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# **ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT**

Hlavács Kata

Anglisztika alapszak

Angol szakirány

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EÖTVÖS LÓRÁND TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM

Bölcsészettudományi Kar

# ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

*A második nyelv tanulási motiváció jellemzése különböző  
oktatási kontextusban*

*The characterisation of educational context in second  
language learning motivation*

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Budapest, 2023. 04. 12.

*Hlavács Kata*

aláírás

## **Abstract**

Motivation has been long viewed as one of the primary determinants of successful second language (L2) learning but as it is clear from recent studies, L2 learning motivation might show contextual differences. The present thesis aims to investigate the way the educational context is acknowledged in past L2 learning motivation theories by reviewing the most important models of L2 motivation and exploring the relevance of these models and related empirical studies to Hungarian educational settings. By analysing issues pertaining to the educational context, I will be able to draw conclusions concerning what affects and differentiates the motivation of L2 learners in distinct educational contexts.

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## Introduction

Motivation, derived from the Latin verb *movere* meaning ‘to move’, is a complex notion, aiming to describe essentially the basis of human behaviour. Most researchers would agree that it “concerns the direction and magnitude of human behaviour, that is: the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, and the effort expended on it” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 8); however, there is no universally accepted definition for motivation.

Defining the motivation to learn a second or foreign language is a difficult task. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) presented several challenges concerning the field of L2 motivation research and concluded that no research in connection with L2 motivation is complex enough to cover all issues at the same time. As a consequence, Csizér (2020) claims that the definition of L2 motivation relevant to a specific research project might not be appropriate for others.

The aim of my thesis is to explore the role of educational context in L2 learning motivation theories and the relevance of these theories and related empirical studies to Hungarian settings, for instance, to primary and secondary schools and universities. For the purpose of this thesis, I define educational context as “the situation in which the language learners practice the language forms that have been presented to them, and which they have learnt” (Omaggio Hadley, 1993, as cited in Illés, 2020). Accordingly, context is important, and it needs to inform theoretical and empirical studies. I concentrate on the Hungarian setting because school is the context of L2 acquisition for most Hungarian language learners (Csizér, 2020); therefore, some of the empirical studies used in this

thesis are originally written in Hungarian. The research gap of my thesis is that generally speaking L2 motivational theories and empirical studies often fail to address issues in a context-sensitive way. Consequently, more studies are needed to investigate critical issues that can contribute to L2 learning motivation research in ways that consider various contexts.

I think this is an important aim because studies relevant to context can inform future research in a more focused way, and practical implications drawn can have a higher level of relevance. In addition, I will be able to identify context-dependent and context-independent characteristics of L2 learners' motivational processes. Based on my aim, I would like to answer the following research question: What influences the motivation of L2 learners in distinct educational contexts? In order to answer this question, I first summarise the most significant past theories on L2 motivation based on Lamb et al. (2019) as well as Csizér (2020) and investigate the relevance of these theories and related empirical studies to the educational context. Next, I explore the role of four influential factors (choice of language, age, group learning and group dynamics, and finally the role of teachers) concerning L2 motivation in the classroom setting.

### **Motivational Theories and Educational Context**

The field of L2 motivation was spearheaded by Wallace Lambert and Robert Gardner by introducing the idea of learning a L2 in order to integrate into a L2 community the learner likes (Csizér, 2020). According to Gardner (1985), L2 motivation is “the extent



to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p. 10). In his view, motivation comprises three components: motivational intensity or effort, desire to learn the language, and attitudes toward learning the language. The most elaborate aspect of Gardner’s (1985) motivation theory is the concept of integrative motive, a construct including integrative orientation, integrativeness, and integrative motive. Integrative orientation is the basis of learning a L2, and it “represents ultimate goals for achieving the more immediate goal of learning the second language” (p.11). Integrativeness subsumes interest in foreign languages, integrative orientation, and attitudes toward the L2 community. In addition, this constituent signifies a genuine interest in learning a L2 to advance closer to the other language community (Gardner, 2001). Integrative motive consists of the effort, desire, and attitudes towards learning the L2.

