire concentrates on language learning motivation. You would help me a lot by taking a few minutes to fill it in, naturally anonymously. Thank you very much in advance!

I wish you good luck with the competition! Molnár Judit, ELTE, BA English major

How long have you been learning English? for years

Which school do you go to? (it is not compulsory to answer this question)

.....
How many English classes do you have per week? _____ classes/week

In your opinion, it is thanks to whom/what that you have reached this level in English?

Please circle the most appropriate answer! You can choose more than one answer! my current teacher my previous teacher my private teacher television/films in English
 computer games Internet reading in English my diligence stay abroad
 foreign acquaintances others:.....

Who motivates you the most to learn English? Please circle the most appropriate

answer! You can choose more than one answer! my teacher my parents my friends/classmates foreign acquaintances me nobody
 others:.....

Why do you like learning English?.....

What are your goals with the English language?.....

Please rate the following statements according to the degree that you agree or disagree with them!

1=completely agree 2=agree with some doubts 3=rather disagree

4=completely disagree

- My friends and classmates value me for my command of English.
- My dream is to be able to speak a lot of languages.
- My role model is my teacher of English.
- Sometimes I worry that the others will have a bad opinion of me if I make a mistake when speaking in English during the English classes.
- Native speakers of English are more friendly than Hungarians.
- If I get a bad mark in English, it really discourages me.
- Those who can speak English get by more easily in life than those who cannot.
- If I speak to a foreigner in English, it always motivates me.
- I am the best in my English class.

- I have already been to a country where English is spoken and this experience arose my interest in the English language.
- I am always looking forward to my English classes, because they are interesting and I have fun during the classes.
- I prefer watching films in English than in Hungarian.
- A lot of times I only learn so that my teacher won't have a bad opinion of me.
- I know a lot about English speaking countries because I find them interesting.
- I like to practise English outside of the classroom, too.
- Later, I would like to settle down abroad.
- English is more beautiful than all the other languages.
- I think I could improve my English skills even if I didn't have to attend classes.
- I would like to have more English speaking friends.
- I wish we had more English classes.
- Those who speak English can get to know more interesting people than those who don't.
- I didn't want to take part in this competition, but my teacher encouraged me to participate.
- My teacher of English is a lot better than any other teacher I have.
- I worry a lot about saying something wrong during my English classes.
- English teaching in Hungary is not good enough, that's why I can't speak English well enough.
- I like the English language, but my classes are boring.
- Those who speak English are more intelligent than those who don't.
- I practise English every day.
- My parents motivate me to improve my English.
- Those who don't speak English nowadays don't have such good opportunities as those who do.
- I wish I could practise English 24 hours a day.
- It annoys me if my classmates speak better English than me.
- I will never give up learning English.
- My teacher of English is a very good teacher.
- I sometimes feel that I will never be good enough in English.
- I always do my English homework with the most enthusiasm.
- It annoys me when we can't make a fast enough progress, because the others don't have a good level of English.
- I sometimes feel that the energy that I put into English is not worth the effort.
- For me, speaking in English comes naturally, therefore I don't worry about it.
- Those who speak English are valued more than those who don't.
- I wish I had a native English teacher.
- If a tourist asks me something in English, I always hesitate.
- I learn English, because like this I can be sure that I will get a good job.
- If my teacher of English praises me, it always motivates me.

- Through the English language I can get closer to other cultures and it enriches my life.
- Those who speak English are bound to be successful in life.

Please, put the following answers in order according to which are the most true of you and which are less true! 1.= the most true, 10.= the least true

Why do you learn English?

- To be able to get a good job
- To be able to communicate with those who don't speak Hungarian
- Because I would like to spend a longer period of time abroad
- Because this is my hobby
- To be able to get good marks
- To get admitted to the college/university where I would like to go
- To make my parents proud of me
- Because in today's world language skills are indispensable
- To be able to watch films/read book in English
- Because my teacher expects me to make a progress

Please, put an X to the most appropriate place according to which opinion is the most true of you.

