ABSTRACT

In research on motivation it is customary to view the construct as a dyadic unity of extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. Research on motivation in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) adopts a similar approach and employs the integrative-instrumental scale which includes learners' attitudes towards the culture and native speakers of the language they learn. This study aims to look at the status of integrative motivation in a foreign language classroom. For this purpose contents analysis of open-ended questionnaires distributed among the Russian language learners in UMS was carried out. As the results reveal, though initially only traces of integrative motivation had been detected, there occurred changes in the learners' motivational pattern in the course of their studies. This fact indicates that learners' motivation is a dynamic rather than static phenomenon. A pedagogical implication of this finding is that learning situation and classroom context may provide venues for language instructors to alter the learners' motivational patterns.

INTRODUCTION

Research on human motivation is plentiful. The construct of motivation has been approached from and viewed at different angles. Initially, the problem of motivation had been a major research topic in psychology, and the researchers' main preoccupation was to discover "what moved a resting organism to a state of activity" (Weiner, 1990, p.617). Psychologists differentiate between basic motivation which stems from human's physiological needs (e.g. hunger, thirst, need for shelter) and psychological motivation (e.g. need for achievement and need for affiliation). Numerous theories and concepts have been put forward by psychologists to describe human motivation in general and learners' motivation in particular. It has been recognised that motivation is an important agent in the
cognitive process. As Weiner (1990, p.618) noted, "Motivation is often inferred from learning, and learning usually is an indicator of motivation for the educational psychologist". Nowadays, study on learners' motivation is an important research area.

The commonly accepted practice in contemporary research on motivation is to view the construct as a dyadic unity of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. This approach has been employed in educational psychology as well. According to Deci Ryan (1985), motivation is considered extrinsic when its source is a person's outward environment. Within the learning context, students' desire to get peers' respect, teachers' or parents' praise, high grades or admission to a university belongs in the domain of extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation occurs when people do activity "for its own sake" when no external pressure is applied or promise of reward is offered (Deci Ryan, 1985). Thus, learners are intrinsically motivated when they are interested in and enjoy learning a subject. Educators and teachers have been encouraged to stimulate, promote and nurture intrinsic motivation in their students.

In the context of a second language acquisition (SLA), motivation has been connected to learners' attitudes towards the culture and speakers of the language they learn, or the target language. This approach to viewing motivation has been widely adopted since Gardner and Lambert (1972) began distinguishing between instrumental and integrative motivation in the process of SLA. Instrumental motivation prompts learners to strive to achieve some utilitarian goals, such as to get good grades, to pass an examination, to be admitted to university, or to get a better paid job. Integrative motivation comes into play when learners have positive attitudes towards and are interested in the country, culture or people of the target language. Apparently, Gardner and Lambert's notion of integrative and instrumental motivation and the stress on the importance of the former stems from a well-established practice to view motivation as a dyadic unity of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation with the emphasis on the prevalence of the latter in a successful learning.

INTEGRATIVE AND INSTRUMENTAL MOTIVATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Gardner and Lambert (1972) stressed the importance of integrative motivation for a successful acquisition of a second language. Learner's desire to be affiliated with the speakers of the target language features prominently in Gardner's consideration of motivation in SLA. His original premise had been whether
"someone could really learn a second language if they did not like the group who spoke the language" (Gardner, 2001).

Gardner has gradually modified his assumption of the importance of the positive attitude towards the target language speaking community and shifted stress to a favourable attitude towards "learning the language" itself. Thus, Gardner (1985) defined motivation as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitude toward learning the language" (p.10). Still, in this Gardner’s view of motivation learners’ attitude remains an important variable in the construct.

Gardner and Lambert’s notions of motivation in SLA, i.e. separation of the construct into integrative and instrumental motivation and the stress on the importance of cultural integration have had a major impact on research on motivation in SLA. However, not all research supports Gardner’s proposition of the primacy of the integrative component of motivation. Some researchers found out that the degree of integrative motivation could not be considered as a predictor of success in SLA. For example, Lukmani (1972) concluded that among Indian women learning English in Bombay instrumental motivation was a stronger driving force to master the language than integrative motivation. Research conducted by Genesee (1978) in Quebec, Canada, revealed that instrumentally motivated English-speaking school children learning French scored better than their integratively motivated peers.

Similarly, in the context of foreign language learning (FLL) the relevance of integrative motivation and learners’ attitude toward the group of target language speakers have been questioned. For example, a study by Olshtain et al. (1990) that adopted an instrumental-integrative scale of motivation found out that effective variables, such as attitudes did not feature prominently in students’ achievement in FLL and efforts that they put into learning a language. This prompted Nikolov (1999, p. 33) to remark, “It is important to find out if integrative motivation is limited to bilingual and bicultural contexts and what role instrumental motivation plays”. This is a valid remark since the presence of integrative motivation presupposes that learners are familiar with the country and culture of the language they learn or have had some encounters with the native speakers of that language. This might not be always the case as people may be learning the language of a terra incognita both in geographical and cultural sense, the language where considerable social, cultural, or psychological distances are involved.