Context is implicit in integrativeness in Gardner’s (1985) L2 motivation model. Integrative motivation acknowledges the contextual aspect of L2 motivation, as it measures learners’ willingness to integrate into the L2 community. The author also considers the L2 community as context, which implies that language learners are motivated by interacting with native speakers. Furthermore, Gardner’s (1985) L2 motivation framework recognises the classroom context in the form of attitudes toward the learning situation. Nevertheless, the outline primarily highlights the personal features of L2 motivation, and it is often debated to what extent social settings and educational contexts are considered in his conceptualisation of learning processes (Dörnyei, 1994).

Based on Gardner’s initial L2 motivation theory, Tremblay and Gardner (1995) incorporated psychologically driven processes, for example, goal setting, causal

attributions, attention, and persistence, in their motivational model. The authors also tested the framework empirically on students learning French in a francophone secondary school in Canada and the language context was identified as an influential factor concerning L2 motivation. However, a decisive variable in Gardner's (1985) original conceptualisation of L2 motivation, an integrative component, is absent from Tremblay and Gardner's (1995) extended L2 motivation framework. Consequently, this model lacks an important contextual aspect of the speaker of the language, the language use. When it comes to the classroom context that is attitudes toward the language, however, it remained in this outline.

Following Gardner's (1985) classic theoretical framework of L2 motivation, Crookes and Schmidt (1991) extended the notion of L2 motivation and proposed that both internal and external characteristics should be studied. The internal attitudinal traits included interest, relevance, the expectancy of success and failure, and outcomes. The external attitudinal traits described a learner who "1. decides to choose, pay attention to, and engage in second language learning; 2. persists in it over an extended period of time and returns to it after interruption; 3. maintains a high level of activity" (p. 14).

As for the educational context, Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) conceptualisation of L2 motivation recognises this aspect. The education-friendly model contains four different levels: the micro level, the classroom level, the syllabus/curriculum level, and the extracurricular level. The theoretical framework is also suitable for both informal and classroom learning, as the primary motivational matters are identical: "does the learner take advantage of opportunities for learning, persist at what is basically a difficult enterprise and what factors facilitate such persistence" (p. 494). Nevertheless, a potential

shortcoming of Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) outline is that the classroom level only considers the role of teachers implicitly. In addition, the impact of teachers is not acknowledged by the authors. Consequently, later research projects and studies do not explore this level to a great extent. Finally, this L2 motivation theory only recognises the role of contact with native speakers of the L2 without considering the role of contact with non-native speakers of the L2, therefore overlooking the lingua franca aspect of English.

Another theoretical analysis of L2 motivation is Dörnyei's (1994) extended motivational model, comprising the language, the learner, and the learning-situation level. The three-level structure correlates with the three general constituents of the second language learning progress (the L2, the L2 learner, and the L2 learning environment) and the three different aspects of language (the social dimension, the personal dimension, and the educational subject matter dimension). The language level consists of orientations and motives in connection with the L2, for instance, the culture it mediates, the community in which it is spoken, and the possible usefulness of proficiency in it. These orientations and motives are determined by the social milieu in which the learning takes place (Csizér, 2020) and affect the basic learning goals and the choice of language as well (Dörnyei, 1994). In agreement with Gardner's (1985) conceptualisation of L2 motivation, Dörnyei (1994) differentiates between two extensive motivational subsystems, an integrative and an instrumental subsystem, at this level. The integrative motivational subsystem focuses on the learner's affective tendencies regarding the L2, including social, cultural, and ethnolinguistic factors and interest in foreignness and foreign languages. The instrumental motivational subsystem contains well-internalised external motives, which determine the learner's future career aims. The learner level subsumes the learner's previously developed personality traits, which are language specific or related to general learning and

achievement. Last, the learning-situation level is associated with situation-specific motivational features based on language learning in a classroom environment.

Dörnyei (1994) recognises the classroom context as the learning-situation level of his L2 motivation model. At this level the author makes a distinction between course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components. Course-specific motivational constituents concern “the syllabus, the teaching materials, the teaching method, and the learning tasks, for example, interest, relevance, expectancy, and satisfaction” (p. 280). Teacher-specific motivational constituents regard the behaviour, character, and teaching manner of the language teacher (Csizér, 2020) and contain “the affiliate motive to please the teacher, authority type, and direct socialisation of student motivation, for instance, modelling, task presentation, and feedback” (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 280). Group-specific motivational constituents are associated with the dynamics of the learner group (Csizér, 2020) and include “the goal-orientedness of the group, the goal structure of the classroom, the norm and reward system, and group cohesion” (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 280). Interactional matters might not be considered in this theoretical framework for the reason that L2 learning motivation was seldom recognised as a process at that time (Csizér, 2020).