1. My motivation to speak to English speakers:
STRONG 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ WEAK
2. My opinion of native speakers:
VERY BAD 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ VERY GOOD
3. My interest in foreign languages:
VERY LOW 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ VERY HIGH
4. My attitude towards my teacher of English:
NEGATIVE 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ POSITIVE
5. My motivation to use English in order to achieve my goals (e.g. work, university entrance exam):
WEAK 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ STRONG
6. I worry if I have to speak English outside of the classroom:
A LITTLE 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ A LOT
7. My attitude towards English classes:
NEGATIVE 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ POSITIVE
8. I worry about speaking in English during my English classes:
LITTLE 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ A LOT
9. My motivation to learn English:
LOW 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ HIGH
10. My parents motivate me to learn English:
A LITTLE 1: ___ 2: ___ 3: ___ 4: ___ A LOT

Appendix C

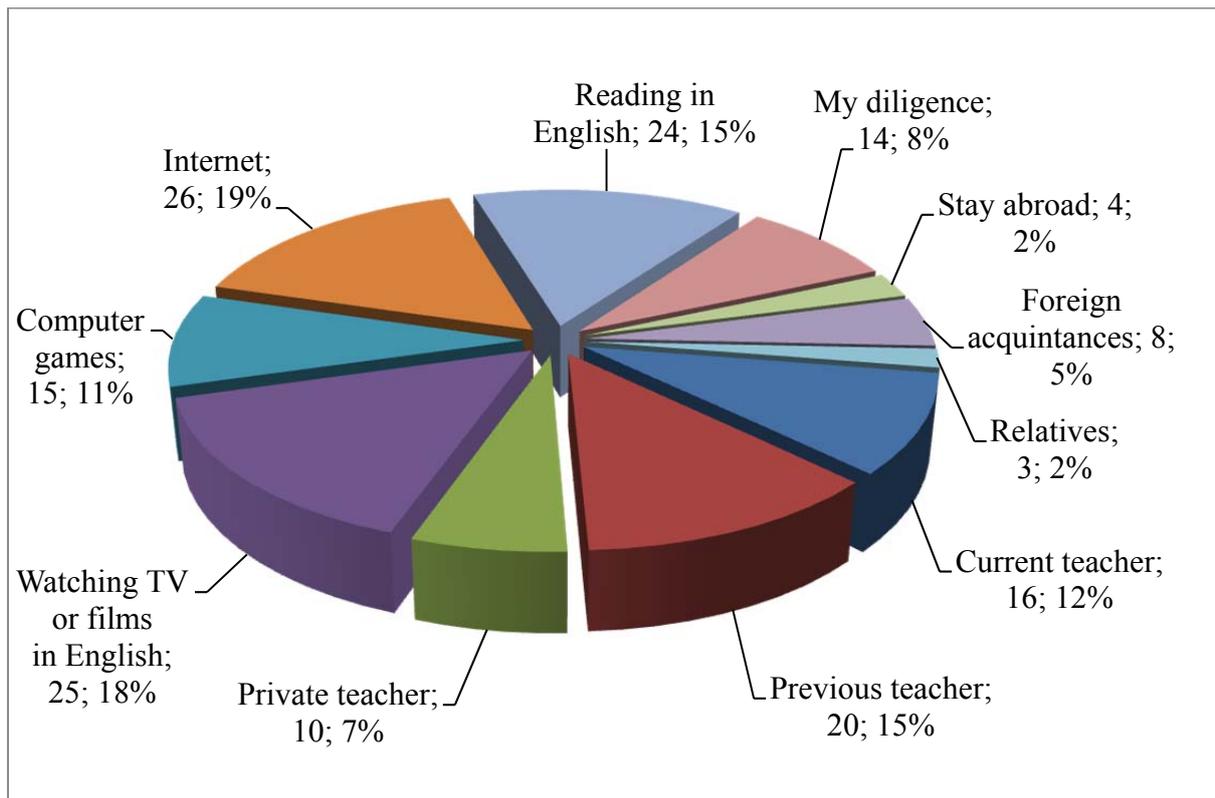


Chart 1: Summary of the answers given to the question “In your opinion it is thanks to whom/what that you have reached this level in English?”

