

Analysis of “A study of the motivational patterns of learners of English for academic and professional purposes” by Shahid Abrar-UL-Hassan

Recibido: 29 de agosto
Aceptado: 13 de septiembre

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Shahid Abrar-UL-Hassan’s article first appeared in TESOL Journal in 2013. In it, the author deals with two research questions: a. Do participants in English for academic and professional purposes (EAPP) programs have one or both types of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic)? b. How do the type and level of motivation influence on EAPP learners’ success? This research tries to measure the types and levels of motivation in EAPP learners. The researcher designed this study in the following way.

The sample was 37 out of 58 international students, male and female. He used opportunistic sampling, which means that he used the population that he had available. It was an exploratory survey, cross-sectional design. The self-report questionnaire was used to collect data. Participants responded statements related to their motivation. Section 1 asks demographic information, while section 2 determined the type of motivation, and section 3 measured the degree of motivation (low, medium, high).

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For the first seven items, which measured extrinsic motivation, and where 1 meant strongly agree, item 4: English is essential for success in the program of study got the strongest agreement, followed by item 1: to improve English reading and writing for professional purposes and 6: for professional growth and moving to high career positions. These facts reveal the participants' extrinsic motivation.

The statements from 8 to 14 measured intrinsic motivation. The ranges were between 1.97 and 2.32, near 2 indicates agree which is positive. The 11th statement, to be better educated and feel confident, got the strongest agreement. This means that the participants were also intrinsically motivated. The analysis showed that the participants were intrinsically and extrinsically motivated; the percentage of both motivations was 83.7

In relation to degree of motivation, it was rated on the 4-point scale: extremely important (high), important, medium, unimportant/ extremely unimportant (low). Most of the statements ranged from 1.73 to 1.95. It is near 2 of the scale. This leads us to think that most of them consider their program important; this means medium degree of motivation.

Finally, the results indicate that 28 participants (75.6%) had both kinds of motivation (on a medium degree). This evidence also shows us that both types of motivation overlap and

they are not separate. This way the two research questions proposed by the author were answered in relation to the participants in EAPP programs.

This research study has some strengths. Since the participants were taking part in a specific program, their answers were reliable, taking into account the numbers, level of education and genders. Besides that, it focuses on very specific aspects of motivation. Nevertheless, it also has weaknesses, such as the fact that its results cannot be generalized because it involves a specific group of students; all of them are professionals who are studying different majors, so they already have high objectives in their lives, and it is a very good university. It is not easy to measure motivation since it is a very subjective matter and it is based on participants' emotions during the research.

In an EFL program, this kind of research is important because we cannot neglect the motivation aspect, either intrinsic and extrinsic. We need to make our students aware of the importance of the English language. Since motivation may vary in time, we need to understand that sometimes our students may be very highly motivated and other times less so. It also helps us to make decisions to adapt our programs if they may not be motivating our students enough.

REFERENCE

Shahid Abrar-UL-Hassan. (2013). A study of the motivational patterns of learners of English for academic and professional purposes. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259543266_A_Study_of_the_Motivational_Patterns_of_Learners_of_English_for_Academic_and_Professional_Purposes