The way in which people imagine themselves in the future plays a crucial role in motivating them in the present (Dörnyei, 2005), which led Dörnyei to conceptualise the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). In this framework three distinct components influence the L2 learning motivation of students: the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience. The origin of the L2MSS can be traced back to Dörnyei and Csizér’s (2002) nationwide study investigating the L2 motivation of Hungarian students based on

the past work of Robert Gardner in the Canadian context, particularly the notion of integrativeness. Although the two settings are dissimilar, integrativeness appeared as a significant concept explaining the extent of effort students intended to put into L2 learning in Hungary as well (Dörnyei et al., 2006). Consequently, integrativeness might not only involve the intention to integrate into the L2 community, but also an identification with the values the proficiency in the L2 could contribute to (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002).

As for the constituents of Dörnyei's (2005) LMSS, the ideal L2 self determines the degree to which the learner can imagine him- or herself having a high proficiency in the L2. The ought-to L2 self presents the external pressures the learner is aware of during the learning process. Last, the L2 learning experience subsumes motives regarding the close learning environment and attitudes towards classroom progress. The theoretical model was first tested empirically by Dörnyei et al. (2005), who explored the language learning motivation of secondary school students learning French, English, Italian, German, and Russian.

The educational context is recognised in the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005) as the L2 learning experience, but it is clearly separated from learners' selves as no relationships are established among the three components of this framework. Contextual variables, classroom and milieu, of the L2MSS were investigated by Csizér and Galántai (2012), who looked at the influence of teachers and parents on the three different components of Dörnyei's (2005) framework. The authors discovered that parental influence exceeded the impact of teachers for the ought-to L2 self; however, the ideal L2 selves of students were found to be less affected by parents. As for the L2 learning experience, which is the classroom context, the impact of teachers and parents was similar, indicating that the L2

learning experience was not only associated with classroom-specific situations but also with the influence of parents as well. Unfortunately, the authors decided to investigate the role of significant others in the educational context and not that of other context-related variables.

The final motivational theory I would like to discuss here is Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self Determination Theory (SDT), which hypothesises that regulations generate a continuum from controlled (extrinsic orientation) to self-determined (intrinsic orientation) forms of motivation, which are differentiated by the extent to which individuals recognise the given regulations. The self-determined end of the scale is intrinsic orientation, and the non-self-determined end is amotivation, which implies a complete lack of motivation from the language learner. Extrinsic orientation consists of four subcategories, which are external, introjected, identified, and integrated regulations. In addition, intrinsic motivation contains knowledge, accomplishment, and simulation (Noels, 2001).

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsically motivated individuals engage in language learning voluntarily and for the satisfaction that comes with the task. As a result, they enjoy practising their creative competencies and challenging their existing proficiencies. On the other hand, extrinsically motivated individuals usually engage in language learning for the sake of achievement, not because of an inherent interest in the task. Amotivated individuals lack any kind of motivation; therefore, they are expected to quit performing the task of language learning.

As for the educational context pertaining to SDT, the empirical study of Noels et al. (1999) explored the significance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for language learning. Furthermore, the way the communicative manner of teachers correlates to the

self-determination scale (Deci & Ryan, 1985) was also investigated. The authors discovered that higher amotivation is in connection with higher anxiety in the language classroom, lower motivational intensity, and less intention to continue studying the language. It was found that students who are extrinsically motivated continue language learning in order to accomplish an external goal. On the contrary, students who are intrinsically motivated are likely to experience less anxiety in the classroom and show greater motivation concerning their intention to continue studying the language. Moreover, the results of the study imply that teachers were perceived as informative rather than controlling by participants with greater intrinsic motivation; however, participants who perceived teachers as authoritarian also showed greater anxiety in the classroom and less motivational intention to continue language learning.