This research aims to analyse students’ motivation in the context of foreign language learning (FLL), the Russian language specifically. This research is dictated by the classroom needs as the nature of learners’ motivations is a critical factor to consider when developing the course syllabus and/or planning
classroom activities, especially with regard to the part of the course that deals with the socio-cultural aspect. To develop a suitable syllabus – and fine-tune it to satisfy the needs of a particular cohort of students - it is vital that language instructor seeks the learners’ opinions regarding the course and hears their “voices”. It is also most helpful to establish a motivational history of each particular cohort of learners and be aware what knowledge and experiences of the target language's country, culture and community the students bring into the classroom.

For this purpose, instead of employing a structured questionnaire built along preconceived opinions on learners' motivation, this research used open-ended questionnaires and sought to hear the students' “voices”. In the following sections, the nature of motivation of the Russian language learners in UMS is looked into and discussed.

PRESENT RESEARCH

Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the nature of motivation among students learning the Russian language. Particularly, it seeks to answer the question: What place integrative motivation occupies in their learning agendas? For this purpose it is necessary to explore the magnitude of the students' knowledge of Russia, their perceptions of the country and people as well as familiarity with Russian culture.

Participants

This research was conducted among the first year students of UMS learning Russian language at the beginners' level. 74 students shared their views and perceptions of Russia, its people and culture in the first part of this research. Since this portion of inquiry was conducted on strictly anonymous basis, it is not possible to give a demographic profile of participants.

Same number of students (74) answered the questions on motivation in the second part of the enquiry. Regarding the demographic profile, there were considerably more female (n=48, or 64.9 percent) than male (n=26, or 35.1 percent) students. Students came from various ethnic backgrounds, eg., Malays, Chinese, Indian, Kadazan, Dusun, Iban, Bajau, and Sino-Kadazan. The majority of participants were science students (n=53, or 71.6 percent).
**Procedure**

Two different open-ended questionnaire surveys were conducted. The first survey was implemented in the beginning of the very first Russian language class for this cohort of students. The second survey involved the same cohort of students and took place in the end of the first year of their language studies when the respondents were finishing level two of the Russian language course.

In the first survey, the students were asked to write what images the words “Russia” or “Russian” conjure in their minds. The answers were solicited on an anonymous basis and the respondents were free to give any number of responses. This part of the research aimed to investigate what knowledge, conceptions and opinions about Russia the students brought into the classroom. Also, it aimed to explore their attitudes towards Russian people and culture, all of which form an important part of the integrative component of motivation construct. 74 students replied these questions yielding a total of 193 answers.

In the second survey, open-ended questionnaires soliciting answers to the questions “what motivates you to learn Russian?” and “what encourages you to learn Russian?” were distributed. These questionnaires aimed to look into the nature of the learners’ motivation. 74 students answered the questionnaires providing 198 statements.

The context analysis then was carried out to analyse the questionnaires. The qualitative analysis software N6 which was formerly known as NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing) was used for this purpose. This software is suitable for detecting the hidden patterns and structures in the responses. After that the answers were categorized into groups or clusters and examined for similarities and differences of opinions.

**RESULTS**

a) Results from the First Survey: Students’ knowledge about Russia as a country and their attitudes towards the target language’s country, culture and people.

The majority of answers (total 54) related to the learners’ attitude towards Russian culture, language and its speakers which is the key element within the construct of integrative motivation. 33 comments related to the Russian language and were mostly of a general nature. Nine answers were concerned with its novelty and uniqueness for the learners (eg., “it’s a new language for me”, “it’s a unique language”, “unique spelling which looks like Greek”). Seven remarks alluded to the perceived difficulty of Russian (eg., “I heard that this language is very
A total of 193 answers were collected in this part of enquiry (see Table 1).

Table 1: Students’ knowledge about Russia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Number of answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian language, people and culture</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography and country image</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History, politics, ideology</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and technology</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of any knowledge</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

difficult to learn”, “it must be difficult to pronounce”). Many answers were less specific (eg., “it’s a foreign language”, “Russia has its own language”). One student candidly answered, “first I thought the Russian and German (languages) are same but I am wrong”.

There are some traces of integrative motivation in this cluster of answers most typical being, “I like the way Russians speak”, “it’s a good language to learn because it comes from an interesting country”, “I think it’s a beautiful language”, and “Russian is a pretty good language to learn”.