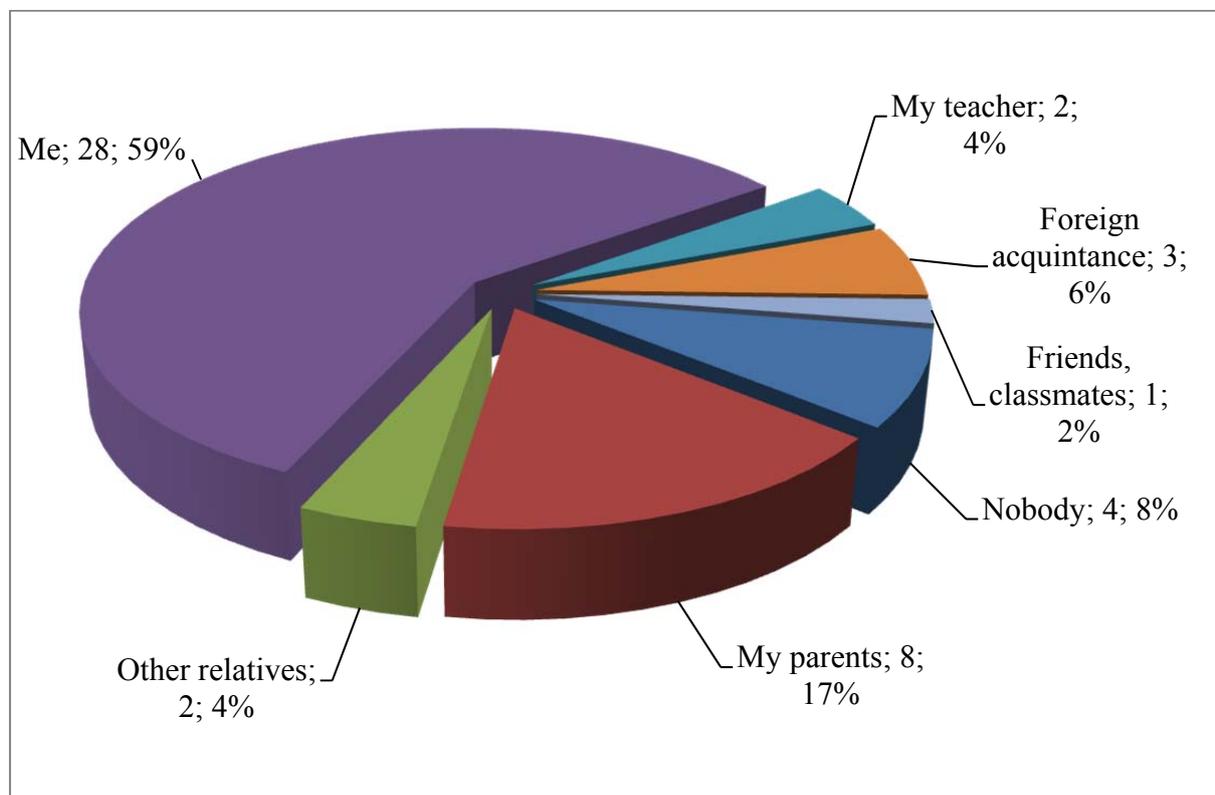


Chart 2: Summary of the answers given to the question “Who motivates you the most to learn English?”