Noels et al. (1999) conclude that teacher communication plays an important role in impacting the intrinsic motivation of language learners in the classroom. In fact, positive teacher influence is likely to increase the benefits of intrinsic orientation, for instance, sustained interest in learning the language and possible achievement. On the other hand, a controlling or authoritarian teacher, who does not give beneficial feedback about the language learning progress, might decrease the self-determination and competence of students. The authors assert that the more students engage in language learning for their own sake and for the pleasure of the task, the more effort they make and the more they intend to continue their studies. Accordingly, Noels et al.'s (1999) study supports the claim that the self-determination sense of students could be enhanced by advantageous teacher feedback and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

## **Interim Summary**

Based on the above cited sources, it can be concluded that most of the past research projects in connection with L2 learning motivation concentrate on the characteristics and behaviour of the language learner, therefore many of the theoretical models do not consider the contextual nature of L2 motivation in its fullest sense. Although all of the theories mentioned consider the educational context regarding L2 motivation, it is also imperative to acknowledge physical and social contexts, for example, the lingua franca aspect of English or the role of the internet.

## **Influential Factors Concerning Classroom Context**

There are a great number of possible determinants that can impact the motivation of L2 learners in the educational context. In this thesis, I would like to discuss the influence of four determinants: choice of language, age, group learning and group dynamics, and finally the role of teachers. The reason for my choice is that these four factors are commonly associated with L2 learning motivation, therefore the contextual aspect of them might also be significant.



## Choice of Language

Regarding the Hungarian context, foreign language acquisition takes place in schools for the majority of Hungarian language learners. As there is no particular compulsory foreign language to be learned, the choice of language and the order in which the languages are acquired might affect the motivational attitude of language learners in the future (Csizér, 2020). In terms of empirical studies, the motivation of students concerning more than one language can be investigated by contrasting students' dispositions toward different foreign languages regardless of whether they are learning the language or not, or by examining their motivation synchronously (Csizér, 2020).

In connection with the first type of study, Dörnyei et al.'s (2006) extensive research outlines language learners' positive and negative feelings about five foreign languages: English, German, French, Italian, and Russian. The authors also explain the importance of the past socio-political changes in Hungary, which might influence the language choice of students. The five languages were selected for the reason that they were the most commonly taught foreign languages in Hungary at the time of the survey. Dörnyei et al. (2006) discovered that English was the most popular language preference for Hungarian students, followed by German, in second place, French, in third place, and Italian, in fourth place. Last, Russian was in fifth place due to the fact that it has been the language enforced by the communist government.

In another research, Csizér and Lukács (2010) explored the differences between English and German in the motivational and attitudinal dispositions of students who were learning the two languages at the same time. As Dörnyei et al. (2006) found earlier,

English was the most frequently taught foreign language in Hungary, and this finding was supported by the empirical study of Csizér and Lukács (2010). In terms of language anxiety in the classroom context, learners of English as a first foreign language were identified to be less anxious compared to learners of English as a L2 and learners of German as a L1 or L2. Students also seemed to be less anxious about their first foreign language, whether English or German, than their second foreign language. Moreover, participants studying English had higher motivational and attitudinal dispositions for English, more outstanding ideal L2 selves, and described more positive learning experiences associated with English. Csizér and Lukács (2010) discovered that the impact of the ideal L2 selves on students' motivated behaviour was also influenced by the preferred order of foreign languages studied. In addition, the results of the study indicate that the ideal English-speaking selves of students negatively affected the ideal German-speaking selves if students were made to learn German first, and English second.

As for choice motivation between English and German, Nikolov (2003) investigated the changes in L2 motivation in the Hungarian compulsory education by collecting data from students learning English or German as their initial L2. The research revealed that the socio-economic status of students' parents plays a significant role in determining the initial choices of language learners regarding which foreign language to begin learning. The author also discovered that students from families with higher socio-economic status choose English more often than German as their first L2.

A more recent study by Öveges and Csizér (2018) explored the state of foreign language education and the differences between the motivation of students learning English and German in Hungary. The authors found that learners of German spoke

Hungarian more frequently than learners of English in the classroom. The ratio of teacher-student talking time was also higher in German classes than in English classes.

Furthermore, German classes were characterised as having more translation tasks and fewer listening comprehension tasks compared to English classes.

Based on the above cited studies, it can be concluded that in the Hungarian educational context, there is a preferred order of learning foreign languages. As for language choice, English is the most popular foreign language to learn in Hungary, followed by German. Students, who were able to learn languages in the order they wanted to have the highest motivational dispositions, therefore it is clear that this preferred order of languages impacts the long-term motivation of students and their engagement with the language. In Hungary, language choice seems to be influenced by the socio-economic status of parents. As a result, context plays an important role in determining learners' language choice motivation. It can also be concluded that students' ideal L2 self might perform as a repulsive component in case the preferred order of languages is not followed. As a consequence, the initial language choice of learners is a critical part of language learning achievement in Hungary.