Within this largest cluster, 21 comments were on Russian people (14 answers) and culture (7 answers). It should be noted that this is rather a small share in the total of 193 answers, especially given the fact that the respondents were free to give as many answers as they wished. This scarcity of opinion could be attributed to the fact that the students had no occasions for direct encounters with the Russians. Overall, the comments regarding Russian people were either neutral (“they are white people”) or positive (“people are nice and warm”, “they are good looking”, “Russians are hardworking”). One person divulged, “it is the first time that I see a Russian” (i.e., the instructor who is a
Russian). Only two responses in this cluster could be viewed within the framework of integrative motivation ("I would be proud to communicate with Russian people", "maybe, some day I can communicate with the saints there"). Remarks on Russian culture were less specific (i.e., "I know Russian culture by watching the tv", "unique culture", "historical (sic) culture"), and no traces of integrative motivation were detected.

The second largest cluster of replies (total 51) was related to Russia's geography (28 responses) and country image (13 statements). Most typical answers were, "Russia is a cold country", "the weather is cool", and "it's a big country". Names of cities and areas, such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, the Ural mountains we also mentioned. There were some erroneous beliefs as well, e.g., "Russia consists of Ukraine, Romania and Crimea". In this part, not unexpectedly, the overwhelming majority of answers were neutral. Overall, only a very general knowledge of Russia was in evidence. Regarding the country image, some responses could be construed as positive (e.g., "(Russia is) one of the biggest powers in the world", "great country") while others tended to be rather negative (e.g., "people are not wealthy", "(Russia) has ethnic problems"). Only two responses in this cluster could be classified as indicating the presence of integrative motivation, i.e., "I think it's a nice country", "I want to go to Russia".

41 answers could be classified under the "history, politics, ideology" heading. Most typical answers (18) related to Russian history and its communist past (e.g., "Russia was a communist country before", "it's a communist country" (sic), "the former nation of the USSR", "the Cold War"). Among the historical personae, Karl Marx (who, in fact, was a German) was mentioned three times while Lenin and Tsar Peter the Great were mentioned twice each. On the positive side, some respondents stated that Russia is "a veto power holder in the United Nations" showing knowledge of the country's international status. One upbeat answer given was that "Putin is a cool guy".

20 answers were related to education and technology. 12 students mentioned medical and pharmacy courses in Russia which are popular in Malaysia (e.g., "Russia has many medical schools", "many Malaysian students study there", "medical program recognized in our country"). Regarding the technology, such statements as "aerospace technology", "great inventions", "high tech", "jet planes" were also offered.

Nine responses professed a lack of any knowledge of Russia (e.g., "I don't know anything that's why I am here").

Finally, 18 answers were classified as "others" since they did not form a unified cluster of opinions and either dealt with emotions (e.g., "exciting and fun", "never expected to learn Russian") and intentions (e.g., "I hope to learn it happily") or were cryptic and difficult to decipher (e.g., "words of greetings", "alloha").
b) Results from the Second Survey: Sources of the Russian language learners' motivation

Total 198 answers were obtained in this part of enquiry (see Table 2). 49 answers revealed that the students were motivated to learn the Russian language to widen their general knowledge (e.g., “to get a lot of knowledge”, “to learn new things”, “more knowledge gained”) and increase their knowledge of languages (e.g., “I want to learn a new language”, “interest in foreign language learning”, “I like studying languages”, “knowing more languages is better”). In this cluster of answers, a strong propensity for knowledge acquisition is quite evident. However, no traces of integrative motivation to learn Russian have transpired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of motivation</th>
<th>Number of answers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia-inspired</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/family</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting/unique experience</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom context</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived usefulness</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation requirement</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second most important source of motivation cited by the students could be described as “Russia-inspired” (33 answers). This is a significant fact since the answers in this cluster indicated a strong indication of the learners' interest in the Russian language, culture and their desire to get a deeper knowledge of the country and language. Among various statements in this section such
Integrative Motivation In A Foreign Language Classroom

answers as “I wish to know more about Russian culture”, “I want to know about Russia”, and “Russia has its own beautiful language” were the most common.

Next, friends and family were cited as a source of motivation (25 answers). Interestingly enough, 11 answers or almost half of responses in this cluster, indicated that Malaysian friends who studied medicine in Russia motivated the learners to succeed in their language studies (eg., “I want to be able to communicate with friends who study in Russia when they come back”, “communicate with my friend who studies in Russia through SMS”, “special friend studies in Russia”). This was quite an unexpected moment in this enquiry since, more commonly, when people learn a language for the purpose of communication, they focus on the native speakers of the target language. In this way learners of a foreign language can become a part of the foreign language culture and community, which is a very important element in Gardner’s concept of integrative motivation. In this case study, however, the learners expressed a desire to use the foreign language when speaking with their compatriots which points out that not integrative motivation but a desire to be affiliated with a certain group of people is the driving force for a number of students in this cohort.