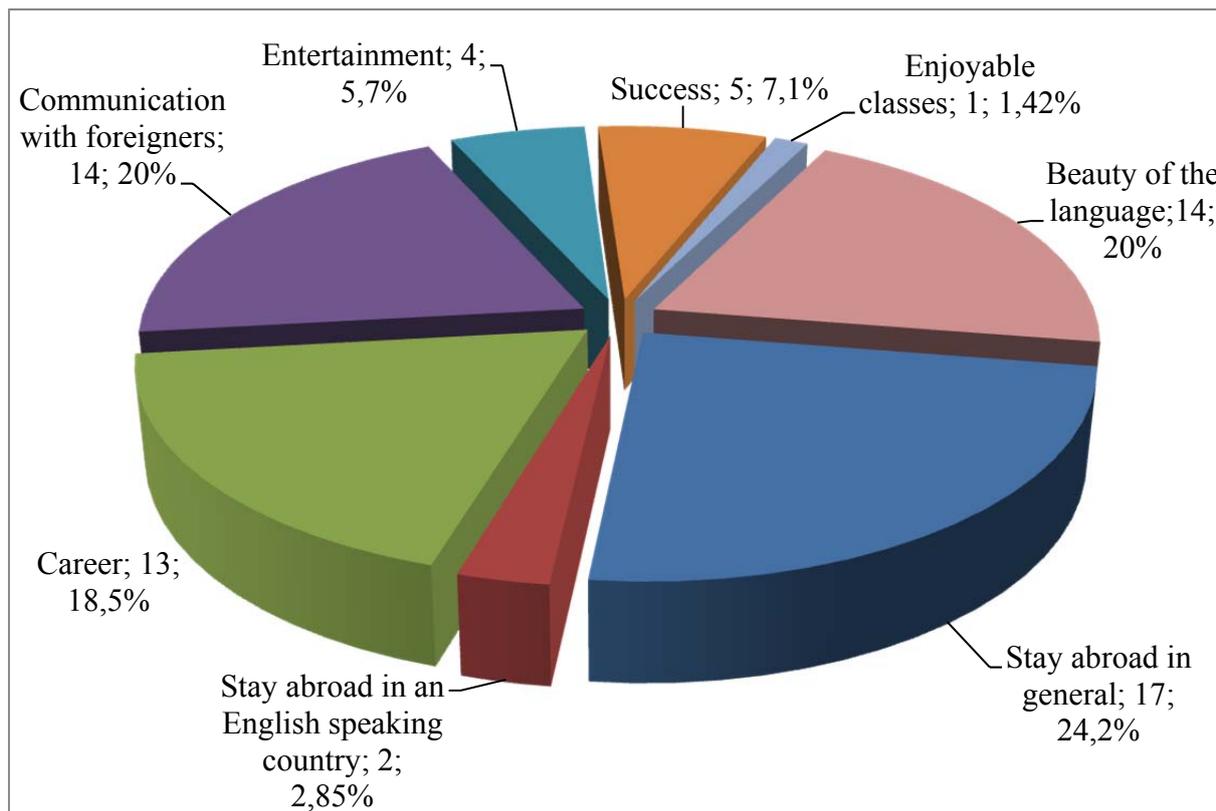


Chart 3: Summary of the main motivational factors mentioned in the questionnaire

To be able to get a good job	4	2	4	3	5	5	7	6	2	4	8	7	1	2	6	4	8	3	2	1	7	7	2	8	6	3	8	6	3	2	5	3	144	4,50	5.
To be able to communicate with those who don't speak Hungarian	2	4	2	2	4	6	6	10	6	8	7	2	5	1	7	3	7	2	3	1	2	5	1	9	2	5	10	4	1	3	4	1	135	4,22	3.
Because I would like to spend a longer time abroad	3	3	1	2	1	4	1	8	3	10	6	1	4	3	3	2	6	1	7	5	6	6	1	7	8	4	9	7	5	6	7	10	150	4,69	6.
Because this is my hobby	8	5	6	3	1	7	9	3	10	7	5	6	10	8	1	7	1	7	10	4	1	7	3	6	1	6	6	1	6	7	6	1	169	5,28	7.
To be able to get good marks	9	10	8	10	0	10	10	4	7	1	4	10	7	9	9	8	9	8	8	6	9	8	1	1	10	9	3	9	9	9	8	10	233	7,28	9.
To get admitted to the college/university where I would like to go	5	8	7	1	7	9	4	7	8	2	1	3	3	6	2	6	5	5	3	3	4	1	3	7	8	2	3	10	1	2	2	-	138	4,45	4.
In order to make my parents proud of me	7	7	9	3	8	2	2	1	5	5	2	8	6	7	8	9	4	9	6	3	8	10	1	4	5	7	4	8	8	8	9	1	184	5,75	8.
Because in today's world language skills are indispensable	1	1	5	1	3	1	5	9	1	6	3	4	2	4	5	1	3	4	1	2	4	2	1	10	4	1	5	5	2	4	1	1	102	3,19	1.
To be able to watch films/read books in English	6	6	3	1	2	3	3	5	6	3	9	5	9	5	4	5	2	6	5	2	5	1	1	5	3	2	7	2	4	5	3	1	129	4,03	2.
Because my teacher expects me to make a progress	10	9	10	10	0	8	8	2	9	2	10	9	8	10	10	10	10	10	9	8	10	9	4	2	9	10	1	10	7	10	10	10	254	7,94	10.

Chart 2: Summary of the answers given in part 3 of the questionnaire

My motivation to speak to English speakers	1=STRONG 4=WEAK	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	1,39		
My opinion of native speakers	1=VERY BAD 4=VERY GOOD	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3,09		
My interest in foreign languages	1=VERY LOW 4=VERY HIGH	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3,45		
My attitude to my teacher of English	1=NEGATIVE 4=POSITIVE	3	2	2	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	4	2	4	4	4	4	3	-	-	3,35		
My motivation to use English in order to achieve my goals (e.g. work, university entrance exam)	1=WEAK 4=STRONG	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	-	-	3,81	
I worry if I have to speak English outside of the classroom	1=LITTLE 4=A LOT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	-	1,28
My attitude to English classes	1=NEGATIVE 4=POSITIVE	1	2	2	4	1	4	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	2	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	2	-	-	2,97		
I worry about speaking during my English classes	1=LITTLE 4=A LOT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	-	1,09	
My motivation to learn English	1=LOW 4=HIGH	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3,79	
My parents motivate me to learn English	1=A BIT 4=A LOT	2	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	1	4	4	3,48		

Chart 3: Summary of the answers given in part 4 of the questionnaire