## **Age**

Age is generally considered a significant determinant of successful second or foreign language learning (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000). While young learners are commonly assumed to be capable of acquiring a new language at a fast pace with little effort, older learners are often regarded as incapable of mastering a foreign language. Most

of the past empirical studies on L2 learning motivation aimed to explore and characterise a particular group of students and confirm the functioning of a theoretical concept; therefore, these studies focus on how the L2 motivation and motivated learning attitude of students might be affected by their personal background. As a consequence, the systematic investigation of age-related differences regarding attitudinal and motivational dispositions within a single language context has been overlooked (Kormos & Csizér, 2008).

In their study concerning the motivation for learning English as a foreign language, Kormos and Csizér (2008) collected data from three distinctive age groups that have not yet been examined to a great extent in the Hungarian context: secondary school and university students and adult language learners. The survey assessed the most important features of L2 motivation established in earlier studies and also explored three new variables that have not yet been tested empirically: the ideal L2 Self, the ought-to L2 Self, and international posture.

For all three learner populations examined, Kormos and Csizér (2008) identified one of the main components of Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System, the ideal L2 Self, as a crucial element of L2 motivation, along with the milieu. As for this constituent, university students showed the highest ideal L2 selves out of the three age groups, followed by adult learners and secondary school students. According to Kormos and Csizér (2008), the ideal L2 selves of secondary school students might be lower due to the fact that this population has limited opportunities to communicate with speakers of English outside of the classroom. Consequently, the language learning attitudes of younger students are mainly based on classroom experience and are greatly affected by teachers. On the contrary, older students possess a rather stable ideal L2 Self; therefore, this

population is less dependent on teacher interaction and the classroom environment. This idea is supported by Mihaljevic Djigunovic and Nikolov (2019), who established a theoretical model portraying the changing nature of the influence of the milieu, the school setting, and the teachers. The model explains how parental and teacher impact decreases as the learner matures; instead, the importance of peer-influences, for example, role modelling, competition, and cooperation, shows an increasing tendency. Last, Kormos and Csizér (2008) discovered a strong relationship between the milieu and the ideal L2 selves of adult and secondary school students, which implies that context is a crucial determinant of shaping the way language learners view themselves.

In another study, Schiller et al. (2023) investigated the potential of one-to-one learning counselling to advocate the autonomy of learners aged 50 and above studying English as a foreign language in Hungary. The authors found that the self-study practice of more mature individuals is primarily affected by self-awareness in learning and metacognitive knowledge both during and after the counselling. Furthermore, the application of cognitive and memory-enhancing learning strategies also impacted the autonomous learning practice of older learners. As for the learning behaviour of the participants, Schiller et al. (2023) discovered that it was continuously influenced by cognitive stimulation, sustained learner motivation and particular self-relating constructs. It is imperative to mention that the participants concentrated on their receptive skills by interacting with technology-supported learning materials, for example, non-authentic reading materials or audio-visual resources.

To conclude the classroom context is essential for younger as well as older language learners. Age does seem to impact language learning in a way that younger

individuals depend more on teacher feedback and classroom interactions than older individuals, who have a stable view of themselves as competent users of the language. As for adults, their successful study behaviours and habits could be applied in new learning contexts by practising new learning directions and finding effective learning strategies that also enhance the efficiency of long-term memory. Finally, the study of Schiller et al. (2023) also revealed that advancing technological competence is imperative for promoting the learner autonomy of older language learners.

### **Cooperative Learning and Group Dynamics**

Students learning in groups is one of the main characteristics of the classroom context (Csizér, 2020). As a consequence, cooperative learning (CL) has been regarded as a highly effective instructional concept in not only education in general, but also in the foreign language classroom (Dörnyei, 1997). According to Dörnyei (1997), this learning approach is made “cooperative” by three basic components. First, students work in small groups of three to six members during class time. Second, members of the group are motivated to ensure that their peers have also comprehended the material or accomplished the instructional goal; therefore, the cooperation process is generated, subsuming several collaborative learning strategies. Third, evaluating and rewarding the group’s achievement in a CL classroom becomes as crucial as evaluating and rewarding individual achievement.