23 respondents stated that learning Russian was a valuable, unique and interesting experience (eg., “learning Russian is something special”, “it’s unique and new”, “I may never have a chance to learn it outside (the campus)”). Again, though the learners expressed their appreciation of being able have a new experience and get an exposure to a foreign culture, the answers do not allow talking of the presence of integrative motivation.

“Classroom context” could be a suitable description for the next cluster of answers on the source of motivation. Among 19 answers in this section the most frequent were “interesting class activities”, “I want to know more to participate in the classroom activities”, “the way lecturer teaches”. No integrative motivation is evident in this cluster. Similarly, answers that are grouped together under the headings “perceived usefulness” (17 responses) and “graduation requirement” (15 responses) cannot be by their nature belong in the domain of integrative motivation.

Finally, 17 respondents cited miscellaneous reasons for being motivated to learn Russian (eg., “Russian is similar to English which is my favourite subject”, “I find it very interesting and challenging to master the language”, “to prove to others that I can do better”) or were too cryptic to be deciphered with a good degree of certainty as to their meaning (eg., “multimedia”, “engineering”).
As responses in the first survey indicated, initially, there has been only a scant evidence of the presence of integrative motivation in the students' learning agendas. This could be attributed to the fact that geographically and culturally Russia is a distant land to learners in Malaysia. There is no Russian language community in the country and not much information on Russia is provided by the major mass media. Also, there remains a lot of space for exploration in the economic and cultural relations between two countries.

The results of the first survey lend some support to the Nikolov's (1999) presumption that integrative motivation could be limited to bilingual and bicultural contexts, such as learning French in Canada and not necessarily be evident in a foreign language classroom. As the results of this survey indicate, socio-linguistic context is an important variable to consider when discussing the influence of motivation on the acquisition of a new language. Thus, initially, there have been only scant traces of integrative motivation among the cohort of students involved in the present research. This means that the students' academic performance in learning Russian, whether good or lacklustre, did not depend on their attitudes and did not involve degree of integrativeness towards the target language's speakers or culture.

However, and this could be the present study's most interesting finding, results of the second survey testified that there have occurred changes in attitudes among the learners. Apparently, by the end of their first year study of the Russian language, this cohort of students acquired a more positive attitude towards - and appreciation of - the target language's country and its culture. In 33 responses, a desire to know more about Russia and its culture was mentioned as a source of motivation to learn the language. This could mean that instead of a static unidirectional relationship the process of language learning and the status of motivation to learn this language have dynamic and mutually enhancing bilateral relationships. As Wlodkowski (1985, p.4) observed, "motivation is not only important because it is a necessary causal factor of learning, but because it mediates learning and is a consequence of learning as well."

The differences in results between the first and second surveys imply that it is indeed possible for learners to develop integrative motivation in the course of the language study. Whether this shift in attitude takes place or not depends to a large extent on the learning context, classroom situation and the range and selection of classroom activities.

As Nikolov (1999, p.39) noted, "actual motivations of students, in our observation, are infrequently employed for establishing the nature of classroom activities". Knowing students' motivational inclination may help language
instructors to make better informed choices regarding classroom procedure. For the cohort of students involved in this study, incorporation of the socio-cultural element in the course synopsis proved to be especially relevant. Thus, in each lesson, the students were provided with short texts in English which introduced them to some aspects of Russian culture and history. The Internet served as a main source for these texts that were both informative and entertaining. Also, the learners were encouraged to explore Russian culture themselves, preparing and presenting group reports (in English) on culture, history, people, or everyday life in Russia were a part of the course's overall evaluation.

Besides providing students with engaging materials on the target language's culture and encouraging them to conduct their own research on the related topics, linking socio-cultural element and vocabulary learning could be an interesting addition to classroom activities and an area for further research. For example, when preparing group assignments on Russian culture students could be asked to include in their presentation a relevant for the topic vocabulary and introduce it to their classmates. Moreover, they could be asked to act as "language instructors" and design some exercises, conduct quizzes, or think of other ways to present the new vocabulary to their classmates. In this way, not only the students' deeper involvement in the teaching-learning process would be possible but a wider classroom context is created to stimulate the learners' interest in the target language's culture and language.

This study looked into the nature of motivation and attempted to establish the status of integrative motivation among the Russian language learners in UMS. For future research, it would be interesting to conduct comparative studies on the nature of motivation and attitudes towards the target language's country, culture and community among students learning various foreign languages (eg., Russian, German, French, Japanese, Arabic, etc.). Such a research could shed additional light on the nature of students' motivation to learn a foreign language. It could supply additional evidence as to whether integrative motivation features prominently in the foreign language classroom and, if so, establish whether integrative component of motivation is more prominent among the learners of the "closer" languages in geographical or cultural sense. It would also be interesting to conduct a quantitative research and investigate how the evolvement of integrative motivation influences students' academic performance.
REFERENCES