The cooperative classroom setting is also characterised by a positive interdependence of the students, which develops promotive interaction. “Learning takes place in small groups through peer teaching, joint problem-solving, brainstorming,

different forms of interpersonal communication and individual study monitored by peers; therefore, the cooperative process is in the focus” (Dörnyei, 1997, p. 484). Dörnyei (1997) compares the cooperative classroom with competitive and individualistic classroom structures as well. In a competitive classroom setting students are obligated to work against their peers in order to accomplish a reward, which results in a negative interdependence among the learners. On the contrary, in an individualistic classroom setting, there is no interdependence as a result of students working independently and the possibility of accomplishing a reward is not affected by their peers.

Group dynamics in educational contexts concerns “the interrelationship between individuals of the group within groups and how these interrelations affect the formation, performance, and dissolution of these groups” (Murphey et al., 2012, p. 250). For a successful communicative language class, group cohesion is imperative (Dörnyei, 1997). Group cohesion is the extent to which members of the classroom feel emotionally close to each other and work well together toward the purposes of the group gathering (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). As group cohesiveness develops continuously during the existence of the group, it is essential for the participants to learn about each other by sharing genuine personal information (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997). In addition, the amount of time spent together in the classroom and the shared group history are also among the most crucial factors in connection with the development of the group (Dörnyei, 1997). In their study concerning Hungarian students’ attitudes, anxiety, motivation toward learning English and perception of classroom atmosphere and cohesion, Clément et al. (1994) discovered that the perceived cohesiveness of the language group impacted the motivational construct and corresponded to the motivated behaviour of learners.

Teachers in the classroom context represent “group conscience” as the group leader; therefore, participants of the group are sensitive to the teacher’s attitude towards the group norms (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997). However, as the task of a capable group leader is not only to lead the group but rather to create the right conditions for improvement, the traditional autocratic teaching manner limits group development (Dörnyei, 1997). On the other hand, the dynamics of the CI process promote the most crucial conditions for the development of not only the group but also a well-balanced internal classroom structure, which can be described by strong student cohesiveness.

As for empirical studies related to group processes in the Hungarian context, Csizér et al.’s (2011) volume investigated group dynamics, issues of group cohesiveness and cooperation as well as experiences of success in the group and dispositions toward the leaders of the group. Jánosházi and Csizér (2011) explored the correlations of intended effort, for instance, motivation, and several constructs in connection with group dynamics. The authors found that it was not only group cohesion and cooperation that benefited the intended effort of students in foreign language learning but also the role of the group leader, the feeling of success within the group, positive group member relationships, and positive dispositions toward the group.

In their study concerning the changing attitudes of students toward group work, Herendi and Fekete (2011) collected data from secondary school students and adult language learners. The results of the research imply that younger learners preferred group work compared to adult learners. On the other hand, older language learners recognised the usefulness of group work to a greater extent. In addition, the authors identified that active participation in group work, the consistent use of English during group work, and



contributing to the success of the group are among the main issues promoting the motivated learning behaviour of secondary school students and adult learners.

Kivovics (2011) compared the completed homework of two language learning groups and their achievement in a final test of the English course in order to measure the amount of effort students invested into language learning. The author also investigated the way classroom exercises that contribute to group dynamics help group cohesiveness. The results of the study indicate that these classroom exercises improve the development of a cohesive group, which encourages active participation and the consistent use of English in the classroom. According to Kivovics (2011), members of a cohesive group are more motivated; therefore, students can enhance their English language proficiency.

Finally, Tóth (2011) explored the role of group dynamics for A2-level adult language learners. The author discovered that classroom exercises aimed to support group cohesion and cooperation are advantageous for even beginner language learners of English. Furthermore, the results of the study imply that language groups who were able to participate in classroom exercises relevant to group dynamics were more successful in learning different language functions.

In conclusion, CL is a highly effective form of foreign language learning in the classroom context. As students are required to work in small groups, the cohesiveness of the group seems to be the most crucial factor of successful group formation. It was found that classroom exercises in connection with group dynamics promote group cohesion, which enhances the motivated learning behaviour of even less proficient language learners.

## **The Role of Teachers**

In the educational context teachers act as important social figures who significantly impact the motivational quality of the learning process in both positive and negative ways (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The motivational influence of teacher behaviour was confirmed by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998), who collected data from 200 Hungarian teachers of English. The participants were asked how crucial they consider a selection of 51 teaching strategies and how often they applied these strategies in their teaching practice. The results of the study indicate that teachers view their own behaviour as the most significant, but at the same time underutilised, factor of classroom motivation.

In light of the above discovery, it is imperative for teachers to establish specific preconditions in the classroom in order to successfully apply motivational strategies (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). First, teachers need to maintain relationships of mutual trust and respect with the language learners by communicating with them on a personal level and recognising their individual achievements. Another decisive factor of successful motivational teaching is enthusiasm, for the reason that enthusiastic teachers exhibit a great sense of engagement to and excitement about the subject matter, which affects students' response to school activities as well. Next, a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere is essential for not only language learning but for learning in general. As student anxiety developed by a tense classroom environment negatively influences L2 motivation, creating a safe classroom setting, in which teachers encourage learners to express their opinion and protect them from potential embarrassment, is an important aspect of motivational teaching. The third precondition concerns the formation and internal

structure of the learner group and the establishment of group norms that control the behaviour of the group. As it was mentioned earlier, group cohesiveness is a significant determinant of successful group composition; therefore, Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) claim that it is beneficial for language groups to include institutional norms authorized by teachers during the formation of the group. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), a group norm that is particularly relevant to language learning environments is the norm of tolerance because it ensures that students will not be criticised in case, they make a mistake.

As the leading figures of the language classroom, teachers need to contribute to promoting positive student attitudes toward learning the subject matter (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). In order to achieve this, there are five main groups of motivational strategies for teachers to use: “enhancing the learners’ language-related values and attitudes; increasing the learners’ expectancy of success; increasing the learners’ goal-orientedness; making the teaching materials relevant for the learners; and finally, creating realistic learner beliefs” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 113).

Another crucial issue for teachers to consider is maintaining the motivation of language learners (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). One way to achieve this is to make learning more stimulating and enjoyable by consistently changing the teaching and learning tasks and presenting these tasks in a motivating manner. As group cohesiveness is imperative for an effective classroom atmosphere, promoting cooperation among the learners is another way for teachers to help preserve learners’ motivation. Finally, it is also important to set clear and specific learning goals for students to follow. These goals should be challenging

but at the same time realistic; moreover, teachers should provide feedback to promote the self-efficacy of students for achieving the goal.

To conclude, the role of teachers has great significance in the classroom context. It is clear that teachers need to set up certain preconditions, for example, a good relationship with students or a supportive classroom atmosphere, for the sake of successfully employing motivational teaching strategies and effectively promoting and preserving the motivation of students.

### **Conclusion**

The present thesis aimed to explore the role of educational context in L2 motivation theories and the way these theories and related empirical studies are relevant to the Hungarian context. It is evident that past theoretical research in connection with L2 motivation only considers the broader educational context and focuses on the characteristics of the language learner. As a consequence, a great number of past L2 motivation theories are not context sensitive.

The educational context appeared as an influential factor of L2 motivation for all four of the examined elements. Language choice was found to be an important determinant of the motivational dispositions of students as well as long-term language learning motivation and engagement with the language. In Hungary, this factor is primarily impacted by the social context, that is the milieu. In regard to age, younger students seem to depend more on the educational context than more mature students because this age

group can only communicate with speakers of English in this setting in most cases. Cooperative learning in the classroom was identified as an effective language learning strategy as it improves group cohesion, a component that enhances the motivated learning behaviour of all language learners. Finally, it is clear that the role of teachers has a significant influence on the L2 motivation of students. It was found that teachers contribute to promoting as well as maintaining the motivation for learning a foreign language.

Based on the findings of this thesis, it can be concluded that primarily context-dependent features influence the motivation of L2 learners in different educational contexts. Regarding the classroom setting, cooperative learning and the position of teachers seem to be among the context-dependent factors that affect the motivational process of L2 learners the most.

The present thesis supports the idea that the educational context plays a crucial role in influencing the L2 motivation of language learners. However, the out-of-classroom context cannot be disregarded. Further theoretical and empirical work is needed in the Hungarian setting, which consider the lingua franca aspect of English and the impact of technology on L2 motivation.

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